

Encyclopedia of Global Religion

Mark Juergensmeyer

ENCYCLOPEDIA OF
GLOBAL *Religion*

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GLOBAL *Religion*

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Lesotho
Liberia
Libya
Liechtenstein
Lithuania
Los Angeles
Lourdes
Luxembourg
Macau
Macedonia
Madagascar
Madrid
Malawi
Malaysia
Mali

Malta	Portugal
Marshall Islands	Puerto Rico
Martinique	Qatar
Mashhad	Qum
Mauritania	Réunion
Mauritius	Romania
Mecca	Rome
Medina	Russian Federation
Mexico	Rwanda
Mexico City	Saint Lucia
Micronesia	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
Middle East	Samoa (American and Independent State of)
Moldova	San Marino
Monaco	São Tomé and Príncipe
Mongolia	Sārṇāth
Montenegro	Saudi Arabia
Morocco	Scotland
Moscow	Senegal
Mozambique	Serbia
Myanmar (Burma)	Seychelles
Najaf	Sierra Leone
Namibia	Singapore
Nepal	Sint Maarten
Netherlands	Slovakia
New Caledonia	Slovenia
New York City	Solomon Islands
New Zealand	Somalia
Nicaragua	Somaliland
Niger	South Africa
Nigeria	South Asia
Niue	South Sudan
Nordic Countries	Southeast Asia
Norfolk Island	Spain
North Africa	Sri Lanka
North America	St. Kitts and Nevis
Northern Ireland	Sudan
Northern Mariana Islands	Suriname
Norway	Swaziland
Oman	Sweden
Pacific Islands/Oceania	Switzerland
Pakistan	Syrian Arab Republic
Palau	Taiwan
Palestine	Tajikistan
Panama	Tanzania
Papua	Thailand
Papua New Guinea	Tibet
Paraguay	Timur
Peru	Togo
Philippines	Tokyo
Poland	Tonga

Trinidad and Tobago
Tunisia
Turkey
Turkmenistan
Uganda
Ukraine
United Arab Emirates
United Kingdom
United States of America
Uruguay
Uzbekistan
Vanuatu
Vatican City State and the Holy See
Venezuela
Vietnam
Virgin Islands (British)
Virgin Islands (U.S.)
Wales
Yemen
Yugoslavia
Zambia
Zimbabwe

Events and Historical Topics

‘Abbāsid Caliphate
Aryans
Axial Age
Ayodhya Mosque Attack
Aztecs
Battle of Badr
Bodh Gaya
Canterbury
Council of Nicea
Crusades
Diaspora
Emergent Religion
Enlightenment
Flood Myth
French Revolution
Generational Change
Hiroshima and Nagasaki
Holocaust
Incas
Indo-European Religion
Indus Valley Civilization
Inquisition
Jewish Diaspora
Karbala

Kumbha Mela
Mashhad
Mediterranean World
Mongol Empire
Mughal Empire
Ottoman Empire
Postcolonialism
September 11, 2001
Silk Road
Taiping Rebellion
Umayyad Dynasty
Vatican Council, Second

Influential Texts and Figures of Veneration

Apostle Paul
Bab, Sayyid ‘Ali Muhammad
Baha’u’llah
Bible
Enuma Elish
Fátima
Gautama, Siddhartha
Ghazali
Gilgamesh Epic
Gospel of Judas
Gospel of Thomas
Guru Nanak
Jesus
Kabir
Muhammad
Our Lady of Guadalupe
Qur’an
Saints
Sanskrit
Scripture
Sutras
Torah
Veda
Virgin Mary

Movements and Organizations

Abakuá Secret Society
Al-Azhar
Aum Shinrikyô
Auroville
Ayahuasca Religious Movements
Babi
Base Communities in Latin America

Batuque de Porto Alegre
 Branch Davidians
 Buddhist Compassion Relief
 Tzu Chi Foundation
 Cao Dai
 Cargo Cults
 Catholic Charismatic Renewal
 Catholic Charities
 Christian Identity
 Christian Reconstructionism
 Church World Service
 Comunione e Liberazione
 Divine Light Mission
 Ebenezer Baptist Church
 Eckankar
 Evangelical Movements
 Falun Gong
 Father Divine and the Peace Mission Movement
 Fellowship of Reconciliation
 Fo Guang Shan
 Folk Saints in Latin America
 Fulani Jihad
 Ghost Dance Religion
 Gulen Movement
 Hallelujah Movement
 Hamas
 Hare Krishna (International Society for
 Krishna Consciousness)
 Heaven's Gate
 Hoa Hao
 Igreja Universal
 Jamaat-e-Islami
 Jemaah Islamiyah
 Jurema of the Brazilian North
 Kali
 Khalistan Movement
 La Luz del Mundo Church
 Marian Cults and Apparitions in Latin America
 Mexican *Concheros*
 Millenarian Movements
 Mithras Cult
 Neo-Pagan Movement
 New Age Movements
 Opus Dei
Pajelanca of the Brazilian North
 Pana Wave Laboratory
 Pentecostal Movements
 Peoples Temple
 Radhasoami

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh
 Sarvodaya Movement
 Satya Sai Movement
 Scientology
 Self-Realization Fellowship
 Soka Gakkai
 Solar Temple Order
 Swaminarayan Movement
Tabligh
 Taizé
 Tambor de Mina
 3HO (Sikh Dharma Fellowship)
 Transcendental Meditation
 Unity Movement
 Vale do Amanhecer
 Vedanta Society
 Wahhabis
 World Congress of Faiths
 World Council of Churches
 World's Parliament of Religions
 YMCA, YWCA
 Yoga
 Youth With a Mission
 Zionism

Religion in Public Life

al Qaeda
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 Anti-Semitism
 Bharatiya Janata Party
 Black Muslims
 Buddhist Law
 Burka
 Christian Democratic Parties
 Christian Militia
 Civil Religion
 Civil Society
 Clash of Civilizations Thesis
 Communism
 Consumer Culture
 Cosmic War and Cosmic Conflict
 Cultural Revolution (China)
 Detainees
 Diaspora
 Economic Issues and Religion
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European Court of Human Rights
European Union
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Global Capitalism and Religion
Global Migration
Global Secularization Paradigm
Hajj
Halakha and Shari'a
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Hindu Law
Hindu Nationalism
Human Rights
Hybridization
Immigration
Intermarriage
International Monetary Fund
International NGOs
Islamic State
Jihad
Just War
Killing Fields (Cambodia)
Kingship
Laicization
Liberation Theology
Marxism
Material Culture
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Men's Roles
Modernization
Multiple Faiths
Muslim Brotherhood
Nation-State
Natural Law
Nonviolence
Oklahoma City Federal Building Bombing
Politics and Religion
Prison Religion
Public and Private Religion
Racism
Refugees
Religion and State
Religions and World Federation
Religious Dialogue
Religious Freedom
Religious Minority-Majority Relations
Religious Nationalism

Secularism
Secularization
Sexuality
Social Justice
Suicide Bombing
Swastika
Taliban
Televangelism
Terrorism
Tiananmen Square
Tolerance
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Turban
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Violence
War on Terrorism
Women's Roles
World Economic Forum
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Zionism

Religious Traditions and Groups

Ahmaddiya
Ancient Near Eastern Religions
Anglicans
Ashkanaz
Assyrian Church of the East
Autochthonous Christians in Latin America
Baha'i
Brahmanical Hinduism
Candomblé
Chinese Popular Religion
Christianity
Compostela
Confucianism
Coptic Christianity
Daoism
Eastern Orthodox Christianity
Engaged Buddhist Groups
Fundamentalism
Hinduism
Indigenous Religions
Islam
Islam in China
Islam in Latin America
Islamic Modernism
Islamic Reform
Islamism (Political Islam)

Ismailis
 Jainism
 Japanese Religions in Latin America
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 Liberal Protestantism
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 Manichaeism
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 Neo-Sufism (Sufi Renewal)
 New Religions
 New Religions in Africa
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 New Religions in Japan
 New Religions in South America
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 Popular Religion
 Protestant Buddhism
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 Reform Hinduism
 Reform Judaism
 Roman Catholicism
 Sangha
 Santería
 Shaivism
 Shamanism
 Shi'a Islam
 Shinto
 Siddha Yoga
 Sikhism
 Soka Gakkai
 Spiritualism
 Sufism
 Sunnī Islam
 Theosophy
 Theravada Buddhism
 Ugaritic Religion
 Unification Church
 Unitarians
 Vaishnavism
 Vajrayana, Tibetan
 Vodou

Wahhabis
 World Religions
 Yagé
 Zen Buddhism
 Zionism
 Zoroastrianism (and Parsis)

Social Issues and Global Trends

Abortion
 Aging
 Anti-Americanism
 Anti-Semitism
 Art
 Cinema
 Civil Religion
 Civil Society
 Clash of Civilizations Thesis
 Clothing
 Communism
 Conspiracy Theories
 Consumer Culture
 Conversion
 Cosmic War and Cosmic Conflict
 Creationism
Da Vinci Code, The
 Desecularization
 Detainees
 Detraditionalization and
 Retraditionalization
 Diaspora
 Environment
 Equality
 Faith Tourism
 Festivals
 Gay and Lesbian Theology
 Generational Change
 Global Capitalism and Religion
 Global Cities
 Global Migration
 Globalization
 Globalization and Conversion
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 Internet
Left Behind Series
 Material Culture
 McDonaldization

Megachurch	Religious Minority-Majority
Men's Roles	Relations
Modernism	Secularism
Modernization	Secularization
Multiculturalism	Sexuality
Multiple Faiths	Social Justice
Multiple Modernities	Sports
Music	Suicide Bombing
Postcolonial Theology	Tattooing and Piercing
Postcolonialism	Televangelism
Postmodernism	Television
Prison Religion	Terrorism
Public and Private Religion	Torture
Racism	Transnational
Refugees	Transvestites and Transsexuals
Religions and World Federation	Violence
Religious Dialogue	War on Terrorism
Religious Freedom	Women's Roles

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Introduction

The *Encyclopedia of Global Religion* has been created to be the standard reference work for the emerging field of global religion. It covers the entire range of topics related to religion in its global context. It explores contemporary transnational issues and the diverse intellectual approaches of scholars who analyze the religious aspects of the global world. Their analyses, presented in more than 750 entries, include the diaspora of cultures and dispersions of peoples, the transnational aspects of religious ideas and practices, the cultural diversity and variations within religious traditions, and the religious responses—both positive and negative—to globalized multicultural societies.

The entries in the *Encyclopedia* are authoritative. At the outset of the project, the editors created an editorial board of some of the world's most significant scholars in the field, who have played an important role in crafting the overall themes of the *Encyclopedia*. They have also helped suggest both topics and appropriate authors. Most of the entries have been written by leading authorities around the world. A select group of promising younger scholars has also been invited to author some of the entries, under the guidance of senior faculty, in their fields of specialization.

The *Encyclopedia* is different from other reference sources on religion that are available online or in print, in at least three ways. First, it is reliable—the entries are written by the most learned and competent scholars in the field. Second, it is contemporary—it explores aspects of religion and society that are unfolding in the contemporary global era. And third, it is specific—the entries are written specifically for the field of global religion. Every article illumines some aspect of global religion or a subject related to it, such as globalization, transnational activity and themes, and aspects

of global society including nationalism, terrorism, cyber culture, and the effects of information technology. A special feature of this *Encyclopedia* is its inclusiveness: It contains an essay on the religious aspects of every nation in the world, from the smallest Pacific island to the largest countries of Asia and Europe. No other sourcebook is as culturally diverse and geographically comprehensive.

The creation of an *Encyclopedia* of this magnitude is an enormous undertaking involving hundreds of colleagues over several years. We wish to acknowledge the army of those who supported and labored on this publishing venture, beginning with our colleagues at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Our able graduate student staff at Santa Barbara included Kendall Busse, Jonathan Lee, Emily Linthicum, Martie Smith-Roberts, John Soboslai, Stephanie Stillman, and Jamel Velji, and some of them have since become professors in colleges and universities around the country. Professor Nathalie Caron of the University of Paris 12 was very helpful in suggesting the names of potential contributors. The editors and staff at SAGE Publications were consistently supportive and encouraging, and we are grateful especially for the diligence and perseverance of Diana Axelsen and Yvette Pollastrini. Most of all, we thank the hundreds of colleagues who contributed entries to this project, knowing that their primary reward would be the satisfaction of having helped create an enduring fountain of information about an emerging field of studies to which they, and we, are deeply committed.

The facts in these entries have been checked to ensure that they are as authoritative as possible. Locating reliable numbers for members of religious communities and groups has been especially problematic. Often we have compared several sources, such as country-by-country census figures, where

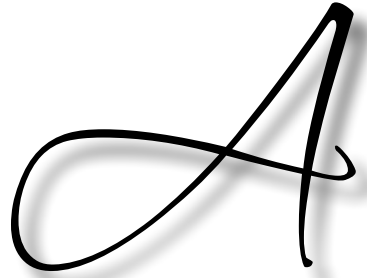
available; statistics from the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency's *World Factbook*; and information gathered by the compilers of the website www.adherents.com, who have used several sources, including David B. Barrett's religious statistics organization, which provides data for other encyclopedias such as the *Encyclopedia Britannica* and the *World Christian Encyclopedia*.

Regarding transliterations from languages that do not use the Roman alphabet (such as Chinese, Japanese, Arabic, and Hindi), we have tried to follow conventional standards and use diacritical marks sparingly. Exceptions have been made with regard to proper names that have their own customary transliterations (e.g., "Tagore" rather than "Thakar"). The authors of some entries have preferred a certain pattern of transliteration and the use of diacritical marks appropriate to their subject matters. We realize,

however, that such judgments are matters of taste as well as practice and that transliteration is often a subjective decision.

Finally, we want to honor the memory of Ninian Smart, one of the world's great scholars of religious studies and a pioneer in the field of global religion. We were privileged to work with him as colleagues at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and we are indebted to his vision of a world in which the best of the religious imagination provides a moral and spiritual stratum for an emerging global civil order. In tribute to his profound intellectual legacy, and in recognition of the high standard of scholarship that he has set for us all, we gratefully dedicate this project to his memory.

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ABAKUÁ SECRET SOCIETY

Abakuá is an all-male secret society, also known as *ñañigo*, primarily located in Cuba. The lodges associated with Abakuá emerged in the western, urban, and coastal areas of Cuba in the 1820s to 1840s, especially in the areas of Havana (Regla, Guanabacoa, and Marianao), Matanza, and Cárdenas. Ideas that undergird Abakuá were transported across the Atlantic Ocean by West Africans captured in their continental homelands and delivered as slaves to the largest island of the Caribbean. There, they and their island-born (Creole) descendants enlarged and reinvented aspects of customs and practices from the homeland regions of Calabar—known in Cuba as *Carabalí*.

Whereas Cuba's imported, enslaved Africans were originally from regions of West Africa, the ideas and practices of the first Abakuá lodge, Efik Buton, were drawn from a wide range of Africa-based knowledge and appealed to a range of ethnic groups in the island. Without the Cuban environment, it is questionable if Abakuá would have arisen the way it did in the Americas. African ethnicity was not the criterion for membership. Rather, the initiation ritual and adherence to the blood oath were the bases for becoming Abakuá in the Cuban context, where economic exchange—trust, collateral, and debt—was a critical component in Abakuá activities.

Cuba's distinctive character challenged the binary ideas about Black-versus-White identity within Abakuá membership. The earliest lodges, called

potencias, appear to have been composed of Africans and their island-born descendants. Non-“pureblood” Afro-Cubans became members in Havana's *Akanarán Efó Muñón Ekobio Mukarará* society before 1863 and were recognized to be *blanco*, rich, and gentlemen of the easy life. A debate arose in 1863 regarding the accusation of selling for profit of the Abakuá secret to Whites, and this was countered with the contention that revenue from the initiations served to buy Abakuá brethren out of slavery.

Given that it was not until late in the 19th century that the term *race* came into wide use, Cuba's complex social and cultural history could produce confusion in racial identification. The island—and most of Latin America—used a combination of phenotypical “color,” “legal color,” and social position to identify a person's category. To claim the Havana Abakuá lodge as “White,” therefore, would be something of a misnomer.

Abakuá constitutes a *potencia* (“society”) wherein the *baroko fundamento*, or “collective pact,” is consecrated. The consecration requires 13 men, or *plazas*, who have been jointly initiated, and other *obonekue* (“men already initiated”) are subsequently incorporated. However, a *potencia* lives beyond the individual Abakuá because it is all of the *potencia*'s altar objects that together form the *ekue*, the Abakuá spiritual source, that is, the enduring embodiment of the socially situated and gendered corporate group—its past and present male members.

Abakuá ritual activities normally occur in a society's sacred house or temple. Women are strictly prohibited from the Abakuá rituals. The contents of

these rituals, as well as the complexity of Abakuá scripting, are beyond the scope of this entry.

Jualynne E. Dodson

See also Candomblé; Cuba; New Religions in South America; Santería; Vodou

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'ABBĀSĪD CALIPHATE

Within the 'Abbāsīd period (750–1258), Islam developed into a world religion, transcending ethnic boundaries. For five centuries, the 'Abbāsīd caliphs were recognized by most Sunnī Muslims as at least their nominal rulers. Iraq, Syria, Egypt, and North Africa became Arabized during this period, while Iran more successfully retained its indigenous identity, experiencing a cultural renaissance in the 10th and 11th centuries. Meanwhile, most *dhimmis* (a non-Muslim subject of a state governed in accordance with the Shari'a law), along with the newly arrived Turks, adopted Islam.

The 'Abbāsīd period began after a rebellion arising in Khurasān in 747 toppled the last Umayyad caliph, replacing him not with a descendant of Muhammad XII, as many expected, but with al-Saffāh (750–754), a descendant of the Prophet's uncle al-'Abbās. Al-Mansūr (754–775) built Baghdad as his new capital, and there the caliphs adopted the traditions of pre-Islamic Sasanian bureaucracy and autocracy. 'Abbāsīd power reached its zenith under Harun al-Rashid (786–809), but his reign was followed by civil war, and provincial governors increasingly established independent dynasties. The Shi'a Fātimids even proclaimed a rival caliphate (910), eventually basing it in Cairo (969–1171).

Al-Mu'tasim (833–842) and subsequent caliphs recruited foreign soldiers, often Turkish slaves (singular *ghulām* or *mamlūk*), but their assassination of al-Mutawakkil (847–861) started a period of instability. From 936, real authority in Baghdad was held by a commander-in-chief (*amīr al-umarā'*),

a position taken over by the Shi'a Būyids in 945. At least their successors from 1055, the Turkish Seljuk sultan (singular sultan, meaning "authority"), having already conquered the eastern 'Abbāsīd lands, were vigorous defenders of Sunnī Islam against the Fātimids and the Byzantines.

Seeking a symbol of communal legitimacy, the ulema somewhat ambivalently endorsed early 'Abbāsīd rule while expounding Islamic standards of government and personal conduct in works of jurisprudence (*fiqh*) based on the Qur'an and sunna. They defeated an attempt by al-Ma'mūn (813–833) and his immediate successors to make the caliphs themselves arbiters of Islamic doctrine and practice, largely securing that role for themselves. Alongside and sometimes in tension with the teachings of conservative Sunnī scholars, though, there developed philosophical, theological, and mystical interpretations of Islam—the last of which would profoundly influence popular religion and provide a basis for new forms of religious association, the Sufi confraternities (singular *tariqah*). As the dynasty declined, Sunnī apologists argued—in opposition to the increasingly coherent Shi'a sects—that an impotent caliph could, indeed must, fulfill his responsibilities by delegating them to the sultans and the ulema.

When Saljuk authority fragmented in the 12th century, numerous ephemeral principalities and some more substantial successor states emerged under contending warlords who offered at best nominal loyalty to the caliph. The last significant 'Abbāsīd, al-Nāsir (1180–1225), was little more than one petty ruler among others. After the Mongols sacked Baghdad and killed most of the family (in 1258), the Mamlūk regime in Cairo maintained a shadow 'Abbāsīd caliphate (1261–1517) until the Ottoman conquest. It was not widely recognized at the time, but later it was said to have conferred the caliphal title on the Ottoman sultans.

Christopher John van der Krogt

See also Islam; Shi'a Islam; Sunnī Islam; Umayyad Dynasty

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ABDUH, MUHAMMAD (1849–1905)

Many scholars consider Muhammad Abduh—controversial teacher, jurist, theologian, and reformer—to be the founder of Islamic Modernism. Abduh was born in rural Egypt to a family committed to religion and education. In 1869, he left for Cairo to study at Al-Azhar University (where he eventually became its modernizing rector). There he studied with Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, who introduced Abduh to Islamic theology and mysticism as well as more “Western” subjects such as social and political science. Afghani also instilled in Abduh an appreciation of activism and Pan-Islamism (regarding all Muslims as one global community). Afghani’s influence, it seems, was to further make Abduh anticolonialist. The government eventually appointed Abduh chief editor of the official Egyptian gazette, where he increasingly influenced public thought and opinion. During this period of rising Egyptian nationalism, though, Abduh’s outspoken criticism of the government’s pro-Britain policies led to his exile.

Abduh settled in Paris, where he formed with al-Afghani an influential society that aimed to unite Muslims in renewed adherence to Islamic principles against European interference. Their journal, *al-Urwa al-Wuthqa*, was one of the most important of the early journals devoted to modernizing Islam. In 1888, the Egyptian government granted Abduh permission to return to Cairo on the condition that he refrain from teaching. Initially a judge, he advanced to membership in the administrative council and ultimately became Grand Mufti of Egypt. Here, he dedicated himself to the reform of Egypt’s educational system and religious courts. He remained in this position until his death in Alexandria in 1905.

Essentially, Abduh situated himself against those secularized Egyptians who claimed that religion held back a progressive society. Abduh came of age when European ideas, politics, and economics were encroaching on the Islamic world. Abduh traced the problem of shifting power relations to external factors (such as European might and colonialism) as well as internal ones (such as religious stagnation, corruption, and sectarianism). He argued that Egyptians could only bring about necessary reform through a discriminating and active

return to the essentials and ethics of Islam (with the Qur’an serving as a cornerstone).

Though Abduh warned against submission to Europe, he did believe that mutual and beneficial change could result from interaction and thus advocated against isolationism. What he saw as rampant secularization disturbed him, however, and led to his concentration on Islamic principles as solutions to the major problems of his time. Confronted with unchecked European advances, he saw a pressing need for the Muslim world to progress by maintaining the core of Islam while simultaneously modernizing its outmoded elements, such as education.

Abduh therefore stood between the two poles of absolute conservatism and modernization. One consequence of this middle ground was an eventual split among his disciples between those who highlighted Abduh’s focus on a return to religious tradition and those who underscored his attention to progressive social policy (such as his political involvement with educational reform and women’s rights). In the end, Abduh’s project of reviving Islam in a modernizing world has had an undeniable influence on global religion.

Daniel C. Dillard

See also Al-Azhar; Egypt; Islam; Islamic Modernism; Islamic Reform; Islamism (Political Islam)

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ABORTION

Religions of the world are divided on the subject of abortion. Pro-choice views coexist alongside no-choice views in the world’s major and indigenous religions.

All religions are united on reverence and awe and concern for the preservation of life. For that

reason, life and death issues are of prime concern for all the world religions. Mysteries such as birth and death particularly stimulate the emotion of the religio-sacred, making religion an inevitable factor—for good or for ill—in the ethics and policies of family planning. Religion has always been a dominant presence in discussions of abortion rights.

Many factors are involved in fertility motivation (such as education level, affluence, the status of women, etc.), and thus, it is notoriously difficult to say with certainty how much the official teachings of the various religions relate to fertility decisions. Positions held by religious leaders are not necessarily shared by the adherents of those religions. Within Christianity, for instance, the Roman Catholic hierarchy opposes both contraception and abortion, and yet France was the first country to experience a transition from high fertility to replacement levels or lower, and Italy (which hosts the Vatican) and Spain have among the three lowest fertility rates in the world. The implication is that birth control measures are widely used in these Catholic countries. In Judaism, there is strong support for abortion under certain circumstances. In some cases, abortion is not only permitted, it is, in fact, mandated, as when the physical or mental health of the woman is at risk or when there is a prospect of having a severely disabled child, such as a child with Tay-Sachs disease. Jewish scholars cite texts from the Bible and from the classical commentaries on the Bible in support of this position.

In Christianity, abortion became widely discussed only in the Middle Ages. Delayed ensoulment was broadly accepted throughout Christian history. The early embryo/fetus was thought to have a vegetative soul. This was succeeded by an animal soul. But only when the fetus was “formed” could God infuse a spiritual soul into it, and only at that point did the fetus attain the moral status of a person. Prior to this, therapeutic abortion could be permitted. There was debate as to when the fetus became “ensouled.” Some held that it happened after 40 days of pregnancy; some said it happened at 80 or 90 days into the pregnancy. In practice, “quickening,” detectable movement of the fetus in the woman, was taken as the arrival of a “person” status for the fetus. Early abortion was permissible for many reasons, such as to save the

woman’s life or to end a pregnancy conceived outside marriage, as when a girl was betrothed to one man but pregnant from another. The Catholic hierarchy today holds conservative views on both contraception and abortion. These are not shared by all modern Catholic theologians or by all Catholic parishioners.

In Islam, there is also a great diversity of views on abortion. Legal positions range from total prohibition of all abortion to unqualified permission for abortion up to 120 days into the pregnancy. Islam also holds that the moral status of the fetus depends on its age. Only when the fetus is sufficiently developed can God’s angel breathe spirit into the fetus.

The “First Precept” of Buddhism is “I will not willingly take the life of a living thing.” That would seem to preclude abortion. However, in all religions, seemingly unambiguous commands are modified when the various complexities of life emerge. The intention is of paramount importance in Buddhist ethics: When there is no greed, hate, or delusion, abortion may be compatible with a good Buddhist life. A woman may have an abortion and still be considered a good Buddhist in Japan. Acceptable reasons offered by Buddhist scholars for an abortion are saving the life of the woman or if the expectant mother is HIV positive. Other reasons are also permitted. Buddhist scholars who see negative karma resulting from an abortion say that it can be compensated for by good deeds. Some Buddhists believe, based on the concept of reincarnation, that abortion merely defers the birth of the being about to be born to another time.

Like Buddhism, Hinduism places a high premium on life in the womb. In Hindu tradition, abortion is even described as a *mahapatakas* (“an atrocious act”). Ahimsa, the teaching of nonviolence, is central to Hinduism as it is to Jainism. Nonetheless, Hindu thought has traditionally rejected absolutism in moral matters and urges consideration of all competing rights and values. Reflective of this is the fact that abortion has been legal in India since 1971, with the passing of the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, which makes abortion easily accessible.

Native American religions tended to advocate living in close harmony with nature. They recognized the need for family planning, including abortion when necessary, and there was broad insistence that

the decision of the pregnant woman was authoritative. Native African religions also show pluralism on the subject of abortion.

The pluralism in world religions on abortion has important legal implications. Some assert that a blanket prohibition of abortion would infringe on the moral freedom that religion allows and validates.

Daniel C. Maguire

See also Christianity; Death Ritual; Ethics; Hinduism; Islam; Judaism

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ADAMS, JAMES LUTHER (1901–1994)

James Luther Adams was a preeminent Unitarian Universalist theologian and ethicist of the 20th century. Born in Ritzville, Washington, he was the son of a Baptist country preacher and farmer. After working on the Northern Pacific Railroad, Adams attended the University of Minnesota and Harvard Divinity School. Training to become a Unitarian minister, he moved from his childhood pre-millenarian fundamentalism to liberal Christianity. Adams served as the minister of two congregations: from 1927 to 1934 with the Second Church, Unitarian, in Salem, Massachusetts, and from

1934 to 1935 with the First Unitarian Society in Wellesley Hills, Massachusetts. During this time, he earned a master's in comparative literature from Harvard and taught from 1929 to 1932 in the Department of English at Boston University.

In 1935, Adams accepted a call to join the faculty of the Meadville Lombard Theological School in Chicago on the condition that he might study for a year in Europe before assuming his teaching duties. During this year, he joined the underground church movement resisting the rise of Nazism and befriended Karl Barth and Albert Schweitzer. Adams returned to the United States in 1936, convinced that liberal religion needed to seek relevancy in the face of the world's evils. He taught at Meadville Lombard from 1936 to 1943, and he then served as a professor in the Federated Theological Faculties of the University of Chicago from 1943 to 1956, earning his PhD in 1945. During his years in Chicago, Adams worked with Independent Workers of Illinois, a grassroots political organization dedicated to governmental reform. In 1957, Adams left Chicago to become a professor of Christian social ethics at Harvard Divinity School.

Adams served as president of the Society of Christian Ethics, the American Theological Society, and the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion and was an active member of the American Civil Liberties Union. Adams strongly influenced American Christian ethics by making the works of liberal German theologians, including Paul Tillich, Ernst Troeltsch, and Karl Holl, accessible by translating, editing, and interpreting their writings. In turn, Adams had a profound influence on Tillich, who claimed that Adams taught him the importance of the emphasis on the practical, social, and political applications of agape to the situations of the society in which we live. Following his retirement from Harvard, Adams continued teaching at Andover Newton and Meadville Lombard until his death.

Adams believed in the role religious institutions play by passing on political and social values shaped by the demands of love and justice. He was concerned that liberal religion too often moves in the direction of individualism, arguing that religion involves both personal and social concerns. Adams's method of reformulating religious liberalism was intentionally dialectical, focusing on the

community, the individual, God, and then the human. Adams maintained that in developing ethical formulations for a new age, no answer is final because the application of any ethical theory to the present situation and reflection on the interaction of event and theory are in constant flux.

Stephen Butler Murray

See also Protestant Christianity; Unitarians

AFGHANISTAN

Formed by the political expansion of Pashtun tribes and unified in the 19th century, the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan harbors a population that is almost entirely Muslim. The Pashtun ethnic group is joined by Persian-speaking Tajiks, Hazaras, and Aymaqs as well as Turkish-speaking Uzbeks and Turkmens, and Islam provides a unifying force for the disparate groups. Ninety-nine percent of Afghans are Muslim, with 84% following the Sunnī tradition (mostly of the Hanafi variety) and 15% following the Shi'a tradition (mostly Hazaras in the Imami school, with smaller groups of Ismailis). In 1990, Afghanistan had the largest refugee population living outside its border, mostly in Pakistan, Iran, and the Arabian Peninsula. Its people began leaving en masse following the coup of 1978 and the ensuing war, and though some returned after the fall of the communists in 1992, many still remain in other countries. This entry will trace the historical development of the Islamic nation, through its engagement with Britain and the Soviet Union during the Cold War, and offer some insight into Afghanistan's situation at the beginning of the 21st century.

Early History

Supposedly the home of Prophet Zoroaster, Afghanistan's location on trading routes to China lent it value to various empires of the past, and it was incorporated into Cyrus the Great's Achaemenid Empire and later conquered by Alexander the Great in 327 BCE. Buddhism was introduced to the region under the Mauryan Empire, which ruled from the fourth to the second century BCE, and

those practices endured through the Sassanid Empire to the sixth century CE. The 'Abbāsīd Dynasty gained dominance in the seventh century, and through the ninth century, the inhabitants of the area were mostly converted to Sunnī Islam. Meanwhile, agricultural conditions brought many to settle in the Hindu Kush area, and they began to assimilate into the already thriving Pashtun culture.

Following the weakening of the 'Abbāsīd Caliphate in the ninth century, Afghanistan began to be ruled by local dynasties such as the Samanids, who preferred and promoted the Shi'a tradition. The area was conquered by Genghis Khan in the 13th century, but his rule did not displace the Islamic faith that had taken hold. By the time the dynasty's reign had concluded, most of Genghis Khan's descendants and successors had converted to the faith. The Mughal emperor Zahir ud-din Muhammad Babur captured Kabul from the Mongols in 1504, and though his center of political power was in India, he expressed his love for the land of Afghanistan in his memoirs.

The Mughal rule, Islamic in character, lasted until the 18th century. During this period, Afghanistan saw regular warfare between the Mughals and the Safavids as well as the Uzbeks of Central Asia. The Pashtuns were able to gain concessions from all sides of the conflict as Kandahar changed hands several times. While the Pashtun Hotaki Dynasty was able to give Afghanistan indigenous rule for a short time, they were ousted by the armies of Nadir Shah of Persia in 1738. None of the myriad governors attempted to alter the religious attitude of the region, but its Muslim character would be challenged by communist zeal during the Cold War.

The Great Game

In 1826, Dost Mohammad named himself Emir of Afghanistan, and his rule saw the beginning of what has become known as the Great Game, the struggle between the Soviet Union and Britain over the mountains of Afghanistan. The Sikh forces of Maharajah Ranjit Singh occupied Peshawar in 1834, and following their expulsion and amid fears of a repeat invasion, Mohammad turned to the British for aid. The British conditions for aid included the relinquishing of Peshawar, recognition

of that province's independence along with the independence of Kandahar, and an immediate cessation of negotiations with Russia and Iran, countries whose reach the British sought to impede. When Mohammad agreed to the terms, Britain installed Shuja Shah Durrani, who was under the influence of British agents, as emir. In 1839, the British invaded Afghanistan, but in 1842, Shuja was assassinated by forces that had repelled the British attack and supported Dost Mohammad's son Mohammad Akbar.

Following what became known as the Second Anglo-Afghan War, the country was consolidated under Abdur Rahman, who attempted to destroy tribal ties by forcibly relocating many Pashtuns. Rahman brought religious leaders into his ruling council with the aim of modernizing Afghanistan, but his harsh tactics of rule increased the enmity between the Sunnī and Shi'a communities. In 1893, he agreed to the Durand Line, which would mark the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan in the foreseeable future, cutting directly through Pashto lands. The boundary continued to foment violence into the 21st century.

Afghanistan secured its independence from Britain following the Third Anglo-Afghan War. Amānullāh Khān took control of the country in 1919 and signed the Treaty of Friendship with Russia in 1921, after the Bolshevik Revolution and Russia's attempts to placate its Muslim inhabitants, but that relationship soon dissolved following perceived injustices done to Russian Muslims. Amānullāh Khān put many reforms into place, such as encouraging the wearing of Western-style clothing, discouraging the seclusion and veiling of women, as well as promoting secular education. In part due to these issues, he was ousted from power by Pashtun tribesmen in 1929, and he was succeeded by the more rigorously religious leader Nader Shah. Shah managed to reunify the broken country and tried to combine religious fervor with modern leanings. Afghanistan joined the League of Nations in 1934, leading to its formal recognition by many countries, including the United States.

With the appointment of Mohammad Daoud as prime minister in 1953, modernization attempts were revitalized. Daoud shocked his country by appearing with his wife and the wives of his ministers unveiled during Independence

Day celebrations, demanding that religious leaders provide verses from the Qur'an in support of their objections, and jailing several of them when they failed to do so. The constitution written in 1964 was considered secular, even though it contained phrases identifying Islam as the religion of Afghanistan and making Shari'a law applicable on issues not covered by secular law. A new constitution was written in 1977, by which time the ranks of the so-called fundamentalists had swelled despite their suppression since 1964. Daoud was assassinated in a coup the following year.

Communism and the Cold War

The year 1978 saw the emergence of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, which supported the Soviet Union and promoted communism in Afghanistan. In response to the growing communist threat, many Afghans fled to Pakistan and Iran, where they began organizing a resistance movement to bring down the "atheistic" and "infidel" communist regime backed by the government. The terms bring to light the intrinsic connection for Afghans between the state and religion; the communists were doubly evil, in faith and in their foreignness.

The resistance was formed by a coalition of groups generally designated as "fundamentalist" and "traditionalist" that were at odds with one another over their political goals. The fundamentalists, composed of members of the Jamaat-e-Islami, Hizb-e-Islami, and Ittehad-i-Islami, sought a state that redefined Islam in Afghanistan through mass politics. The traditionalists wanted rule defined by Shari'a but were less concerned with a redefinition of Islam in political terms. Members of the Mahaz-e-Milli-Islami dominated that group, and it incorporated Shi'a Muslims of the Hazarajat and Sufi orders.

The Soviet Union became involved in 1979, and a decade of guerrilla warfare ensued, waged by the mujahideen ("those waging jihad," "holy warriors"), who linked moral considerations with their political purpose. The United States, along with Pakistan, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia, aided the mujahideen in the defeat of the Soviet forces, and in 1988, Afghanistan came to an agreement with Pakistan to provide for the repulsion of Soviet

troops and the establishment of a neutral Afghan state. This deal was not well received by the mujahideen, and when the Soviet Union left the country under the new president Mikhail Gorbachev, Afghanistan quickly became involved in a civil war. Islam became central to the new Afghani state, and in April of 1992, the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan came into being.

Growth of the Taliban and the U.S. War

Many mujahideen followed their religious zeal into the folds of the Taliban, who ruled over nearly two thirds of Afghanistan in 1996 and sought to create a new Afghani Emirate under Mullah Mohammed Omar. Most of the group members are young men who were trained in Pakistani madrasas (many run by the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam) and were inspired by the Deobandi brand of Islam. The Taliban are infamous for their strict interpretation of Shari'a law and their harsh treatment of women, including the requirement of women to wear the burka in public. They engaged the United Front of the North in a civil war that lasted from 1996 to 2001 and earned a reputation for ruthlessness. During the war, they allied with the Pakistani national army, an alliance that continued into the 21st century and was bolstered by Pakistani soldiers allied with the Taliban, estimated to be 20% to 40% of the fighting force. The war against the northern alliance ended in 2001 with the assassination of its leader, Ahmad Shah Massoud, shortly before the September 11 attacks, an act said to have been orchestrated by al Qaeda to win Taliban support for its terrorist program.

In the wake of the September 11 attacks on the United States by al Qaeda, the Taliban offered protection to Osama bin Laden (d. 2011), who the American government believed to be implicated in the attacks. On October 7, the United States launched an offensive in Afghanistan that sought to capture al Qaeda terrorists and disband their hosts, the Taliban. They were quickly successful in toppling the Taliban regime, though the capture of bin Laden would remain an elusive hunt until 2011. In 2006, there were indications that the Taliban was regrouping and gaining influence in Afghanistan despite the ongoing war. Suicide attacks and a particular (but by no means universal) interpretation of jihad (holy war) characterized

the Taliban's strategy, and the flourishing opium trade provided its wealth.

In the first decade of the 21st century, the Taliban was still active in the area surrounding the Durand Line, extending their reach to the Swat Valley of Pakistan in 2009 and gaining recognition from the Pakistani government for their rule. American attacks on Afghanistan continued, commonly through the use of unmanned drone aircrafts, but the sway of the Taliban is evident in much of the country. President Barack Obama stated in 2010 that U.S. troops would begin to withdraw from Afghanistan in 2012, but many remain unconvinced, and defense officials have speculated that the conflict could continue into the foreseeable future, though in 2011 secret negotiations between the U.S. government and the Taliban to create a truce were made public. Afghanistan is a country created by, and for the majority of its past governed by, foreign administrations, but its Islamic character has remained a unifying element for its diverse population.

John Soboslai

See also 'Abbāsid Empire; al Qaeda; Anti-Americanism; Communism; Islamic State; Islamism (Political Islam); Mongol Empire; Mughal Empire; Pakistan; Sunnī Islam; Taliban

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AFRICA

In Africa, more than 1,000 languages are spoken across a landmass that holds 53 nations, countless terrains, and diverse cultural practices, ethnolinguistic groups, and religious worldviews. Though Christianity, Islam, and African Traditional Religion (ATR) are the three predominant religions of Africa, Rastafarianism, Hinduism, Black Judaism, Cargo Cults, and multifarious new religions creatively exist and persist in pockets across the continent. While stereotyping often presents Africa and Africans monolithically as part of a primordial, unchanging past, in reality, Africa and its people are continually transforming, influencing, and creatively adapting to modern challenges, global interchange, and cultural interactions. As part of the global community, Africa's people affect and are affected by trade, national debts, technological advancements, health reform, industry, and governmental sanctions. Global economic processes interplay and transform, on a local level, social interactions, religious ideologies, educational practices, consumer preferences, and daily activities. As access to electricity, clean running water, and substantive nutrition becomes more available to larger populations, Africa's potential role as a significant player within the global market and transnational cultural relations exponentially increases. This entry discusses the social impact of different religious worldviews; slavery, colonization, and the formation of nations and governments; the global society; globalization and technology; the religions of Africa; and cultural practices and competing values on the continent.

Social Impact of Religious Worldviews

Because for many Africans, the sacred is imbued in everyday life, fiscal concerns, emotional well-being, spiritual developments, and material realities are not just interconnected but dependent on one another. As conversions to Christianity rapidly expand in West, Central, and South Africa and Islam continues to have a stronghold on many North, West, and East African countries, the ways in which these religious traditions are embraced, interpreted, and practiced within Africa society must be recognized as filtered through lenses that

generally honor the fusion between material manifestations and spiritual realities. Because of this holistic interrelationship between the invisible and visible worlds, religious traditions often become integrated with farming practices, market vending, trade relationships, family units, social ceremonies, and daily functions.

Understanding this vital connection forces the impact of religious traditions to be placed on the same ideological table as the impact of global factors on Africa's economy. It becomes relevant to examine not only the philosophies of religious traditions across Africa but also global factors that shape day-to-day realities and decision-making processes: globalization and technology, historical factors such as slavery and colonization, government and economy, education, health, environmental factors, migration patterns, and social concerns.

Colony, Government, Economy

Africa's most recent postcolonial development, and, in turn, its place within the economic world order and global market, has been affected by several key historical factors: slavery, colonization, and the formation of nations and governments.

Brief Early History of Africa

The earliest human descendants scientifically discovered inhabited the African subcontinent; crude tools such as hand axes have been dated back from 60,000 to 1 million years ago in West Africa, implying a long human presence; rock paintings in Namibia have been dated back 27,000 years; decorative pottery dating back nearly 10,000 years has been found across North and West Africa. By 3000 BCE, cattle herders and hunter-gatherer communities predominated in West Africa; by 2000 BCE, hierarchical communities developed, with flourishing examples of art and kingship present among the Egyptians, the Nok of Nigeria (500 BCE), and empires and city-states of the 8th to the 15th century CE, including the Songhai State, the Soninke Kingdom of Ghana, the Mali Empire, the Benin Kingdom, and the Yoruba and Hausa city-states.

Several ancient Egyptian and Roman records, as well as Muslim travelers like Ibn Battuta, refer to

powerful empires and city-states across northern, western, and eastern Africa engaged in inter-African trade and trade relations with the Mediterranean world hundreds of years prior to the transatlantic slave trade and European colonization of Africa. This is significant to note because many Western scholars, from early historians to Hegel, inaccurately believed that Africa had no history or global interface prior to 15th-century European interests promoting continental domination.

Many early Christian scholars, or patricians, such as Origen and Augustine, wrote theological arguments interpreting Christian doctrine, canonical orthodoxy, and biblical legitimacy while residing in North Africa. Ethiopia, which had a strong Jewish presence from the time of the Queen of Sheba, converted as a nation to Christianity in the first centuries of the Common Era. While Christianity and indigenous traditions predominated in North Africa prior to Islam, by the 9th to the 10th century, Islam had spread across the Sahara and Sahel, with Islamic libraries and scholastic centers established in places such as Niger, Nigeria, and Mali as early as the 13th century. Mansa Musa, the Islamic ruler of the Mali Empire from 1307 to 1332, stands out in history: Accompanied by 8,000 men and several tons of gold in 1324 to 1325, Mansa Musa went on hajj, the Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca (Makkah), carrying so much wealth with him that his gifts of gold to other rulers were purported to have disrupted their local economies.

In the 15th century, the Ife (Nigeria) and Benin kingdoms, recognized for metal casting, indigenous traditions, and wealthy, powerful shrines, began trading relationships with the Dutch and Portuguese as early as 1432. By 1517, however, the Spanish had instituted the slave trade from West Africa to the Caribbean; by 1617, the Dutch West India Company entered the lucrative slave trade; and by the 1780s, Britain became the leader in the slave trade, which at its peak in the late 18th century shipped off an estimated 70,000 enslaved Africans per year. Throughout this process, African kingdoms such as the Oyo and Asante states increased in wealth and power through arbitrating the slave trade with European merchants in the 17th and 19th centuries, respectively. It was not uncommon for Christian missionaries and explorers from Europe to establish contact with African communities as a vehicle for obtaining wealth;

conversion and the claiming of natural resources often went hand in hand. In Central Africa, for example, Portuguese explorers, who arrived on the Gabonese coast in 1470, converted the royal court of Kongo to Christianity in 1491 and began the exportation of enslaved Africans to the Americas by 1520.

Slavery and Colonization

The impact of the trans-Saharan and transatlantic slave trades is still present on the continent today. The numbers of Africans enslaved is difficult to calculate, since they include not only those who survived the capture and sea voyage to be sold into slavery in the New World but also those who died in the process through warfare, capture, and transport associated with slavery. It is estimated that between the 16th and 19th centuries anywhere between 12 and 25 million Africans were involved in the New World triangular trade. West and Central African communities suffered the most human loss through death, regional disputes over slave trade power dynamics, and forced emigration. West African port cities such as Elmina held European outposts that became the gateway of transport to the Caribbean and the Americas.

In 1807, Britain outlawed the slave trade to British colonies, later enacting the outlaw of the entire institution of slavery in British colonies in 1834 to 1838, which prompted other European nations with Caribbean colonies to follow suit. Surrounded by the North-South controversy and a brutal Civil War, slavery in the United States was not entirely outlawed until 1865; Cuba and Brazil protected the institution of slavery legally until 1886 and 1888, respectively. Because of the contraband demand for slave labor in the Americas, the trans-Saharan slave trade remnants in East Africa, and the established local practice of regionalized enslavement, many African nations upheld continental slavery as a lawful practice until the turn of the 20th century. Mauritania did not officially abolish slavery until 1981.

The 19th-century outlaw of the slave trade within the New World, which was reliant on the labor resources of Africa's able-bodied individuals, was shortly followed by the 1884 to 1885 Berlin Conference on Africa, held for European nations to divvy up African landmasses into colonies. At the

conference meetings, African leaders were noticeably absent: The purpose was not to engage with African leaders civilly but, rather, to create peaceable treaties between the war-torn European nations struggling for increasing power within a highly competitive world market. Seeking for “untapped” resources, European nations arbitrarily cut the African continent into distinct colonies, for the most part regardless of long-established regional and ethnic boundaries.

In the “scramble for Africa,” France, Britain, Belgium, Portugal, and Germany became the primary players deciding the future of Africa based on its regional economic viability, access to natural resources, and potential for colonial capital. Nearly every African nation today, excluding Ethiopia, was forcibly colonized by a European nation from the late 19th to mid-20th century. Dispersed African peoples were more easily quelled; strong states such as the Asante in present-day Ghana and the Sokoto Caliphate in present-day Nigeria upheld battle and massive resistance to the attempts at European control.

This process of European colonization disrupted local and regional hierarchies and established new systems of government as well as transforming laws, global relations, market input, urban development, the African elite, vocational opportunity, social displacement, and trade relations in the 20th century. African soldiers, fighting under colonial banners, significantly affected the outcomes of World War I and II. French Algeria and southern Africa had the largest population of European colonists; much of West and Central Africa was predominantly ruled from the Metropole.

The era of African independence began in 1957, when the British-ruled Gold Coast became the independent nation of Ghana. Francophone West and Central African colonies followed Britain’s model and became independent in 1960, closely correlating to the timeline of the civil rights period in America and the independence movements in the Caribbean. The Organization of African Unity was founded in 1963 in Ethiopia with 32 newly formed African nations joining, promoting Kwame Nkrumah’s early visions of Pan-Africanism. In nations such as South Africa, which initiated a system of apartheid in 1948, colonization did not technically end until 1994, when the ANC’s (African National Congress) Nelson Mandela was elected president after being imprisoned for 27 years.

In the postcolonial environment, many nations experiencing social and political upheaval have worked hard to transform peacefully. The formerly war-torn South Africa has shown how to nationally facilitate reconciliation among the discontented parties postapartheid through the success of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Assisting in peace matters across the continent, the African Union (formerly the Organization of African Unity) consists of 53 nations and aids in humanitarian, political, financial, social, health, and border issues. Ten Muslim nations in northern and eastern Africa are also regionally affiliated to the Arab League, founded in 1945.

While some humanitarian organizations have pointed to problems in Africa with questionable elections, voter intimidation, and ballot miscounting, there has also been a steady rise in women leaders and government officials, such as Liberia’s 24th president, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. Access to education, including postsecondary, trade, technical, medical, and university schooling, has become more readily available to the general populace as initiatives foster access for women and rural communities. Microcredit loans are also enabling more start-up small businesses.

Several nations in the past decade have created government-issued national insurance programs, which have been moderately to highly effective in decreasing infant mortality rates and making health care more affordable en masse. For the majority of citizens, however, stipends for retirement, unemployment, medical leave, welfare, or disaster coverage are rare, making community relations critical to social advancement and stability in times of crisis or illness. Families must band together for economic reliance, meaning that the healthy and able often support the weak and infirm. This social network in rural areas makes individual social advancement more difficult, because greater wealth invites further responsibility to extended family members in need. This communal reliance is reflected in the South African phrase *ubuntu*, meaning “I am because we are, and we are because I am.”

Africa and Global Society

At the beginning of the 21st century, Africans have encountered and engaged in many acts of globalization that have significantly affected choice in

livelihoods, styles of dress and music, modes of transport, types of communication, available materials for trade and consumption, as well as tools that promote access to healthier styles of living.

Global Market Exchange

Western and Asian products flood into African markets and become a part of country, regional, and village life transactions. From used clothing to plastic products, car parts, eating utensils and cookery, medicines and food, Nike shoes, and Coca-Cola, disparate items from across the planet are becoming more readily accessible and available for individual and community use. Regionally consumed and locally interpreted, global products are often transformed, refurbished, and used for localized means and purposes: Used tires become sandal soles; oil drums store uncooked beans, rice, and grains for market vendors; wool hats become symbolically reidentified with particular garb for religious initiations; glass soda bottles are reused as storage for local perfumes and gasoline; and plastic labels and telephone wires are refashioned into stylish bags and bowls. When money is scarce but services and products are desired and needed, ingenuity creates a number of new, viable items that match social interest and the local economy.

Glocalization

As the promotion of global trade has enabled dialogue between rural communities and world capitals, cooperatives that create clayware, jewelry, art products, soaps, cloths, stoneware, and utilitarian products for the benefit of rural development are steadily on the rise. The promotion and success of these groups is reliant on global exchange. Microcredit loans have also proved beneficial to rural and urban communities. In areas where illiteracy is prevalent among women, it is often difficult for female traders to receive traditional loans from banking institutions. Working cooperatives enacted locally but engaged with a global playing field change the way global actors are perceived and community members are locally received.

Farming Production and Export

Local raw products such as shea butter, tea, cocoa, bauxite, palm oil, gasoline, and coffee are

exported to nations in Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and the Americas. The fiscal value of monoculture farming products, such as peanuts and cacao, are often based on pricing models regulated on a global scale. Living on limited incomes, small farmers in rural areas are often forced to sell to transnational monopolies listing global pricings below production value cost. Creating this overreliance on monoculture farming products, shown to be economically fluid within the global market, can cause societal disturbance and overwhelming bouts of poverty in communities depending on an individual product's success.

Industrial Development and Product Access

Countries such as South Africa and Libya are taking the lead in African intercontinental trade and development. South African companies, from beer brewers, to clothing manufacturers, to building developers, have become the leading marketers presenting Westernized products and models of consumption to a growing African audience. Malls, supermarkets, and high-end retail shops have sprouted rapidly in the past 5 years across West African capitals. Whereas a decade ago many global products were unavailable to African patrons, today in most capitals nearly any marketable item, from foodstuffs to entertainment, to luxury watches, to computers, is available to well-financed African consumers and expatriates, if only they are willing to pay for the product's convenience and accessibility.

Globalization and Technology

With increasing access to Western and Asian consumables, scholars and communities alike discuss the impact of global products with competing value systems on African transnational exchange, regional development, and discussions of cultural capital through examining how local traditions interact with business models of multinational expansion.

Shifts in Technological Advancement

At the end of the 20th century, many places in Africa had few access points to telephone landlines, making global communications for the

majority limited to calling booths and traveling to major ports of business for global transactions. By 2007, however, many African nations skipped the process of landline development entirely, moving directly to cell phone usage, which requires less infrastructure and is more technologically practical. This has meant that many rural communities, unaccustomed to affordable phone access, have become or are in the process of becoming hotbeds for cell phone usage and the opening of Internet cafés.

With greater access to cell phones, CDs, DVDs, radio, the Internet, and television, news outlets are projecting world stories into local homes. Homes made of clay and cement, without running water, and with only sporadically working electricity can have residents that have access to the Internet and Shakira's latest platinum album on their iPhone. Nollywood, Nigeria's booming movie industry, reigns over visual entertainment over the entire continent. Music conglomerates such as MTV Africa, projecting Rhianna's music videos from movie screens into city clubs and university nightlife, promote Western-produced music as a global standard for audio entertainment. Radio stations across sub-Saharan Africa present a combination of locally performed music and transnational televangelical missionaries preaching for the listener's salvation. Internet cafés can provide access to anything: family members' e-mails across the globe, local single's groups formed online, job sites, pornography, political blogs, nongovernmental organizations and scholastic opportunities, world media, Internet-based universities, and medicinal advice published in the latest scientific weekly. Without the paced induction of technology into daily realities, the consequences of increases in telephone usage, TV watching, Internet browsing, and computer reliance have for many African communities remained a subject yet to be determined.

Impact of Technological Change

The recent increase of technology, mobility, media, and communications across the continent has invited a whole new way for many Africans to engage in global dialogue. For example, rural communities that only 40 years ago developed their first Western-style schools, 20 years ago received access to clean running water, 15 years ago had

minimal access to electricity, 10 years ago had phone booths a bus ride away, 8 years ago had access to motorcycles, 6 years ago gained access to workable roadways, 4 years ago had access to cell phones, 2 months ago had access to the Internet, and 1 week ago had access to iPods are sure to bring new innovations, market products, and social expectations tomorrow and the next day. As technological advancement invites more opportunity for individual and collective development, social obligation and community function will have to shift to match the adoptive change.

For example, with radio as an accessible medium for nearly all Africans, regardless of class status or education level, grassroots movements and global initiatives can be better publicized, promoted, and supported across rural and urban communities.

Because battery-charged radios and cell phones are becoming more affordable, millions of rural dwellers are engaging in localized global exchange through a newfound awareness of economic and social opportunity. As other vehicles of communication, such as newspapers and the Internet, become more accessible to the majority of Africans across economic lines, an increase in dialogue, engagement, and interrelationship with global partners and communities will have a greater effect on local businesses, farmers, traders, and mothers as well as on country GDPs, international trade deficits, and national growth and development.

Modes of Transport

Air transport throughout Africa is becoming increasingly more available; whereas capital cities used to be the only transport hubs, and travel across African nations used to include a stopover in Amsterdam or London, today stable nations have transcontinental planes and daily regional flights. While African air travel is constantly improving, the steep prices limit flight usage to the elite, the tourist, and the expatriate. Conversely, motor transport, including privately owned cars, publically run buses, and motorcycles for hire, has become much more accessible to the average African citizen.

As in Asia, motorcycles have become highly sought after commodities as quick, affordable vehicles capable of traversing unpaved rural paths and small town roads. For villagers with undeveloped

roadways, access to motorcycles and other off-road vehicles enables their products' entry into entirely new markets of trade, formerly inaccessible due to their being beyond walking distance. Because Africa has almost no intracontinental production of motor vehicles, nearly all modes of transportation must be internationally tariffed and shipped, making costs of new and used cars often exorbitant according to U.S. standards. As more used vehicles saturate Africa's transport market, lowered costs will make gas-run vehicles more available for the masses. While enabling more trade, further development, and easier travel, poorly kept roads and overcrowded vehicles have led to increases in fatal transport accidents, pollution, and theft.

Religions of Africa

Across Africa, very little atheism exists; regardless of tradition, there is almost a unanimous belief in a higher power governing and regulating daily life and communal relationships.

Islam

The Muslim calendar began in 622 CE, when Prophet Muhammad settled in Medina. By the late 600s, most of North Africa had already converted to Islam, and by the late 700s, Islam had spread as far south as present-day Senegal. Islam traveled from northern and eastern Africa to western Africa through trade relations. From the 10th to the 13th century, Berbers and Muslim Arabs began converting the royalty of the Sahel, such as the Ghanaian and Malian kings. Many kings and traders practiced both local and Islamic traditions. Islamic missionary activities for the general populace in West Africa became relatively successful from the 13th to the 17th century, followed by nearly 60 years of Fulani-led holy wars (1804–1862). In the 16th and 17th centuries, the Arabic *Timbuktu Tarikhs* recorded West African history, showing that postconversion, many African Muslims went on pilgrimage to Mecca and returned with renowned scholars and lawyers to help rebuild cities such as Timbuktu as centers of Islamic learning. The late 1800s showed an increase in citizen conversions to Islam, with a steady number of followers converting as Muslim schools, services, and

businesses became greater strongholds within the community. Today, North Africa is almost entirely Muslim, and approximately two thirds of West Africans profess a Muslim faith, with the more northerly regions holding higher percentages of Muslims than the southern regions, which are more Christian.

In West Africa, forms of Islam called *Kharijism* and Sufism predominate. Practicing Sufis are part of a contemplative, mystical tradition. Kharijism is considered more democratic and less conservative than Islamic practices in the Middle East and East Africa, with veils rarely required and many Muslims peacefully and harmoniously living among Christian and ATR practitioners. In locales where mosques are established, the call to prayer is publicly announced across the region five times a day, eating restrictions are adhered to during Ramadan, alcohol is abstained from year-round, and the Five Pillars of Islam are faithfully followed.

Generally, Muslim men wear single-tone, two-piece tunics, and women wear loose print dresses with a head tie. While the Qur'an allows the practice of polygyny, a husband is required to adequately provide for his wives and children economically and love his wives equally, having no more than four wives in total—though having two wives is more common. Many West African Muslims combine local practices with Muslim beliefs. Robinson refers to this as the “Africanization of Islam” and the “Islamization of Africa.” For example, some Muslims may use amulets for protection with written script from the Qur'an or consult Muslim scholars for divination sessions. Countries such as Nigeria, which instituted Shari'a law in six northern states in 2000 and 2001, conversely have stricter expectations for Muslim practitioners, including limiting female mobility and education, requiring veils, and promoting a stronger categorical distinction between Muslims and nonbelievers.

In contemporary East and North Africa, increasing militancy among Muslim groups has raised concern among Western nations. Chad and Sudan, for example, were on USAID's (U.S. Agency for International Development) 2009 CPC (Critical Priority Country) list. The Horn of Africa has maintained strong ties for more than a millennium with Muslim Indian Ocean trading networks and Arabian Peninsula social contacts, and today, it

remains a strategic area for rising insurgent movements across the Muslim world. Central Africa, comparatively, has had relatively little Muslim influence, with most practitioners following Christianity or local traditions. Mid-19th-century slave raids of Central Africans by East African Muslim traders, however, have remained in historical memory. In southern Africa, Muslims only account for about 1% of the population, many of whom are Asian immigrants.

Christianity

North Africa had been exposed to Christianity and the Mediterranean world since the religion's inception in the ancient Roman Empire at the turn of the Common Era. While widespread conversion to Christianity did not occur in North Africa, citizens traveling in the ancient world could be exposed to the tenets of Judaism, Christianity, the ancient Egyptian religion, indigenous practices from a variety of African communities, and to some extent Hinduism and Mesopotamian practices. Through trade routes and contacts, cultures were able to intermingle and hybridize, with knowledge of powerful gods and traditions often being transferred along with material exchanges.

Because many African communities used oral histories rather than written narratives, speculation ensues about exactly how much North and East Africa influenced and were influenced by the Mediterranean, Persia, and Arabia. Nevertheless, by the 10th to 16th centuries CE, trade networks existed between East Africa and Arab and Indian traders. Indian and Chinese traders had dealings in India, and Indonesian sailors traded with Madagascar and central-eastern Africa, meaning that ideas and products were exchanged across multiple continents. Portuguese merchants had arrived at the Cape of Good Hope and Central and West Africa by the early 1500s, with the Dutch, British, and Germans later building trading forts, slave castles, and mission stations.

While some royalty and scattered citizens across Africa converted to Christianity as early as the late 1400s, up through the 1800s, Christianity was not a major religious factor in Africa until increased European and American missionary activities were widely propagated by Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian, Methodist, and Baptist denominations

in the late 1800s. Formerly enslaved Africans in Britain and the Americas began missionization when resettlement began in West African Liberia (1847) and Sierra Leone (late 1700s). By the 1930s, Christianity was practiced by less than a quarter of Africans. However, by the time of African independence from colonization in the 1960s, African independent churches (AICs), run by Africans and catering to community concerns, became popular and enabled locally interpreted Christian doctrines to be widely practiced. Post-Vatican II practices also promoted a more inculturated form of Catholicism that invited African communities to hear and interpret liturgy in their native tongue.

Many White-led mission stations brought the idea of Christianity to African communities, but few have strong impacts on current Christian practitioners. Most Protestant churches use African styles of music and worship and are more charismatic than their European or American counterparts. Healing sessions, anointings, overnight prayer sessions, dance, and glossolalia (speaking in tongues) are common practices in many African churches. In Ghana, for example, in 50 years, Christianity has moved from being a minority religion to the predominating practice.

For many Africans, despite inculturated practices, Christianization is associated with Westernization and education, which is associated with wealth and social betterment. For some, this can mean that with conversion comes an expected de-Africanization or complete social isolation from African indigenous practices, sometimes imposing a dual reality or competing religious and social identities. Protestant and AIC movements today generally preach the gospel of prosperity, with global evangelists earning converts through promised get-rich-quick schemes. African Catholicism is seen by the Vatican as a burgeoning hope for the global future, with African priests and practitioners holding steady or increasing as European counterparts steadily decline.

African Traditional Religion

Indigenous religious practices have historically been stigmatized by missionaries and converts as pagan, demonic, heathen, and a form of witchcraft. What was misunderstood was often deemed

as superstitious, rising from an assumed ignorance or a form of primitivism. This oversimplification came from groups using patronizing colonial models to justify imprisonment, enslavement, and degradation of African peoples: Dehumanization was often necessary to validate the social mandate for acquiring African labor, land, and resources for powerful people abroad. It is no surprise that the history of Africa is often overlaid with Europe's political history, for it was inaccurately assumed by influential philosophers that prior to engagement with Europeans, Africa was ahistorical. Where linear histories were left unrecorded, socially carried oral histories were denied scholastic relevancy. Because systems of analysis and ways of being were different from European standards, African modes of thought were presumed subpar at best and nonexistent at worst: These misperceptions have produced more than a century of Eurocentric research validating the colonial manifesto.

Many Western-trained 19th-century anthropologists assumed that Africans had no religion because there was often no identified name specifically tied to localized practice. However, it soon became clear that specific titles were unnecessary within a worldview where life encompasses the full spectrum of religious practices: Life is religion, and religion is life. ATR or African Indigenous Religion is literally the air you breathe: all-encompassing, life supporting, and societally nourishing. Everything is interconnected: plants, animals, peoples, spirits, ancestors, the weather, and nature. ATR has been termed polytheist, pantheist, panentheist, animist, and monotheist, depending on the writer, the era, and the perspective. Diffused monotheism is probably the most accurate description, as many traditions and locales have multiple divinities or spirit intermediaries that work on behalf of a Supreme Being or a highly esteemed deity that is hierarchically powerful. Some traditions have one or few divinities, while others have countless; ancestors play a greater or lesser role depending on a community's ritualization of the life cycle process.

Whereas in Abrahamic traditions exclusionary practices are promoted through standardized forms of ideological orthodoxy, backed by written documents classified as sacred texts, African traditions are more associated with orthopraxis: Right

action and positive results lead to a communally accepted response. Rather than tenet based, African philosophies are performance based.

Indigenous traditions generally include ancestors and the not yet born as a part of community life and decision-making processes. Clear distinctions between the visible and invisible worlds do not exist when the dead can be invoked by mediums and ancestors can speak to the living through dreams, prophecies, and visions. Local beliefs and practices are constantly adapting and transforming new images, traditions, and materials to match current community needs and social interests. ATRs embrace multiple elements from competing traditions when methods and potential outcomes are viewed as compatible and socially valuable. As communities trade, transform, migrate, and adapt, hybrid forms of beliefs and practices are adopted and initiated. When conversions to Christianity and Islam occur, many of the cultural practices associated with ATR often still remain for the practitioner, as it is almost impossible to completely separate religious tenets from communal praxis. Today, while pockets of ATR practitioners remain across the continent, Togo, Benin, Liberia, Burkina Faso, Guinea-Bissau, and ethnolinguistic groups across Central Africa have the highest percentage of ATR followers in self-designating polls.

In most indigenous worldviews, time is measured cyclically, and lifetimes are malleable, with once-living ancestors and the not yet born (or the rebirthed) serving as guardians of and liaisons between spiritual forces and humanity. Life cycles and time are viewed cyclically rather than linearly. While African Christians and Muslims have reinterpreted this worldview to match ideological criteria, the spiritual realm is still viewed as a significant factor in daily decision making.

Style Aesthetics and Signification

Facial markings, styles of dress, and worn accessories can indicate a person's religious affiliation, societal status or cult affiliation, spiritual connections, community roles, birth order, and vocation. These external modes of spiritual and social recognition foster right action and relationship by visually presenting an individual's interior state of being to the community.

Supernatural Powers

Secret societies based on competing trials or rites of passage often connect to community expectations that with knowledge comes power and with power, social responsibility. With energetic formations often holding a neutral status, able to be manipulated for good or ill based on the personal user of such powers, out of respect and awe of the powers themselves, and the understanding of the destructive nature of such powers in the wrong hands, esoteric practices remain hidden because of their associative power. Tradition becomes distorted into a form of witchcraft when natural and supernatural energetic forces are mismanaged or used with ill intentions by an individual or group for personal gain or harmful purposes.

Witchcraft

Fears of witchcraft abound, not because they are superstitious remnants of old practices but rather as an expression of modern global times: As spiritual powers become diffused and transferable through market means based on capital costs, rather than through more traditional means of spiritual apprenticeships, the ability for powers to be mismanaged steadily increases in probability. In a system that acknowledges the power of the invisible, manipulation of energetic forces (divinities, individual spirits, and the dead) is seen as a real threat, and hence fears of witchcraft often remain among African Christian and Muslim communities, despite religious conversion. Christian and Muslim converts often proclaim that ATR in its entirety is a form of witchcraft, while practitioners of ATR clearly distinguish between witchcraft and tradition based on a person's intention of malice. Because converts must often publicly revoke prior traditional practices, it is not uncommon for the services of ATR priests and diviners to be used in secret by converts still seeking ancestral advice or for AICs to incorporate elements of local traditions within communally interpreted Christian practices.

Cultural Practices and Competing Values

As cultures intermingle, globalization blossoms, and migration adapts, socio-religious conversions continue to shape the community makeup of values

and peoples. Traditional customs, rituals, and regional histories persistently transform as influentially contributing factors to communal practices and social norms.

Art and Culture

Cultural ingenuity in dance, music, and the arts is promoted from an early age in children. This is reflected in the continent's rich compilation of oral history, proverbs, epic poetry, and song, held within the knowledge tapestry of community historians, griots, bards, priests, and kings. This is also reflected in the utilitarian and social arts, as seen in the production of beads, pottery, sculpture, painting, clothing, brassware, musical instruments, and body adornment. It is not merely the philosophies and theoretical ideologies of the continent that affect the religious practices of modern African peoples but also the practically applied arts, dance, storytelling, and ritual performances that help construct and interpret the sociopolitical, economic, and cultural realities that shape today's Africa for tomorrow's global citizen.

African and European Philosophical Differences in Worldview

Throughout the Enlightenment in Europe and North America, the Cartesian distinction promoting a duality between body and mind, material and spiritual, physical and invisible changed not only the way individuals encountered religion and the divine but also their relationship to the world at large. This promotion of a spirit-mind dichotomy did not hold sway in Africa.

While urbanization in Africa has steadily been on the rise since the early 1960s, and industrialization projects continue to expand across the continent yearly, 18th-, 19th-, and 20th-century European philosophical influences have either been theoretically recognized across Africa, but interpreted with local specificity, or disregarded entirely as an effective way of engaging modern African realities. Whereas European scientists of the Industrial Revolution discouraged relying on invisible forces or realities that could neither be measured nor analyzed within a controlled environment, many Africans from Christian, Muslim, and indigenous backgrounds have continued to

use invisible realms, seen as an extension of the material world, to discern important decision-making processes. While American preachers have historically stressed spiritual purity separate from the guises and pitfalls of material riches, Africans have often seen material wealth as a visible sign of a spiritual world blessed with ancestral or divine assistance. Whereas early-19th-century European financial institutions and businesses began to promote urban living and factory production, leaving workers disconnected from both the land and its produce, Africans who were not enslaved, and remained on the continent, have until recently lived and worked in predominantly rural environments reliant on subsistence farming, community responsibility, and local production.

Competing Values and Philosophies

Africa in modernity is faced with interpreting globally competing values in both local and regional contexts. Conflicting ideologies and practices affect the day-to-day living standards and expected familial and communal social responsibilities. Discussions include debate around the merits of nuclear family units versus extended family compounds, individual capital investment versus community advancement, urban versus rural dwellings, traditional courts versus local and national justice enforcement, and marital polygyny versus expectations of monogamy. President Jacob Zuma of South Africa, for example, has been criticized in the international media for siring 20 children with five wives, marrying his last wife while in office after paying *lobola* (“bride price”), as is the traditional custom.

Generally, an increase in Western- or Islamic-style education is a corollary of religious conversion. As literary rites of passage challenge the familiar social makeup of community hierarchy, dissonance between youth and parents arises based on language usage and cultural difference. Schools often teach colonial languages, while elders may speak only local languages. When religious conversions imply not only spiritual connotations but also social and institutional promotions of an attitudinal change, citizens on individual and collective levels are faced with competing sectors of power relations. As an example, the most skilled and well-educated Africans often seek opportunities by emigrating to more economically developed

countries, a phenomenon often referred to as brain drain. Tensions can run especially high when traditional expectations of economic support for communal advancement are met by Africans in the diaspora with competing models of economy, such as capitalism, that promote individual interests over community gain.

Armed with multiple messages and mediums for interpretation, issues such as the selling of family land, inheritance rights for women, the role of children as caregivers, the practice of sorcery, and the interpretation of socially stigmatizing issues such as AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome) and homosexuality often lead to competing national debates and conflicting policy interests. Western medicine and traditional healing methods using diviners, healers, and herbalists can also present incongruous prescriptions, though often, for the patient, these two practices work hand in hand. Environmental, educational, emigrational, medicinal, social, and political messages are all affected by global pressures and religio-cultural change. As religious values across Africa transform, so do its peoples.

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See also Divination; Indigenous Religions; Missions and Missionaries; New Religions in Africa; North Africa; Postcolonialism; Vodou

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AGING

The challenges of aging, from midlife to end of life, involve far more than just shifting demographics. In a socio-religious context, they involve the redefinition of individual and collective identity and self-worth. As many societies worldwide become increasingly older, the aging life cycle is emerging as a social imperative addressed, at least in part, by religious praxis. As people experience their inevitable progression from youthful exuberance to middle age, to aged frailty, their socially defined sense of belonging and perception of life's meaning change. Humans are confronted by mortality, and within their social systems, they are forced to process their conceptions of weakness, physical/mental deterioration, and death.

The issue of aging is different depending on the cultural and religious context. In areas of the world dominated by traditional Hindu, Buddhist, Islamic, and indigenous cultural traditions, old age is often accepted as a respected and honorable stage of life.

In many of these parts of the world, the average population age is quite young, and elderly people are accorded a respected role in life. In more urban areas of these parts of the world and in the modern urbanized West, aging can be a more painful social process. In both cases, however, religious belief and association can play a positive role. This entry will focus on the problems of the modern West, for which Christianity and Judaism are the primary religious cultural traditions.

There are several cultural, social, and systemic problems generated by the aging process. In many cultures—especially Western cultures—older people are segregated and rejected by societies that value youth, strength, outer beauty, and physical/mental prowess. Social rejection can lead to self-loathing and a sense that one is unwanted and clinging to a life without meaning. This feeling is exacerbated by the direct experience of physical human deterioration combined with the knowledge that all human life is moving toward a certain end. As one's limitations grow, life is progressively seen as more and more finite, and one's focus is on the triumphs—or in many cases shortcomings—of the past instead of hope for the future. Focusing on the past, acknowledging the loss of youth, and developing an increasingly real awareness of death can induce fear, guilt, shame, anxiety, and an overall loss of agency. A negative view of the self, one's vocation, and interpersonal relationships can cause older people to seek meaning in a transcendent reality.

Apart from the general effect aging has on Western society's conception of self-worth, other key familial and cultural factors contribute to the greater perception of the older self. Some cultures revere the elderly as wise and having worth, not as reminders of inevitable physical and mental decay deserving isolation and abandonment. Within the economically focused, capitalist Western cultures, however, the elderly are sometimes seen as liabilities due to their lack of productivity. Also, in these cultures, the family unit is changing. It is generally not as nuclear, predictable, stable, or geographically confined as it was in years past. Because of these conditions, care for the aged tends to veer toward what is convenient and local—managed senior care—as opposed to supporting the proliferation of multigenerational households. Increasing numbers of older people form new “families” within retirement communities to combat loneliness, isolation,

and negative self-worth. In a dynamic, rapidly changing culture teeming with social upheaval and problematic social developments (crime, violence, general tumult, and war, to name a few), the pseudo-family can offer safety, refuge, acceptance, and peace.

Prior to attaining the socially defined and/or physically (visually) defined label *elderly*, many people in their 40s and 50s experience a “midlife crisis,” where they seek to recapture the vibrancy, self-assuredness, and social value they perceive as lost as their youth was lost. A midlife crisis can involve attempts to join a more appealing social circle; purchasing clothing, housing, or automobiles generally reserved for a younger crowd; and/or undergoing plastic surgery or making other attempts to slow, or even reverse, the physical aging process. The midlife crisis could also entail mental reordering, where people attempt to rewrite their personal history, creating a more interesting and exciting past in an effort to give themselves increased social value and possibly jump-start a better future. People usually seek solace when death seems close and increasingly real, and they often create alternate realities when the inevitability of dealing with their past, present, and ever-shortening future becomes overwhelming. They may seek to control and overcome the aging process, physical/mental/emotional uncertainty, a sense of legacy, and impending death. Humans often want to reverse the inevitability of time, which involves the loss of loved ones, the loss of socioeconomic roles/value, the loss of health and vitality, and the loss of an opportunity to leave a socially valued legacy. Aging can cause disillusionment, forcing the aged to engage in a coping mechanism. As social humans, most people need to feel a sense of agency over their surroundings and themselves.

An aging population achieves this agency in part through religion, which helps people make sense of the inevitabilities of life as time passes and aging becomes a glaring reality. As people realize that social values, goals, and means of achievement are all changing as their life cycle progresses, they often find solace in religious symbols, rituals, and myths. Transcendence is sought as the familiar withers away and is passed on to the next generation. A 78-year-old has a different sense of hope than an 18-year-old, and spirituality—which can involve meditation, liturgy, spiritual conversation/relationships, social action, or any other spiritual

pursuit—leads the aged toward a transcendent reality that lies in contrast to social alienation, disenfranchisement, and living on the social margin/periphery. Religious systems can also assist greatly as one copes with actual or impending loss, as one makes sense of the human condition, the inevitability of the human life cycle, and mortality.

Religion can provide meaning as death nears, because it can give significance to legacy, forgiveness, suffering, triumph, love, and family within life’s journey. The afterlife, a popular tenet of many religious systems, offers a new type of hope and rejuvenation when the aging process vanquishes the socially defined normative (youthful) sense of hope. As earthly expectations are lowered and one’s physical being is expected to decline, turning inward toward religion can enable a reidentification and a reintegration of the self, with value added. Faith is a means to defeat negative feelings, loneliness, regret, diminished self-worth, and isolation. Life, death, and all happenings in between are given significance through religion within a naturally and divinely ordered existence. Good and evil are explained, life is given meaning, legacy is defined by faith and devotion to others, and structure includes an aging humanity with inherent value. In sum, religious systems help people process current pain/loss/anxiety, provide hope, and comfort those moving toward illness and death.

Generally speaking, within religious communities, fear is addressed, strength is bestowed on the faithful, and the aged are desired, useful, and seen as powerful sources of wisdom and enlightenment (Odin, Zeus, Abraham, Noah, indigenous ancestors, etc.) worthy of honor and respect. The wise sage with a mature, informed, and valued existence, emanating experiential and spiritual cognizance, is seen as having infinitely more value than what is typically valued by earthly culture/symbol systems: physical aesthetics, productivity, and/or social status. Religious systems usually hold that there is an intrinsic human value that transcends social definition, where unconditional love is available from a divine or transcendent source and tangible platonic love abounds within the religion’s community. Each individual is unique and is seen as significant by the divine, and there is an inherent integrity in experience and the sharing of stories. Religious communities are intended to be attached and relational, not detached and isolated. Within a virtual or tangible religious community

of acceptance, change and progression happen for a reason, so fear of the future (and uncertainty, suffering, and death) may subside.

Religious systems offer images of reverence, celebration, growth, wisdom, and fulfillment in aging, which counter the images of isolation, decay, loss of physical and mental abilities, and inevitable loss abundant in secular societies. Since religions are generally not bound by time, aging and death can be viewed as the culmination of fulfilling a meaningful purpose on earth until the next (transcendent) chapter of the universal narrative begins, not as a tragic end to our vocation, responsibilities, or the sense of loving and being loved. There is a sense that time, which will progress no matter what humans do on earth, is not an enemy or a master over humans but an inevitability that brings one closer to the transcendent reality. Although aging with agency is difficult within many cultural/social contexts, it is the norm within religious value systems.

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See also Christianity; Death Ritual; Modernism; Postmodernism

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AHMADDIYA

Ahmaddiya is a new religious movement that originated as a sect of Islam. The Ahmaddiya movement was founded by the religious reformer Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (1835–1908) in the village of Qadian in the Punjab region of India. The movement became known as the Ahmaddiya movement after Prophet Muhammad's alternative

name. The movement started at the end of the 19th century as a reaction against what he regarded as the ignorance and narrow-mindedness of Punjabi Muslims. Having accepted the Muslim veneration of the old prophets, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad considered Krishna and Buddha as local prophets; he was acclaimed as the reformer of Islam (*Mujadid*) and the long-awaited Messiah and Mahdi. As the reformer of Islam in the 14th century of the Hejira era, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad preached against the jihad of the sword and the expensive hajj to Mecca (Makkah), suggesting instead the jihad of the pen and pilgrimage to Srinagar in Kashmir to visit the tomb of the local saint Yuz Asaf, believed by local people to be the true burial place of Jesus Christ. The Ahmaddiya movement started as Jamaat-e-Ahmaddiya in 1889. It received support from educated Punjabi Muslims, but due to a lack of wide public recognition, it developed into an Islamic sect. The movement also became an active Islamic missionary society.

After the death of the founder, the society was controlled by Mirza's khalif, or successor, Maulana Hakeem Noor-ud-Din (1841–1914). On his death, the Ahmaddiya movement split over the question of succession as well as over the personality of its founder. The Lahore-based Lahore Ahmaddiya movement considered Mirza Ghulam Ahmad the reformer of Islam and decided to follow the collective opinion of the board of senior members of the society. Other Ahmaddiyas followed a lineage of leaders, known as khalifs—direct descendants of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. This group considers Mirza Ghulam Ahmad to be the lesser prophet and believes in the revival of the institution of the khalifate. Both groups are active in missionary activity outside India, particularly in Europe, Africa, and America. Both groups are sometimes called Qadiani, after the headquarters of the founder of the movement, though many members of the Ahmaddiya movement consider it to be a derogatory term.

The 1947 division of India caused the division of territory of the Ahmaddiya's influence. The town of Qadian remained in India, while the city of Lahore became a provincial center of Pakistan. The fate of the communities in these two countries was different. In secularist India, the Ahmadis, or followers of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, are considered Muslims. In Pakistan, the Ahmadis initially received protection but soon became victims of a widespread anti-Ahmadiyya movement called

“*Khatm-e-Nabuwat*” (the “Last Prophecy” [of Prophet Muhammad]). In the 1980s, anti-Ahmadi laws technically prevented members of the Ahmaddiya community from calling themselves Muslims and praying in common mosques. Many Ahmadis were taken to prison for violation of this ban. Others emigrated to Great Britain and other countries. Other Muslim countries, including Indonesia, have enacted laws restricting the religious practices of Ahmaddiya followers. At present, the headquarters of the biggest Ahmaddiya group, known as Jamaat-e-Ahmaddiya, is situated in a London suburb called Islamabad. Branches of the movement are found in more than 180 countries.

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See also India; Indonesia; Islam; New Religions; Pakistan

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AKBAR (1556–1605)

Akbar, one of India’s greatest Mughal emperors, was touted as one of the most open to diverse religious points of view. But he also used this position of tolerance as a way of consolidating his imperial control over vast regions of the Indian subcontinent. His policy of *sulh-i-kul* (“universal tolerance”) did not discriminate against persons on the ground of religion. At the same time, Akbar’s thirst for theological knowledge was proverbial, and he participated in lively discussions with religious scholars from a variety of traditions.

Abul Fazl Allami (1551–1602), his court historian, enumerated the emperor’s divine right theory of kingship. The emperor was regarded as being *farri i-izdi* (“a light emanating from God”). The *mahzarnama* (“doctrine of infallibility”) was drafted in 1579 to contain the influence of religious leaders. The emperor was *Imam Adil* (“a just ruler”) with the title of *Mujtahid* (“having infallible authority”).

Akbar started a new religious practice called *Tauhid-i-Ilahi* (“divine monotheism”) or *Din-i-Ilahi* (“Divine Religion”) in 1582. It was not only a reflection of his liberal outlook and faith in eclecticism but also an expression of the absolute power of the emperor. The followers of Din-i-Ilahi had to carry a miniature portrait of the emperor in their turbans and pledged to sacrifice life as well as honor for him. It was not a new religion, and Akbar made it clear that he had not abandoned his own religion, Islam. The interpretation by Jesuit missionaries and orthodox mullahs (theologians guarding Islamic custom) had generated much confusion regarding the nature of Din-i-Ilahi. It did not have any priesthood, prophet, god, revealed books, or rituals. It was a conglomeration of elements such as monotheism, nature worship, mysticism, and philosophical doctrines from different religions. As an ethical system, it stressed virtues such as kindness, prudence, and piety. Vices such as lust, arrogance, and slander were to be abjured. Akbar introduced the *Ilahi* era in 1584, a solar calendar prepared by the royal astrologer Amir Fatehullah Seraji (d. 1588). Raja Birbal (1528–1586), a minister in Akbar’s court, was the first to embrace Din-i-Ilahi. It had only 19 followers and died a natural death after Akbar.

The Mughal state under Akbar was not a theocratic one. The criteria for appointment to high offices in his regime were based on merit, irrespective of a person’s religion. The *zimmis*, or non-Muslims, did not have to pay the discriminatory tax called *jizya*. The Emperor participated in Hindu festivals, and he did not force his Rajput Hindu queens to embrace Islam. The liberal religious outlook of the emperor was not universally appreciated, especially within the orthodox elements of Islam. One of the responses to Akbar was the rise of a conservative Muslim revivalism. The religious milieu of the Indian subcontinent witnessed remarkable changes under Akbar. The interaction between Hinduism and Islam resulted in changes in both religions. On the one hand, there was the liberalism promoted by Akbar, and on the other, there was conservatism in both the religions, partly in response to the liberal attitudes of the court.

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See also India; Islam; Islamic Modernism; Liberal Islam; Tolerance

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AL QAEDA

Al-Qa‘ida (al Qaeda) is a Sunni Islamist group that espouses a radical “jihadist Salafist” ideology and relies predominantly on terrorist tactics in its pursuit of a global Islamic supremacist agenda. The group is best known for its association with the highly destructive “suicide” terrorist attacks using hijacked passenger jetliners in New York City and Washington, D.C., on September, 11, 2001. Its history, organization, ideology, and operational objectives will be summarized below.

Historical Overview

Al-Qa‘ida’s origins can be traced to certain logistical organizations established in Peshawar, Pakistan, to recruit, transport, subsidize, house, and record the names of Arab and other Muslim volunteers who had flocked to Afghanistan during the 1980s to wage armed jihad against the “infidel” Soviet invaders—the so-called Afghan Arabs. The most important of these was the Maktab al-Khidamat li al-Mujahidin (MAK; Mujahidin Services Bureau), which had been established by the Palestinian ‘Abdallah ‘Azzam, the “imam of jihad,” and Usama bin Ladin, the scion of a

wealthy Saudi family of Yemeni origin, whose father, Muhammad, had built one of the largest construction firms in Saudi Arabia. After the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, ‘Azzam and bin Ladin decided to establish a “solid base” (*al-qa‘ida al-sulba*), both territorial and organizational, and thereby transform the Afghan Arabs into a kind of transnational Islamist fire brigade, which could be quickly sent to defend Muslims in various regions who were being attacked, occupied, or oppressed by infidel or “apostate” regimes. That, at least, was ‘Azzam’s initial conception, but over time, bin Ladin, together with veteran Egyptian jihadists from the *Tanzim al-Jihad al-Islami* (“Islamic Jihad Organization”), above all Ayman al-Zawahiri, developed a more grandiose vision for this newly formed jihadist “base,” which would henceforth constitute the vanguard (*tali‘a*) of a projected global jihadist insurgent movement that would focus on attacking the “far enemy” (*al-‘adu al-ba‘id*)—that is, the United States and its Western allies—rather than focusing on the “near enemy” (*al-‘adu al-qarib*), the local non-Muslim or apostate Muslim regimes that were allegedly oppressing Muslims if not waging a war to destroy Islam. This dispute over the proper role for al-Qa‘ida eventually led to a growing schism between bin Ladin and ‘Azzam, followed by the November 1989 car bomb assassination of the latter.

Thenceforth, bin Ladin and al-Zawahiri became the uncontested leaders of al-Qa‘ida, by then renamed *Qa‘idat al-Jihad* (“The Base of the Jihad”). Incensed by the Saudi regime’s reliance on American troops to oust Saddam Husayn’s forces from Kuwait in 1990 to 1991, bin Ladin increasingly began to denounce it as an apostate regime, which in turn caused him to become persona non grata within the kingdom and ultimately to lose his Saudi citizenship. He therefore opted to move the core of his al-Qa‘ida organization to Sudan, where he established various business ventures and forged tangible links with other jihadist organizations, both Sunni and Shi‘i. However, the increase in al-Qa‘ida-sponsored terrorist attacks caused the American government to apply enormous pressure on the Sudanese regime to expel the group from Sudan, and as a result, bin Ladin felt compelled to leave that country in 1996 and to move the core of his organization back to Afghanistan, which was by then largely under the control of the puritanical

Taliban. He then forged a close relationship with the Taliban leader Mullah ‘Umar, founded *al-Jabha al-Islamiyya al-‘Alamiyya li Jihad al-Yahud wa al-Salabiyyin* (the “World Islamic Front for Jihad Against Jews and Crusaders”) in 1998, established elaborate training camp complexes in Afghanistan where prospective mujahidin from all over the world could receive generalized or specialized instruction, and continued plotting and launching attacks against his “infidel” enemies abroad, such as the destructive August, 7, 1998, U.S. embassy bombings in Tanzania and Kenya. This phase culminated in the sponsoring, planning, and execution of the “planes operation” on “Blessed Tuesday,” that is, 9/11, which resulted in the collapse of the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in New York City and damage to a wing of the Pentagon on September 11, 2001, along with the deaths of nearly 3,000 people.

This attack prompted the U.S. government to respond militarily by invading Afghanistan to overthrow the Taliban regime and hunt down and kill bin Ladin and his lieutenants. Although this invasion quickly led to the collapse of the Taliban regime and the killing of many Taliban and al-Qa‘ida fighters in the course of military operations, the failure of the United States and its Afghan allies to capture or kill bin Ladin until 2011, or to interdict the retreat of hundreds of foreign jihadists across the border into the tribal frontier zone of Pakistan, where they soon established new safe havens, meant that the threat posed by al-Qa‘ida was not soon eliminated. However, bin Ladin and al-Zawahiri were forced to restructure their group inside Pakistan by establishing a more diffused and dispersed network. Bin Ladin was finally killed in a U.S. military raid on his hideout in Abbottabad, Pakistan, on May 2, 2011.

Organizational Structure

Al-Qa‘ida proper is a relatively small organization that is divided into two basic levels. First, there are a few dozen members of the *majlis al-shura* (“consultative council”), which is internally subdivided into several functional committees and effectively constitutes the strategic directorate or officer corps of the group. Second, al-Qa‘ida consists of somewhere between several

hundred and several thousand rank-and-file members who take their marching orders directly from leading figures in the *majlis al-shura* or their direct subordinates.

However, the terrorist threat posed by the group goes beyond the actual leaders and rank-and-file members of the al-Qa‘ida organization. First, al-Qa‘ida has established affiliations with a host of other Islamist terrorist organizations or factions, both within and outside the Middle East. These affiliated groups and factions have in part embraced al-Qa‘ida’s transnational jihadist agenda, including its emphasis on attacking the far enemy—that is, the United States. Second, after 2001, al-Qa‘ida also evolved from a hierarchically structured, relatively delimited organization with networked affiliates into the primary mouthpiece of an extremist ideological current that served to inspire hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of people across the Muslim world. Although only a small segment of this radicalized population will likely ever resort to terrorism, the result was an increase in the threat posed by alleged “self-starter” cells inspired by bin Ladin’s ideology, which seem at first glance to have few if any tangible organizational, operational, or logistical connections to al-Qa‘ida. However, this theory of “homegrown” or “leaderless” jihad has been overstated, since most of the successful jihadist terrorist attacks and elaborate terrorist plots in the West have thus far been linked either to “al-Qa‘ida Central” or to its official or unofficial regional affiliates. Even so, to the extent that al-Qa‘ida Central’s operational capabilities have been degraded by U.S. military actions in the Afghanistan-Pakistan region, and by the 2011 killing of bin Ladin, both al-Qa‘ida’s key regional affiliates and these homegrown groups may become more of a security concern.

Basic Ideological Tenets and Goals

The ideology of al-Qa‘ida—jihadist Salafism—is the most radical variant of contemporary Salafism, a series of diverse but interrelated ideological currents that all purport to follow the ostensibly pure Islamic doctrines and supposedly exemplary behavior of *al-salaf al-salih* (the “pious forefathers” of the faith)—that is, the generation of Muhammad and his companions (*sahaba*) and the two successive generations of early Muslims. The

globally oriented “jihadist Salafists” are actively pursuing an expansionist, imperialistic, and Islamic supremacist geopolitical agenda. Their primary goal, far from being rational, pragmatic, limited, and defensive, is utopian, quasi-apocalyptic, totalitarian, and bellicose: to unite all of the world’s Muslims into a single political community (*umma*), restore the glory and power of the medieval caliphate (or imamate), and wage “offensive jihad” against infidels until the entire non-Islamic world is brought under the control of an Islamic regime (*al-dawla al-islamiyya*) or Islamic order (*al-nizam al-islami*) governed by a strict, puritanical interpretation of the Shari‘a.

In his public statements, bin Ladin often sought to divert attention from or disguise al-Qa‘ida’s aggressive and expansionist underlying designs by emphasizing its relatively limited short-term objectives and seemingly legitimate grievances in an effort both to rally support from the Muslim masses and to foment divisions among the infidels. Yet even in their public propaganda statements, bin Ladin and al-Zawahiri regularly juxtaposed superficially rational rhetoric with theological imperatives that can only be said to “make sense” within an Islamic cultural and historical context that has long since been superseded. Indeed, even the most restrained and *proximate* demands of al-Qa‘ida and other global jihadist groups—the complete withdrawal of foreign military forces from “Muslim lands,” the abandonment of all Western support for apostate Muslim regimes and Israel, the elimination of all “corrupting” Western cultural influences from the *dar al-islam* (“Abode of Islam”), and the end of “infidel exploitation” of Muslim resources—are in large part nonnegotiable and therefore virtually impossible to achieve, whatever their moral merits or demerits might be.

Moreover, when one considers al-Qa‘ida’s long-term objectives, one has truly entered the realm of fantasy. The minimal objective of the global jihadists is to liberate all Muslim-majority territories that are currently occupied by hostile infidel military forces, including Palestine, Iraq, Afghanistan, Chechnya, Kashmir, southern Thailand, the southern Philippines, and “eastern Turkestan.” Their intermediate long-term objective is to recover all of the territory that was once under Muslim control but was then subsequently lost to infidel powers,

including Spain, Sicily and parts of southern Italy, a substantial portion of the Balkans, huge swaths of territory in Turkic Central Asia, all of northern India, and large segments of northwestern China. Their maximal long-term goal is the very same one promoted by the “rightly guided” caliphs (*rashidun*) and several later Umayyad, ‘Abbasid, and Ottoman rulers—to spread the word of Allah to the unbelievers (*kuffar*), by force if necessary, and ultimately to Islamize every corner of the globe at the expense of both the *ahl al-kitab* (“people of the book”—i.e., Jews and Christians in this context) and the “polytheists,” which in practice would amount to completely overturning and transforming the existing world order.

Preferred Operational Methods

Given their Manichean ideological division of the world into “righteous believers” and “evil unbelievers” and their grandiose long-term objectives, it is hardly surprising that al-Qa‘ida and affiliated global jihadist groups have from the outset favored the systematic application of the most extreme, ruthless, and brutal methods of violence, in particular an emphasis on carrying out spectacular, psychologically traumatic, and highly destructive mass casualty attacks against the “enemies of Allah.” Indeed, over the years, al-Qa‘ida’s basic operational methods for carrying out attacks have become fairly standardized: The launching of simultaneous mass casualty bombings conducted by self-styled “martyrs” that are designed to kill and maim as many people as possible, cause extensive physical damage, psychologically traumatize designated enemies, and rally or inspire supporters. These types of actions, at times carefully planned and well executed, have long constituted al-Qa‘ida Central’s “operational signature,” although there will undoubtedly be periodic tactical modifications or innovations in the future, perhaps involving the use of chemical or radiological agents. One of the group’s primary strategic objectives is to establish a secure jihadist base somewhere in the heartland of the Arab world as a platform from which to launch further terrorist attacks and territorial conquests. Another is to provoke infidel overreactions and military invasions of Muslim territories, which they hope will further serve to radicalize the Muslim masses. Hence, al-Qa‘ida will likely

continue to pose a significant asymmetric terrorist threat until its leaders and operational cadres have been destroyed or otherwise neutralized.

Jeffrey M. Bale

See also Islam; Islamism (Political Islam); September 11, 2001; Terrorism; War on Terrorism

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AL-AZHAR

Al-Azhar refers to a famous university and its associated mosque in Cairo, Egypt. The prestigious university is an important intellectual and religious center for the Arab Muslim world, and it is one of the world's oldest universities.

The mosque of Al-Azhar was built from 969 to 972 CE (358–361 AH), when the Shi'a Fātimids conquered Egypt and founded Cairo. Three years after the building of the mosque, it began to take on an academic nature, featuring seminars and readings on Islamic law. The university was officially founded in 998 CE. An explicitly Islamic establishment, most of its focus was on Qur'anic study and Islamic law and jurisprudence. Other areas of study were Arabic grammar, logic, Islamic philosophy, and Islamic astronomy. Although the university originally began in line with the Isma'ili Shi'a thinking of the Fātimids, it was changed to a Sunnī establishment in

the 12th century, when the Fātimids were overthrown. Sultan Saladin, the founder of the Ayyubid Dynasty, changed Al-Azhar's studies to accord with Shafi'i Sunnī Islam.

During the Mamluk period (1250–1517 CE), Al-Azhar became a shelter for many Muslim expatriate scholars from Andalusia and Central Asia. In the 14th and 15th centuries, the university thrived through its development and advancement of scientific progress. It was also a strong center for the study of mathematics, geography, and history. The university remained well-known throughout Ottoman rule and became Egypt's principal religious institution.

This flourishing scholarship was temporarily halted during the Egyptian revolution against the French occupation in 1798. Al-Azhar was at the center of the revolution's beginnings, serving as a meeting place and a political community for opponents of the occupation. But when the revolution broke out, the Grand Imam and the ulema of Al-Azhar closed the mosque and university due to their inability to carry out academic programs under those conditions. Studies were resumed 3 years later, when the French evacuated Egypt.

In 1961, the university was restructured by the Egyptian president Gamal Abdul Nasser. New secular departments were added, including medicine and engineering. A female faculty was also added for the first time, although women speakers had visited in recent years before that.

Today, Al-Azhar is considered by many to be the most prestigious school of Sunnī Islamic law, and it is one of the most well-respected universities of the Arab world. It offers training for secular professions and houses scholars of secular fields, particularly the sciences. However, it remains a primarily Islamic institution where only Muslims may study. Among its stated objectives is the propagation of Islamic religion and culture, as well as the Arabic language. For these purposes, Al-Azhar publishes a monthly magazine dealing with Islamic literature, law, history, and current news. Additionally, it is the home of a printing press for Qur'an printing. The mosque and university are headed by a Grand Imam with the title Shaykh Al-Azhar, and a committee of ulema serve there to judge questions of Islamic law and religion. The university library is also well-known, considered second only to the *Dar al-Kutub al-Misriyya* ("Egyptian House of

Books”) library in Egypt. Al-Azhar’s prestige has attracted scholars of many Arab countries and contributed to Egypt’s place as an important center in the Middle East.

Kristin Tucker

See also Egypt; Islam; Islamic Modernism; Middle East

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ALBANIA

Long considered Europe’s most isolated country, located next to the former Yugoslavia on the Adriatic Sea, Albania after the end of the Cold War became open to diverse cultural influences and global religious trends. With an ethnically homogeneous population of more than 3.6 million, the general estimates of religious diversity purport the population to be 70% Muslim, 20% Albanian Orthodox, and 10% Roman Catholic. These statistics, based on a pre-1944 census of questionable merit, misleadingly characterize the diversity of religious identification and adherence in what was the world’s only officially atheist country. Most Albanians retain an indifference toward religion, though many acknowledge some religious affiliation, at least as an ethnic marker if not as a lived category, but its role in people’s lives is developing dynamically.

Christianity established itself as the dominant religion at the beginning of the second century. By the end of the fourth century, the territory had come under the political authority of Byzantium and the ecclesiastical authority of Rome. This dual authority became more boldly demarcated by the 1054 schism, when Christians living in the south came under Constantinople’s control and those in the north maintained connection to the papacy. In the 14th century, Albania fell under Ottoman rule. Although the millet system allowed non-Muslims

to maintain their religious traditions, taxing differentials resulted in sizable pragmatic conversions to Islam. Despite this “acceptance” of Islam, while Albania was under Ottoman rule, some men would circumvent regulations by having two names: one Christian and another Muslim.

In 1912, Albania declared independence from the Ottoman Empire. As the Ottoman Empire came to an end and Atatürk’s reforms began to be implemented in Turkey, the leaders of the Bektashi Sufi Order (Shi’a) moved their headquarters to newly independent Albania. In 1944, however, communist partisans seized control of the country and initiated 46 years of xenophobic rule. In 1967, Enver Hoxha took draconian measures to emasculate groups that threatened his control base and banned religion. Under his rule, religion was suppressed more than anywhere else in the communist world.

Religious practice was allowed again in 1990, and in 1991, the country ended its self-imposed communist seclusion. Protestant missionaries rushed to “save” the atheist population, though their successes have been modest at best. Orthodoxy, Catholicism, Sunnī (Hanafi) Islam, and Bektashism remain the most locally identifiable religious groups, though the salience of these identities is quite elastic; some claim affiliation to affirm regional and political distinctions. Although many secular elites minimize religion’s importance, preferring to emphasize ethnic cohesion over religious affinity, regionalist agendas are taking on a religious identity, and religious indifference—colloquially characterized as tolerance—is being replaced by religio-political associations.

David W. Montgomery

See also Christianity; Croatia; Greece; Islam; Kosovo; Marxism; Ottoman Empire; Serbia

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AL-BANNA, HASAN (1906–1949)

Hasan al-Banna is most famous for helping launch the global movement of resurgent Islam in the 20th century by founding the Society of Muslim Brothers (*al-Ikhwān al-Muslimūn*) in Egypt in 1928. The Muslim Brotherhood began as a community-based organization for Islamic revival. Initially composed of a few close friends and followers who devoted themselves to study and worship, the Brotherhood quickly became a powerful political, social, and religious force in many parts of the Muslim and Arab worlds.

Banna, who at first taught students at a primary school by day and instructed their parents in religious matters by night, appreciated the value of education, though he never sought to join the ranks of Egypt's religious scholars. From an early age, Banna, son of the local imam, was more concerned with developing a practical and populist movement that endorsed—and enjoined—religious standards. He refused to accept what he saw as immoral Western influences on Egyptian politics and culture and declared them to be in direct conflict with his ideal of an Islamic society and its values. As an activist, Banna sought out others in the community and soon united them into the Young Men's Muslim Association (YMMA). Established in 1927, the YMMA was a reformist community under the leadership of religious authorities that aspired to return society to “true” Islam, unify Muslims throughout the world, stop the onslaught of Western culture, and ultimately reestablish the caliphate abolished by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. The YMMA worked toward these goals through the use of strategic methods and organizational structures that he would soon incorporate into the Muslim Brotherhood.

Due to Banna's skills in communication, his charismatic authority, and keen organizational skills, the Brotherhood soon spread throughout Egypt and to neighboring countries. With his influence growing, Banna became increasingly involved in politics in the 1930s and 1940s. This political engagement and conflict culminated in December 1948 with the assassination of the prime minister by a Muslim Brother. Allegedly, members of the secret police retaliated by killing Banna 2 months later.

Throughout his life, Banna held to a conservative ideology yet remained considerably progressive in his approach to social and religious problems. His underlying concern was a belief that Western domination (in politics, ideas, and values) came as the result of the Muslim's departure from “authentic” Islam. Yet in many respects, Banna attempted to adapt Islam to contemporary demands, to open the way for both legal flexibility and renewal, and to make the Brotherhood relevant in a rapidly modernizing society.

Banna, always more of a pragmatist and popular leader than a systematic thinker, saw his primary role in the Islamic revitalization movement as that of an organizer and activist rather than that of a formulator of intellectual theories. Envisioned as an all-encompassing religious community, the Brotherhood intentionally recruited not just from the elite but also from the populace as a whole. Previously, the urgent need to renew or revive Islam in Egypt and other Ottoman territories had been largely articulated by a rather small group of educated Muslims. It is thus with Banna that the shift toward “resurgent Islam” as a truly mass movement begins.

Daniel C. Dillard

See also Egypt; Islamism (Political Islam); Muslim Brotherhood; Qutb, Sayyid

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ALEXANDER THE GREAT (356–323 BCE)

The influence of Alexander the Great on the ancient world is undeniable, as seen in his initiation of Hellenization and contact between diverse populations through imperial expansion. During

Alexander's childhood and adolescence, he was taught by multiple tutors, the most notable of whom was Aristotle. Aristotle helped develop a deep respect for Greek civilization in the Macedonian Alexander. And though Alexander's conquests were principally driven by imperial glory, Alexander's desire to spread Greek culture was a major motivation as well. But this may have been an unintended side effect of imperial conquest, and the deep Greek cultural influence throughout the conquered territories needed time and influence to develop, which Alexander was unable to give because of his death at the early age of 32. However, the empires that succeeded and divided Alexander's empire were able to provide that power and time. These empires continued to support the influence of Greek thought and culture, especially the use of the Greek language, throughout their existence. From this came the development of Hellenistic Judaism; the influence of neo-Platonism in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam; the preparation of the region for Roman conquest; the diffusion of Christianity through the common Greek tongue; and the later preservation of Greek philosophy by Muslim scholars. And this influence spread even further east. For example, around the time of Alexander's expansion to the Indus River, statues of the Buddha took on a significant resemblance to those of the Greek god Apollo.

During his conquest of Egypt, Alexander was greeted as "the son of god" by the priest of Amun at Siwa, Libya. Amun was associated with the Greek god Zeus, and Alexander welcomed or demanded worship of himself as a divinity from his own people as well as those he conquered from that point on. This type of leader worship, characteristic of the Egyptian religio-political structure of the time, was significantly different from existing Greek and Macedonian norms. Still, it continued with Alexander's successors, especially Ptolemy II, and this innovation was eventually taken up by the emperors of the Roman Empire along with so many other aspects of Greek culture and religion.

Finally, Alexander's imperial expansion eventually ruined the city-state system of the Greeks through the cosmopolitan incorporation of new religio-political practices as well as other cultural (especially Persian) elements into his dress and habits. Along with this, Alexander's expansion required that, when he did not completely annihilate a community, he leave religious practices in place

along with the local rulers for the sake of expediency. And all the while, he brought in native warriors for his army and built new cities. Of these new cities, the various cities of Alexandria had the double function of spreading Greek culture and religion as well as being nodes of Greek military strength. The most important of these, Alexandria, Egypt, has been a religious, cultural, commercial, and intellectual center for thousands of years.

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See also Greece; Mediterranean World

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ALGERIA

Algeria, centrally located in North Africa and at the cultural crossroads of the Mediterranean, has been affected by Christianity and Islam over the course of the past 1,500 years. The area that now constitutes Algeria had been converted to Christianity during the second century CE. One of the most important and influential thinkers in the early Christian church, St. Augustine of Hippo, was born near modern-day Annaba (Hippo Regius) in 354 CE, and the ancient city of Carthage played an important role in the development of early Christianity. Over the course of the seventh to ninth centuries, the Berber population of Algeria converted/reverted to Islam. While Ibadi and Shi'a Islam were prevalent at various points during this early period of Islamization, eventually the population became largely Sunnī Mālikī Muslims.

While religion had a long history of significance in the identity and politics of the region that came to be known as Algeria, it played a particularly important role after the French colonization (1830) and in the emergence of an independent Algerian state (1962). The (re)birth of Algerian nationalism during World War I and in the interwar period

was in part due to the efforts of the Union of the Ulema, which, along with other strands of nationalist agitation, emphasized religion as a key difference between European *Colons* settlers and the indigenous population. During the Algerian War of Independence (1954–1962), the line between socialist nationalism and religion was blurred, and members of the *Armée de Libération Nationale* (ALN; “National Liberation Army”) became known as mujahideen. The power of this moral basis of struggle against French colonial oppression was apparent even for secular Marxist Algerian nationalists. During this period, nationalists regularly referred to broader conceptions of jihad and historiographies of the Crusades, all of which created a combustible context for radicalization among Algerians.

More recently, Algeria suffered from a particularly brutal civil war, ostensibly fought between a largely secular state and Islamists who challenged the political status quo. The Algerian state had been subjected to Islamist challenges almost from the time of its establishment, in the form of *Al Qiyam* (1964, lit. “values”), which demanded a greater role for Islam in politics. During the 1980s, a militant Islamist challenge to the secular regime, in the shape of the Algerian Islamic Armed movement (led by a former ALN fighter), though small and not very popular, was a precursor to subsequent larger and popular challenges to the one party rule of the *Partie de Front de Libération Nationale* (PFLN; “Party of the National Liberation Front”). Political liberalization in the late 1980s to early 1990s saw a proliferation of Algerian political parties, with one of the most popular opposition groups coming from the *Front Islamique du Salut* (FIS; “Islamic Front for Salvation”). In the wake of the election success of FIS in 1991, the government, after army intervention, banned the party, and this led to the Algerian civil war, during which 200,000 Algerians were killed. The civil war mostly concluded in 1999 with a declaration of amnesty by President Abdelaziz Bouteflika. The role of Islam in politics remains a highly charged issue in contemporary Algeria.

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See also Islamism (Political Islam); Middle East; North Africa

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AMSTERDAM

Amsterdam, the capital of The Netherlands from the beginning of the 19th century onward, is renowned for its religious diversity and tolerance, which date back as far as the Eighty Years’ War, the Dutch revolt against Spanish and Roman Catholic rule (1568–1648). The revolt was largely a reaction to the Counter-Reformation, the persecution of the Protestant sects that had firmly established themselves in the northern lowlands, including Amsterdam, during the Reformation. In 1588, these territories united to form the Dutch Republic and managed to liberate themselves from Spanish and Roman Catholic rule.

Although the population of the Dutch Republic was primarily Calvinist, the revolt spawned a deeply felt urge for religious tolerance. As a result, Amsterdam, in particular, soon became a safe haven for religious dissidents from all over Europe, including the French Huguenots and Sephardic Jews who had fled the Iberian Peninsula and were unwelcome virtually everywhere else in Europe. Before World War II, no less than 10% of the city’s population was Jewish, but only 20% of these survived the war.

In the 1960s, Amsterdam became the center of the Dutch counterculture, and the city has retained much of the latter’s secular permissiveness (as seen in its coffee shops, its red light district, its gay

scene, and its openness to leftist political activism and alternative lifestyles). The cultural changes associated with the 1960s' counterculture contributed substantially to the decline of the mainline Christian churches, but they also sparked an interest in inner spirituality. Amsterdam has remained the major hub of the Dutch holistic milieu, hosting more New Age centers than any other Dutch city. Despite the bankruptcy in 2000 of Ronald-Jan Hein's center Oibibio, an icon of Amsterdam's shift from utopian idealism and social criticism to commercialized business spirituality, neither the milieu's size and vitality nor the interest in spirituality has declined since.

The period since the 1960s has also witnessed an influx of Muslim immigrants from Turkey and particularly Morocco, which has made Islam a major player in the city's religious landscape. Christian immigrants from Southeast Asia, Latin and South America (from the former colony of Surinam), and sub-Saharan Africa have meanwhile established a wide range of so-called immigrant churches in Amsterdam. Particularly thriving are the African churches in the southeastern part of the city (the "Bijlmer"), many of them of the evangelical or Pentecostal strain.

Although strikingly secular in many respects, Amsterdam hence also boasts an immense religious and spiritual diversity. Its traditional religious and multicultural tolerance has been severely put to the test since the rise of the late populist politician Pim Fortuyn in 2002. Declining secular tolerance vis-à-vis Islam, the increased salience of (sometimes orthodox) Islamic identities, and instances of anti-Semitism and gay bashing by Islamic youngsters have culminated in the assassination of the playwright Theo van Gogh by a young Islamic militant, Mohammed Bouyeri, in 2004. In this increasingly heated climate, the city's mayor Job Cohen, Jewish like many of his predecessors, is blamed by some and admired by others for his defense of the city's age-old tradition of multicultural and religious tolerance.

Dick Houtman and Jeroen van der Waal

See also Jewish Diaspora; Netherlands; Protestant Christianity; Religious Minority-Majority Relations; Secularism; Tolerance

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ANCESTORS

In multiple religious traditions, living relatives call on ancestors to provide aid, guidance, and intercession. Ancestors are generally beneficent, domesticated, and deceased relatives or prominent community figures. They may also be seen to punish those who do not act properly toward them or their guidance. And the living show reciprocity for ancestors by honoring them through memorials, caring for the resting place of the ancestor, making prayers for and to ancestors, offering goods to ancestors that are needed in the afterlife, and holding feasts for ancestors.

An important consideration in understanding ancestors in various religious traditions is in clearly making the differentiation between ancestors and the dead. While ancestors have passed beyond this life, they are ancestors because they are considered to have passed on to a new and pleasant existence rather than to have simply died. As such, ancestors can still aid the living through visions, prayers, intercessions, and examples of how to live. Furthermore, ancestors are an aid to the living by virtue of becoming ancestors and not just ghosts or unhappy dead. In this respect, the living help themselves by helping ancestors. For instance, in Hindu death rites, the living descendants of the dead care for the deceased, considered a *preta* (ghost) immediately after death.

If the rites are properly observed, then the *preta* becomes a *pitr* or “father” and reaches the “world of the fathers.” In so doing, the deceased becomes a proper ancestor. If these rites are not properly observed or if the dead person does not reach the householder age, which assumes a complete life and the means for proper ritual observance (i.e., for descendants), then the deceased remains a *preta* and will become a malicious, wild spirit in his or her displeasure with these circumstances.

Ancestors of communities act as “guiding lights” to the community, and some members may claim to see visions and hear the voices of those ancestors. Cosmogonic myths of certain traditions refer to an ancient king or first human being as a community ancestor. Meanwhile, civil religious traditions look to “city fathers” or “founders” as community ancestors. In these cases, the ancestors are the source of the establishment of the community, and from them, the present community derives its authority and purpose.

From even humanistic perspectives, ancestors influence the living. In such a view, ancestors are those by whom the still living are given into this world. This giving over, both of life and the world, from ancestors to the living, lays heavy responsibilities and expectations on the living. But it is through the examples of ancestors that the living find the means to both persevere and excel. In this view, as in religious views, ancestors are (at least) a portion of the ground of a community’s tradition that legitimizes its existence, guiding it and its members toward proper ways of being.

Aaron J. Sokoll

See also Death Ritual; Indigenous Religions

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ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN RELIGIONS

One of the deepest roots of global culture lies in the ancient Near East, which has had as profound an

influence on Western civilization as the later cultures of Greece and Rome. Momentous themes emerged from Near Eastern literature, such as lost innocence, undying love, leaders as good shepherds, sanctified justice, and sanctified war. Such themes continue to resonate in the Western imagination.

Part of the geographical region of West Asia, the ancient Near East extends from Mesopotamia (modern Iraq) in the east to the Mediterranean coasts of Anatolia (Turkey) and the Levant (Syria, Lebanon, Israel, and Gaza) in the west. Some historians include ancient Egypt, Iran, and Afghanistan. It is from this vast region that we get core notions and stories that, some 3,000 years ago, biblical and Greek authors made their own. The Mesopotamian kernels may be traced back four, even five, millennia. There is a great variety of literature preserved in Sumerian, Akkadian, Old Babylonian, Hittite, Ugaritic, Egyptian, and other languages. Since the 19th century, scholars have studied these literatures not only for their intrinsic merits but also for their influences on Western thinking.

Perhaps the most poignant Near Eastern theme to penetrate Western imagination is that of primal innocence. Adam and Eve were not the first to lose it. Nor was the Greek Epimetheus, who unwittingly welcomed Pandora and her box of ills. The tragic prototype is Enkidu, companion to King Gilgamesh in the Mesopotamian epic named after him. A hairy subhuman born in the steppes, nursed by gazelles and happy among animals, Enkidu is seduced by a prostitute, who awakens him to his humanity. She sends him to Gilgamesh, a godlike ruler whose arrogance knows no bounds and whom Enkidu was created to humble. Together, Enkidu and Gilgamesh find love and adventure. Eventually, Enkidu is stricken by the gods, realizes his imminent death, and curses the prostitute who tempted and initiated him. The Sun God scolds him for this curse because the joys that Enkidu has gained are profound. Enkidu reverses his curse to a blessing and then dies, leaving Gilgamesh in despair. As do the biblical and Greek stories, this epic ponders the virtues of ignorant bliss.

This depiction of wildness probably reverberates from a more ancient tale of the grain goddess Ashnan. A Sumerian hymn to her refers to a distant time before people knew clothing and the eating of bread. Instead, they grazed like sheep and

drank water from ditches. Unlike the pessimistic biblical and Greek tales, Ashnan's story makes civilization, particularly agriculture, a blessing because it helps define human life and because grain is a gift for both gods and humans.

Undying love is another theme traded across written and bardic traditions. Not only Gilgamesh and Enkidu but also the Homeric Achilles and Patroklos, the Hittite Tudhaliya IV and Kurunta, and the biblical David and Jonathan profess a life-long commitment to each other. In all these pairs, one member is adopted as the other's brother, and the two pledge enduring loyalty, which is sealed by documents or by ritualized acts. All of these friendships but for the Hittite one are known to end in tragedy. An echo of this theme may be heard in the biblical story of Ruth and Naomi, wherein Ruth pledges undying love to her mother-in-law, Naomi, and risks everything to be with her: "Where you die, I will die." In Ruth's case, adversities are overcome, and the two live happily thereafter.

Erotic love was also extolled by ancient Near Eastern troubadours 3,000 to 4,000 years ago. Being "faint with love" is described at length in the biblical Song of Songs and Egyptian love poetry, while similar longings are attested in Mesopotamian poetry associated with sacred marriage rites. Fertility imagery and titles of brother and sister adopted by friends infuse these lyrical traditions. Whatever its historical motivations, the Song of Songs resonates today as expressing the love of God for Israel and of Christ for His Church.

In the sphere of domestic diplomacy, ancient Near Eastern rulers portrayed themselves as wise shepherds concerned with the welfare of widows and orphans. Ur-Nammu (24th century BCE, Mesopotamia) boasted that he did not abandon orphans to the wealthy, widows to the powerful, or the poor to the rich. By the power of the gods, he established freedom and justice for the Akkadians and foreigners in the lands of Sumer and Akkad. The Hittite king Hattusilis I (17th century BCE, Anatolia), guided by the gods, claims to have taken the enemy's slave girls from the mills and male slaves from the sickles and to have freed them from taxes and the *corvée*. His successor, Mursilis I, is instructed to give bread to the hungry, oil to the weary, and clothing to the naked. The biblical king David, in the Books of Chronicles, is said to have administered justice and equity to his people, and

King Solomon asked God not for wealth but for wisdom, which he received: "He would speak of trees, from the cedar that is in the Lebanon to the hyssop that grows in the wall; he would speak of animals, and birds, and reptiles, and fish." His wisdom surpassed that "of all the people of the east, and all the wisdom in Egypt" (1 Kings 4).

Deities in the ancient Near East support royal piety and justice. While not all law codes claim religious sanction (the Hittite one does not), virtually all rulers claim it, and nearly all claim to administer justice on behalf of the gods. In accord with Sun God Utu, judge of heaven and earth, the Mesopotamian ruler Lipit-Ishtar (20th century BCE) made the lands of Sumer and Akkad hold fair judicial procedure. In accord with the utterance of God Enlil, he eradicated enmity and violence. Chosen as king by God Enlil, the Mesopotamian Hammurabi (18th century BCE) was instructed by God Marduk to establish justice and appropriate behavior for the people of the land. The Hittite king Hattusilis III (13th century BCE) claimed the favor of Goddess Ishtar from boyhood. She made him her chosen one and promised never to abandon him to an evil god or to an evil judgment. The biblical king David too enjoys a chosen status. He is the anointed king and a begotten son of God, who instructs kings to be wise and to serve the Lord with fear (Psalm 2). The queen of Sheba says of his son Solomon, "Because the Lord loved Israel forever, he has made you king to execute justice and righteousness" (1 Kings 10).

Conversely, because of their lack of righteousness and piety, unfaithful leaders are punished by gods, and so are their people. The error is conceived commonly as the betrayal of an oath. It invites an array of punishments—banishment and humiliation in the biblical prophetic books, starvation and cannibalism in Assyrian oaths, and familial annihilation and national hunger and discord and fever in Hittite treaties.

Divine interest in justice entails divine support in war. Just as biblical songs celebrate Yahweh's saving terror in battle (i.e., "the earth shook, the heavens poured, . . . the mountains quaked before the LORD" [Judges 5]), Hittite and Assyrian kings report divine inspiration, particularly when gods lead armies by "going in front." The Hittite king Mursilis reported that "the sun goddess of Arinna my lady, god Tessup the mighty, my lord,

the goddess Mezzulas, and all the gods ran in front of me” when he conquered the district of Arzawa. The Assyrian king Esarhaddon reports that Goddess Ishtar flayed his foes and gave them to him: “I, Ishtar of Arbela, before thee, behind thee, I will go; fear not.” Ishtar of Arbela sent a dream to the armies of the Assyrian king Assurbanipal on his eighth campaign against Elam: “I will go before Assurbanipal, the king whom my hands have formed. My armies put their trust in that dream, and crossed the Idide in safety.” The biblical god goes in front: “The Lord your God who goes at your head will fight for you and he will do again what you saw him do for you in Egypt and in the wilderness” (Deuteronomy 1:30), as do many Homeric gods (i.e., Iliad 5:590–595, 14:384–387, 15:306–311). The notion of divine support in battle continues to resonate in religious rationalizations of conflict in the 20th and 21st centuries (see the entry “Cosmic War and Cosmic Conflict”).

In short, ancient Near Eastern civilizations have bequeathed to us many notions that continue to be felt in Western imagination. Any serious student of history can grasp the idea of lost innocence. We are still drawn to stories of undying love, which, although surely not invented in the ancient Near East, find some of their earliest literary expressions there. We are shocked when our leaders fail to behave as good shepherds, although we rarely reflect on the origins of the motif. While fewer of us today expect our gods literally to support the commitments of nation-states, the reflex is telltale in anthems and spirituals. Last, the notion of holy war is thriving in contemporary religious terrorism, although some would deny the notion’s authenticity. However universal these themes are, their earliest Western attestations are found in the literature of the ancient Near East.

Margo Kitts

See also Bible; Cosmic War and Cosmic Conflict; Gilgamesh Epic; Sexuality; Social Justice

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ANDORRA

The Principality of Andorra, a small, landlocked country located in the Pyrenees Mountains between France and Spain, is first mentioned in the act of consecration of the Cathedral of Urgell, dated 839. With the rise of feudalism in western Europe, Andorra became a domain of the county of Urgell in 843. The proximity to the Archbishopric of Urgell, a center of Christianity from as early as 527, was key to this religion being officially implanted in Andorra by the end of the 9th century, although this process did not completely eliminate certain pre-Christian beliefs and attitudes. The Inquisition finally eliminated these practices, which originated from a non-Christian belief in the supranatural. In the 10th and 11th centuries, the bishops of Urgell progressively increased their control. Beginning in the 12th century, Andorra became a domain of the diocese. Between the 11th and 13th centuries, the count and the Church were the guarantors of public order and defense of the community. At the same time, the Church, the center of intellectual activity, ideologically justified the political power and the structure of Andorran medieval society. In the 13th century, the *Pariatages* established the indivisible shared domain between the Bishop of Urgell and the Count of Foix.

The “feudal tradition” was put into question in 1866 with the *Nova Reforma*. Between 1882 and 1887, three girls’ schools run by nuns of the Order of the Sacred Family were created in Andorra. Until that time, the Consells Comunalis were responsible for education, although in the majority of cases the vicars were entrusted with schools. In 1899, the Consell General issued a decree in which all parishes of the country were obliged to have a male and a female schoolteacher. Under this decree, the

French co-princes attempted to increase the presence of French culture and language by opening five secular French schools between 1900 and 1913. This was an attempt to counter the increasing weight of the episcopal co-princes. In 1931 and 1935, two new Catholic schools opened in Andorra.

Beginning in the 1960s, Andorra underwent a modernization process. The constitution of 1993 includes the separation of church and state and freedom of religion and guarantees the Roman Catholic Church “the free and public practice of its activities and the continuation of its special collaboration with the State, in accord with Andorran tradition” (*Constitució d’Andorra* [“Constitution of Andorra”], Article 11:3). In 2008, the Vatican and the Andorran government signed an agreement that guarantees the ability of the Catholic Church to carry out its mission and establishes that cultural assets destined for worship are the charge of the state. It is also stated that nonreligious centers shall teach religion outside school hours and only to students who so desire. It also regulates the economic and tax regimen of nonlucrative activities and the acquisition of objects designed for worship. At present, there are two congregational centers in addition to the public schools in Andorra.

Today, Catholicism (followed by 80%–95% of the population of Andorra) has a great influence on the social and cultural life. September 8, feast of the Virgen of Meritxell, and December 25, Christmas, are official holidays. Other Christian groups include the Anglican Church, Jehovah’s Witnesses, the Reunification Church, the New Apostolic Church, and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. People of other faiths live in Andorra: Judaism (estimated at 100) and Hinduism and Islam (primarily made up of 2,000 North African immigrants). The authorities reportedly expressed concern that some methods used by religious organizations might affect public health, safety, morals, or order. In spite of negotiations for some years between the Muslim community and the government, no mosque has been built. The Islamic Cultural Center has provided approximately 50 students with Arabic lessons. The government and the Moroccan community have not yet agreed on a system to allow children to receive Arabic classes in school outside the regular school day. The government is willing to offer Arabic

classes, but the Muslim community has not been able to find a suitable teacher.

Enrique Fernández Domingo

See also France; Roman Catholicism; Spain

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ANGLICANS

This entry defines both *Anglican* and *Anglicanism* and continues with a brief account of the latter as a distinctive theology within Christianity. It then describes the nature and development of the Church of England, before turning to the worldwide Anglican Communion.

The word *Anglican* originates in the expression *ecclesia anglicana*, a medieval Latin phrase meaning “the English Church.” Anglicans are adherents of Anglicanism (a much later term), which refers to a distinctive tradition within the Christian church. The mother church of Anglicanism is the Church of England; worldwide, Anglicans are those in communion with the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Anglicanism, as expressed in the Church of England and the Anglican Communion, is both “catholic” and “reformed”—meaning that it combines continuity with the Catholic tradition (the creeds and a distinctive ecclesiological structure and aspects of liturgical practice) with Protestant understandings of theology and ministry. From the 18th century onward, three distinctive currents can be discerned both within the Church of England and elsewhere. These are (1) the evangelical tradition, which emphasizes the authority of Scripture and justification by faith and personal conversion; (2) the Catholic tradition, which stresses continuity with the medieval (Catholic)

church and thus the apostolic succession; and (3) the liberal tradition, which underlines the importance of reason in theological exploration. These are currents that shift and adapt over time, combining in many different ways within both individuals and communities. More recently, a fourth influence has become important. The charismatic movement emphasizes the work of the Holy Spirit—its roots lie in evangelicalism, but it has undoubtedly influenced people and groups from different traditions (Anglican and other).

The beginnings of the English Church go back to the time of the Roman Empire, when elements of Christianity took root in the Roman province of Britain. A second step occurred at the end of the sixth century, when Saint Augustine—a Benedictine monk—was sent by Pope Gregory the Great to Britain with the aim of converting King Æthelberht to Christianity. The mission was successful: In 597, Augustine became the first Archbishop of Canterbury (Æthelberht's principal town) and established the See of Canterbury. For these reasons, Augustine is considered the "Apostle to the English" and the founder of the English Church. It is important to note, however, that these efforts combined both with the remnants of the old Roman and British church traditions and with a third component—a distinctive Celtic tradition, which came from the extremities of Britain and was associated with saints such as Aidan and Cuthbert. A second archbishopric was established in York in a church that, until the Reformation, was firmly part of the Western tradition and accepted the authority of the pope.

The changes that took place at the time of the Reformation are necessarily complex in the sense that the religious or theological developments that occurred at this time are inseparable from the political upheavals that were also taking place. All over Europe, both national and local leaders were looking for ways to assert their independence, taking advantage of the latest theological currents in order to reject supranational authority (whether secular or religious) and to legitimate new alignments. The notion of *cuius regio, eius religio* (meaning "whose realm, his religion") became paramount as the old order, in the form of a unified Christendom, began to fall apart.

In England, the catalyst is clear: Henry VIII asked the pope to annul his marriage to Catharine

of Aragon in order that he might marry Anne Boleyn. The pope refused, leading Henry to "break with Rome," a gesture that became a defining moment in English history. This break not only repudiated the authority of the pope but also established the monarch as the effective head of the Church of England, which became exactly what its name implies. The pope retaliated, excommunicating Henry in 1538. That said, Henry himself displayed a preference for Catholic ways of doing things, meaning that distinctively Protestant changes did not occur until the reign of Edward VI. Under Edward, new patterns of worship were set out in the Book of Common Prayer (1549 and 1552). The new liturgies—the work of Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury—were definitive for the Church of England; they combined Protestant principles with older forms of worship.

The twists and turns of the subsequent decades are many. Under Mary Tudor, the Church of England once again submitted to papal authority. This was rejected once and for all when Elizabeth I came to the throne in 1558. It is at this point, moreover, that the distinctive identity of the Church of England begins to emerge in the form of a *via media*—that is, a church that steers a middle course between the Catholic tradition, on the one hand, and the more rigorous understandings of the Reformation, on the other. Its essence was captured in Richard Hooker's *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* (1594–1597), which argued that reason and tradition are both important when interpreting the scriptures. Specifically, Hooker sought to defend the Church of England against its Puritan critics, who wanted to make the Church of England more like the reformed churches of Geneva or Scotland.

The Church of England continued to be buffeted by the wider currents of English history—notably the civil war (1642–1651), the Commonwealth (1649–1660), and the restoration of the monarchy (1660). In 1689, however, the Bill of Rights determined the constitutional position of the present church (i.e., its established status), and it was in this church that the various theological currents listed above were able to develop. Establishment as such gave to the Church of England a mixture of rights and responsibilities, which, by and large, remain today. Currently, it is an institution with considerable privilege but little

power, obliged to take its place alongside communities of many different faiths and those with none. Like most churches in Europe, its position has been considerably eroded by the forces of secularization.

A reduced Church of England at home is, however, the mother church of an expanding Anglican Communion—that is, an international association of Anglican churches. The nature of this entity is important. Unlike its Catholic equivalent, there is no single “Anglican Church” with universal authority. Rather, each national or regional church has its own autonomy, but at the same time, it is in full communion with the Church of England. The notion of full communion implies that there is agreement on essential doctrines and that all Anglicans can participate fully in the sacramental life of each national church.

To achieve these goals, there are four “instruments of communion”: (1) the Archbishop of Canterbury himself, who functions as the spiritual head of the Communion; (2) the Lambeth Conferences (a forum for the bishops of the Communion that takes place every 10 years); (3) the Anglican Consultative Council (the only body to maintain a permanent secretariat); and (4) the Primates’ Meeting (the most recent manifestation of consultation and deliberation). With approximately 77 million members, the Anglican Communion is the third largest communion in the world, after the Catholic Church and the Orthodox churches. Unsurprisingly, its geographical structure mirrors the shape of the former British Empire; Anglican expansion (often in the form of mission work) developed alongside economic and military power—sometimes colluding with it and sometimes resisting its more destructive features.

The present situation is somewhat paradoxical. A Church of England that is somewhat diminished at home constitutes the hub of a Communion in which the church is growing rapidly. The situation can perhaps be described as follows: historic, financial, and theological power is still located in the Global North (in England and also in the United States). Demographic power, however, lies in the Global South. Expanding congregations, moreover, are able to challenge the older churches on issues of doctrine, discipline, worship, and ethics. A particularly intractable example can be found in the heated debates concerning the role of homosexuals, notably in the North American

churches. These find expression in the blessing of same-sex unions and in the ordination and consecration of individuals in same-sex relationships. Many of the more conservative provinces of the Communion (particularly in Africa and Asia), however, object both to these practices and to the lack of consultation before they were allowed to happen. These differences of opinion remain largely unresolved. One reason for them lies in the nature of the Anglican Communion, in which provincial autonomy is institutionalized. Another can be found in the essence of Anglicanism as such, given the very different elements that are present in its theology (see above).

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See also Canterbury; Christianity; England; Europe; Missions and Missionaries; Protestant Christianity; Roman Catholicism; Secularization; United Kingdom

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ANGOLA

The Republic of Angola is a country in south-central Africa bordered by the Democratic Republic of the Congo in the north, Namibia in

the south, Zambia in the east, and the Atlantic Ocean in the west. As a Portuguese colony from the 16th century to 1975, Angola was a fruitful destination for Roman Catholic and Protestant missionaries and is today an overwhelmingly Christian country. However, at the same time when Angola received Western Christianity, it also sent its own religious influences across the Atlantic via the indigenous religions practiced by slaves and the African Christianity practiced by emigrants.

Christianity first took root in Angola with Portuguese Roman Catholic missionaries in the late 15th century. The first Protestant missionaries, Baptists from Britain, arrived much later, in 1878. All missionaries were subject to the authority of Portugal, so that in addition to proselytizing they also adhered to colonial priorities. The colonial-era Portuguese Empire also included Brazil, to which more than 3 million African slaves were exported from Angola to work on sugarcane plantations. Although Brazil is the largest Roman Catholic country in the world today, the influence of religions brought to Brazil by African slaves is still seen today in practices such as Candomblé and *umbanda*.

Today, although it is clear that Christianity is the dominant religious entity, due to a civil war that lasted from 1975 to 2002 and the ongoing instability since then, reliable statistics about the exact religious makeup of the country are difficult to obtain. The number of practicing Roman Catholics has been estimated at anywhere from 55% to 70% of the population, and Protestants are estimated to constitute 10% to 25% of the population. Many Protestant missionaries who came to Angola were very cognizant of adapting Christianity to the local culture. Thus, they translated the Bible into local Bantu languages, integrated Christianity into existing community structures and discourses, and provided medical care and other essential services to the community. Indigenous religious practices were greatly reduced, and today, exclusive practitioners of indigenous religion are mainly in the rural areas, although some estimates cast up to 47% of the population as having indigenous beliefs. However, there is heavy social pressure in the urban areas against many of the traditional practices, especially those involving animal sacrifice and witchcraft.

In addition to the missionary churches, home-grown African Christian churches are also a part

of the religious landscape of the country. One of the largest religious movements in Angola is the Tokoist Church, founded in 1949 by Simão Gonçalves Toko. Some estimates place it just behind the Catholic Church in size, with more than 1 million members. Since the first overseas congregation in Portugal in 1992, the Angolan diaspora has continued to expand the church to join the growing presence of African Christianity in the major cities of Europe and North America.

In recent years, non-Christian religions have made inroads into Angola through immigration. Islam is practiced in the country by an estimated 80,000 to 90,000 adherents, mostly composed of West African and Lebanese migrants. Although small in number, the growing presence of Muslims in the country has caused some public concern about the importation of non-Angolan cultural values and the possibility of terrorism.

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See also Africa; Brazil; Christianity; Indigenous Religions; New Religions in Africa; Roman Catholicism

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ANGUILLA

One of the smallest inhabited Caribbean islands, Anguilla's populace is heavily Christian, but the island is an important location for other traditions as well. The areas known as Big Springs and Fountain Cavern seem to have been large ceremonial spaces for the early Anguillans, though the

exact nature of the ceremonies practiced remains unknown. A British overseas territory since 1980, its inhabitants are largely of mixed Welsh, Irish, and British descent, along with a large West African body descended mostly from victims of the slave trade. A 2001 survey reported Anguillans to be 40% Anglican, 33% Methodist, 7% Seventh-Day Adventist, 5% Baptist, and 3% Roman Catholic. The remaining 12% of the population represent religions such as Obeah, a syncretic religion based on West African religious practices with Catholic trappings, as well as Rastafarianism. Anguilla is the birthplace of Robert Athlyi Rogers, founder of the religion known as the Afro-Athlican Constructive Gaathly and author of the Holy Piby, an important text for the Rastafari movement.

The earliest evidence of a settlement on Anguilla has been dated as early as 1300 BCE—a tribe of Awaraks, whose society stretched to around 600 CE. The first English colonists arrived in 1650 from neighboring St. Kitts, looking to extend their tobacco and corn crop. The poor crop yields of Anguilla and famine in the 17th century did not halt attempts to create a plantation-style economy that included the importation of slaves mainly from West Africa in the 18th century. The failure of that economy, followed by the outlawing of slavery and the exodus of plantation owners back to England, resulted in the current demographics, and the religious institutions that played a role in the short history of colonization are still represented. In recent years, Christian denominations not linked to British colonization have been on the rise, especially Pentecostalism and the Church of God.

Religion and the state have developed a balanced relationship in Anguilla during the 21st century, but that balance has been contested in its development. The island's first *Carnivale*, celebrated in 1961, for instance, was opposed by the local churches, resulting in the banning of the *Carnivale* for several years following. Its reinstatement likewise was owed to the churches, especially the Anglican Church, which held its bazaar on Emancipation Day, the 1st Monday in August. In 1974, the *Carnivale* was attached to the bazaar with great success, and in subsequent years, it outgrew the Anglican reach, resulting in the church promptly protesting against its "heathenistic" character. The *Carnivale*'s success was accompanied by

its direction under the Anguilla Cultural and Social Society, and the first independent *Carnivale* outside the bounds of the Anglican Church brought the most people to the island ever. It has since become a celebrated part of Anguillan life, and today it enjoys support from all denominations on the island.

John Soboslai

See also Anglicans; Caribbean; Globalization; New Religions in South America; Postcolonialism; St. Kitts and Nevis; Syncretism

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ANIMALS

Animals have historically played an important and enduring role in the world's religious traditions, from shamanism, through classical cultural expressions, up to the current debates on animal rights.

One of the earliest expressions of religiosity can be found in shamanic traditions. In many tribal cultures, a specific animal may become sacred to an individual or group. Known as totems, these animals will not be eaten and are said to generate

the power of protection. The shaman, a traditional healer, often draws inspiration from animals, imitating special skills and powers associated with the coyote or the wolf or the bear. Shamanic rituals in some cases may involve the donning of animal skins and performing dances in imitation of animals. These practices can still be observed among the tribal peoples of Siberia and the Americas.

The Hebrew scriptures include extensive descriptions of how animals should be treated. The Book of Genesis states that God created fish and fowl on the fourth day and mammals on the fifth day, followed by humans on the sixth. Though God gave humans dominion over animals, animals must be treated with care and kindness. Noah preserved numerous species of animals during the Great Flood; the protection of humans and animals constituted God's first promise or covenant. The law books of Leviticus, Deuteronomy, and Numbers include many passages that deal with the treatment of animals, specifying that an animal threshing grain must not be muzzled, that only unblemished animals may be used as ritual offerings, and that animals must not be treated cruelly. These laws form the basis for kosher observances and remain important within contemporary Judaism.

For Christians, animals provide vivid imagery in the story of the birth of Jesus, in his parables, and also in the Book of Revelation. Jesus was laid in a manger surrounded by animals. He was compared with the sacrificial lamb and heralded as the great shepherd. The lion, ox, griffin, and eagle protect the throne of God in the last book of the Christian Bible. Many Christian religious orders, including the Camaldolese, the Cistercian Trappists, and the Carthusians, practice vegetarianism, as do some Protestant denominations, such as the Seventh-Day Adventists.

In Islam, animals stand in a special relationship with God. Many passages of the Qur'an extol the ability of animals to worship God. One of the favorite images to describe the glory of God can be found in praise of the honeybee, which creates great beauty and sweetness through its labors. Like the Jews, Muslims follow a strict code that governs the slaughter of animals, designed to minimize suffering and guarantee cleanliness. For the Sufi mystics, animals provide examples of how best to love God.

Animal Themes in Indic Religious Traditions

Animals are a major theme in Indic religious traditions. India has nurtured numerous religious traditions, including forms of Hinduism that include Vaishnavism, Shaivism, and Advaita Vedanta. India has also produced Buddhism, Jainism, locally flavored varieties of Islam, and Sikhism. Yoga postures, often in imitation of animals, emerged as a distinct expression of religious devotional practice in several of these traditions over a course of many hundreds of years in India. Early images from the Indus Valley cities of Mohenjadarro and Harappa (ca. 3000 BCE) depict humans surrounded by animals, both wild and domestic. Terracotta sculptures show humans imitating the countenance of animals, most notably the tiger. The earliest image of what might be deemed a proto-Yogi shows a cross-legged figure sitting on an animal skin, adorned with a headdress that includes horns from a buffalo or antelope.

Following the decline of the Indus Valley cities around 1500 BCE, a body of literature known as the Vedas was composed. The Vedas extol the cow in dozens of hymns, likening the beneficence of the cow to the dawn, to speech, to the rain clouds, and to creation itself. The Upanishads introduce the idea of reincarnation, stating that one can be reborn as a worm, a moth, a fish, a bird, a lion, a tiger, or a person.

In Hinduism, animals were not only past incarnations and beloved companions but also living deities, including the eagle Garuda, the monkey Hanuman, and the elephant-headed Ganesh. Each anthropomorphic deity has a well-known companion animal, including Ganesh's rat, Durga's lion, Sarasvati's peacock, and Siva's bull. In the Jaina tradition, each great teacher has an associated animal. Rsabha's companion is the bull; Ajita is marked by an elephant; Sambhava, a horse; Abhinanda, an ape; and Sumati, a partridge. The two historical Tirthankaras, Parsvanatha (ca. 800 BCE) and Mahavira (ca. 500 BCE), are signified by a snake and a lion, respectively.

The great religious teachers of classical India included animals in various ways in their narrations and iconic depictions. The Jina, also known as Mahavira (ca. 500 BCE), taught a doctrine of non-violence (ahimsa) toward animals as a central tenet

of the Jaina faith. He was described in the Kalpa Sutra as containing animal-like qualities, resembling the armor of a tortoise, the solitary nature of a rhinoceros horn, the freedom of a bird, and the strength and energy of an elephant, a bull, and a lion. According to Jainism, animals have moral agency that determines their rebirth. The Jaina taxonomy of life-forms places them in a gradated order, starting with those beings that possess only the sense of touch. These include earth, water, fire, and air bodies, microorganisms, and plants. The next higher order introduces the sense of taste: worms, leeches, oysters, and snails occupy this domain. Third-order life-forms add the sense of smell, including most insects and spiders. Fourth-level beings, in addition to being able to touch, taste, and smell, also can see; these include butterflies, flies, and bees. The fifth level, which includes hearing, includes birds, reptiles, mammals, and humans.

The Buddha (ca. 500 BCE.) told many stories of his past births in a collection of narratives known as the Jataka Tales. These stories include references to more than 70 different types of animals. The Buddha took form as a monkey, an elephant, a jackal, a lion, a crow, a deer, a bird, and a fish. The Buddha, when he lived as a wealthy prince, had a close relationship with many animals, most notably his white stallion Kanthaka.

In the medieval period of Indic religious traditions, detailed Yoga manuals were composed that provide instruction on how to mimic the stance and mood of specific animals. Many postures (asana) carry the names of animals. The *Hatha Yoga Pradipika*, written by Svātāmara in the 15th century, lists several poses named for animals, including the Crow, the Cow's Head, the Tortoise, the Rooster, the Peacock, and the Lion. Later Yoga manuals such as the *Gheranda Samhita* include several additional poses named for animals, including the Serpent, the Rabbit, the Cobra, the Locust, the Eagle, the Frog, and the Scorpion.

Animal sacrifice, which was practiced extensively during the Vedic period, still persists in small pockets, particularly in Nepal and eastern India. Sanctified particularly in the ancient horse sacrifice, such rituals make magical correlations between the parts of the animal, the human body, and the cosmos. The *Bṛhadaranyaka Upaniṣad* correlates the body parts of the sacrificed horse to features of the

cosmos, saying that the sun is his eye, the wind is his breath, the sky is his back, and so forth. Years ago, the horse sacrifice was replaced with the sacrifice of smaller animals, particularly goats, and in most places, such sacrifices are strictly forbidden in India.

Buddhists, from the onset, have decried and condemned the practice of animal sacrifice, along with the Jainas; this helped convince many Hindu rulers to abandon this practice. In fact, many Buddhists in China, Korea, and Japan participate in an alternate ceremony of releasing animals. However, rather like the stranded bunnies and newly hatched chicks that get abandoned after Easter, many of these “released” animals were bred specifically for this purpose and are often recaptured to be sold yet again to another client with pious intentions.

India maintains an extensive network of religious organizations that advocate animal welfare, including shelters for unwell and elderly cattle. Thousands of Jaina *Pinjrapoles* (“animal shelters”) give shelter, food, and medical care to countless birds and animals each year. The most famous animal activism movement in India, the Bishnoi, was founded by Jambhēsvara (1451–1536) in Rajasthan in 1485 for the protection of humans, animals, and plants. In modern times, Bishnoi has established the All India Jeev Raksha Bishnoi Sabha, a wildlife protection organization, and the Community for Wildlife and Rural Development Society.

Humans maintain a remarkable intimacy with animals on the Indian subcontinent. Cows, water buffalo, goats, camels, and elephants ply the same roadways with humans. They continue to provide labor that in the developed world has been replaced with machinery. In their honor, animal celebrations are held each year, such as Pongal, when animals are given a special day of rest and decorated with brightly colored dots and patterns. No place in the world can claim a more pervasive and diverse vegetarian cuisine.

Chinese religions include animals as objects of worship and as spirit mediums; as in India, here also animals have been sacrificed. The movements of Daoist meditation and Tai Chi Chuan include imitations of animals. Confucius advised humane treatment of animals. Both Buddhist and neo-Confucian texts echoed this concern.

Western Philosophy, Law, and Animals

Aristotle displayed a keen interest in understanding the differences between various animal species. His cataloging of animals (*De Anima*) provided the foundation for the study of zoology. René Descartes regarded animals to be no more than unfeeling machines. Charles Darwin's observations of animals resulted in the development of the theory of evolution. The contemporary ethicist Peter Singer articulated a new movement known as animal liberation that seeks to redefine human-animal relations and helped establish the Great Ape Project for the study and protection of those animals that most closely resemble humans.

The field of animal ethology has demonstrated that animals have a rich and varied mental and emotional life. Many animals are capable of empathy, and some have developed an extensive working vocabulary, including chimpanzees that use sign language and parrots that use words purposefully. Philosophers have helped craft laws to protect animals from undue cruelty, most notably Bernard Rollin, who coauthored U.S. federal legislation in 1985 on the welfare of laboratory animals. The U.S. Endangered Species Act of 1973 took the stand that animals threatened with extinction must be protected. This resulted in the prohibition of many harmful pesticides and brought the bald eagle back from the brink of disappearance. The biologist E. O. Wilson has used the term *biophilia* to indicate the need for humans to be more sensitive to the complexity of nature and animals, indicating that a spiritual connection between animals and humans has gained wide acceptance.

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See also Chinese Popular Religion; Cycle of Rebirth; Ethics; Hinduism; Jainism; Mahayana Buddhism; Nonviolence; Sufism; Theravada Buddhism; Vajrayana, Tibetan; Veda

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Website

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ANTI-AMERICANISM

Anti-Americanism is a set of opinions, attitudes, and behaviors expressing criticism or hostility toward the United States. It refers to American culture, values, society, economy, and politics and is expressed in various ways—from mild distrust to actual terrorist attacks. Anti-Americanism emerged at the outset of European settlement in America and has been present ever since, evolving from cultural criticism through the phase of fear of American economic and political hegemony to the global era, in which the previous objections coexist with those resulting from international value conflicts. Moreover, since globalization is often identified with Americanization, anti-American sentiment has gained strength and visibility with the rise of the antiglobalization movement. Therefore, it is an important and influential phenomenon in the contemporary world.

Anti-Americanism as a coherent collection of negative ideas and prejudices appeared in the 18th century. In this period, critical views were predominantly culturally oriented and based on the belief in American inferiority to Europe. Antipathy toward America was preserved and spread by European writers in a number of critical commentaries. America was accused of lack of taste and civility, and Americans were portrayed as backward and uncouth. In the late 18th century, the “degeneracy theory” was formed. It assumed that the American land was hostile to both humankind and animals. Defenders of this theory claimed that unfavorable climate, humidity, tornados, earthquakes, and other adverse natural phenomena unknown in Europe made people and animals physically weaker. As a consequence, they maintained, it was impossible to create an advanced civilization on the American continent. Several decades later, another cultural objection was raised. It aimed at American materialism and

industrialism, which were seen as in opposition to European sensibilities and refinement.

In the 19th century, the natural environment was replaced by national character as the explanation for American inferiority. European intellectuals stated that the democratic experiment in America was a failure. According to them, renouncement of monarchy, aristocracy, an official religion, and a rigid class system led to the degradation of society and culture. The United States was considered to be a threat to Europe as it could serve as a bad example to European states. This fear was animated greatly by memories of the French Revolution and the terror brought by an attempt to create a state based on abstract principles.

The next stage of anti-Americanism was of a largely political nature. After the American Civil War, uneasiness about American influence on the rest of the world increased, especially after the American victory over Spain in 1898 and later after both world wars. The United States proved to be a global superpower. During the Cold War, anti-Americanism was propagated mainly in communist environments; nevertheless, events such as the Korean War and the Vietnam War spread concern about American imperial ambitions and the possibility of unjustified use of its power across the world. This concern grew after the collapse of the Soviet Union, as the United States became a hegemon in world politics, having no serious rival until a war between Western civilization and the Islamic world was declared after the September 11 terrorist attack. This event initiated a new phase of anti-Americanism that comprises a mixture of old arguments and new ones emerging on the wave of globalization and modernization.

Anti-Americanism takes a new shape in the era of globalization. Communicational mechanisms functioning in the contemporary world disseminate ideas instantly, which favors both American values and criticism toward them. Furthermore, globalization is frequently identified with Americanization; thus, the antiglobalization movement is largely anti-American at the same time. Both ideologies, antiglobalism and anti-Americanism, are very complex, and they embrace various dimensions—from cultural, to economical, to political. Cultural criticism is premised on a reluctance to accept the export of American culture to countries around the world and on fear of cultural

invasion. The impression of invasion refers both to American popular culture (e.g., television, cinema, music, commercial brands such as Coca-Cola and McDonald's) and elements of American sociocultural reality (e.g., women's rights, sexual permissiveness, consumerism). Cultural anti-Americanism is tightly connected with international value conflict, which has escalated in recent decades. It is founded to a great extent on religious factors and integrates various antinomies, depending on the point of reference. European secular states feel uneasy about American religiosity, and, on the other hand, Islamic fundamentalists accuse Americans of godlessness and vulgarity. Also common is anxiety that modernization and Westernization processes, embodied by the United States, would alter the local cultures and identities of traditional populations.

Contemporary anti-Americanism is based on a number of economic charges. The United States is seen as the nucleus of the alleged ills of globalization, therefore the globalization backlash converges on that country. Americanization is associated with the expansion of capitalism, which causes economic inequalities, impoverishment of numerous sectors of the population, and their displacement from local habitats. Critics claim that American economic development comes at the expense of less affluent countries and that Americans use the International Monetary Fund and World Bank to advance their interests. Distrust of the American economy is aroused also by American multinational corporations located around the world, which influence local markets significantly and which to many people incarnate the negative aspects of capitalism.

Anti-Americanism is by and large focused on American foreign policy. The international community criticizes the United States for refusing to join the International Criminal Court and for lack of support for the Kyoto Protocol on climate change. A serious issue that continues to generate protest is the presence of American bases and nuclear weapons in most world regions, from western Europe to the Philippines, Japan, and South Korea. American political hegemony is resented or feared by various countries for the United States has influenced most regions of the world since the end of the World War II. In the case of China, dislike for the United States caused by its support for Taiwan superimposes on the memories of the period of Western imperialism

and on apprehension of the global spread of democratic ideas. In Latin America, antipathy toward the United States dates back to the American-Mexican War between 1846 and 1848, which deprived Mexico of nearly half of its territory in favor of its northern neighbor. In the 20th century, American involvement in Latin American affairs (i.e., Guatemala, 1954; Cuba, 1961; Dominican Republic, 1965; Chile, 1973; and El Salvador, 1980–1992) and its support for local dictators (Augusto Pinochet, Alfredo Stroessner, Anastasio Somoza) strengthened the anti-American sentiment. Another backbone of anti-Americanism is the Islamic states. Even though Islamic anti-Americanism is considered to be initiated by the culturally and socially oriented critical writings of Sayyid Qutb in the middle of the past century, contemporary leaders in the Middle East lay mainly political charges on the United States. Osama bin Laden (d. 2011), the leader of the Jihadist organization al Qaeda, issued two fatwas against the United States (in 1996 and 1998). He condemned America for occupying Islamic holy places and for its alliance with the Jews in the Jewish-Islamic conflict. Islamic anti-Americanism led to the creation of anti-American terrorism, September 11 being its most dramatic expression. Hostility toward the United States among the Arabic population reached its climax in 2003, when the American president George W. Bush started a war with Iraq. Western countries also opposed this move, considering it to be unilateral, which increased indexes of anti-American feelings in opinion polls in Europe and other regions.

Politically grounded anti-Americanism has been consolidated by other acts of American foreign policy that were considered controversial (e.g., the role of the United States in the Balkan wars). Through global interconnectedness and means of mass communication in the contemporary world, local conflicts become international issues. Foreign actions are no longer aimed at one particular country but affect whole regions or groups of countries; thus, American involvement in one part of the world has an impact on global public opinion. Additionally, networks of interrelations bridge various planes of relations—political, economic, cultural, and religious; this means that an ideology such as anti-Americanism is concurrently nourished by many factors—cultural and religious differences

as well as divergence of political and economic interests. What also has an important impact on the perception of the United States are media that have become exceedingly powerful and capable of manipulating messages and, consequently, creating images and attitudes. Hence, anti-Americanism in the era of globalization emerges as a complex phenomenon that is determined by several factors, created and modified by various subjects, and perceived from diverse angles. Notwithstanding, its capacity for influencing world opinion and international politics is irrefutable and is advancing with growing complexity.

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See also al Qaeda; Clash of Civilizations Thesis; Fatwa; Globalization; Jihad; Postmodernism; War on Terrorism

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ANTIGLOBALISM

See Globalization

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

Religious diversity in Antigua and Barbuda, an island nation located in the Leeward Islands of the northeastern Caribbean Sea, is the result of a long history of European colonization, the Atlantic

slave trade, and subsequent Christian missions. Antigua is the largest island in the country, and about 98% of the population live there. Due to its status as a British colony from 1632 to 1981, most inhabitants of Antigua and Barbuda are Christian. According to the 2001 census, 74% are Christians; of the Christian population, 25.7% are Anglican, 12.3% Seventh-Day Adventist, 10.6% Pentecostal, 10.5% Moravian, 10.4% Roman Catholic, 7.9% Methodist, 4.9% Baptist, 4.5% Church of God, and 5.4% other Christians. Rastafarianism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, and Baha'i are also represented, mostly as a result of 20th-century emigration from South Asia, the Middle East, and other Caribbean islands.

British colonists and traders settled the islands in the 17th century. Slaves imported from West Africa to work the sugar plantations practiced ancestral religious traditions, the remaining traces of which include ecstatic worship and remnants of obeah, a folk religion of the diaspora that includes beliefs in spirits and charms. Anglicanism was the official religion until the 18th century, but Anglicans ministered only to the White population and outlawed obeah practices as a threat to the social order.

From 1756, Moravian missionaries sought to convert slaves and teach them literacy. More than half of the slave population became Moravian by 1834, the date of the end of slavery in the British West Indies. Methodist missionaries also reached slave populations in the 18th century. Both Moravian and Methodist churches advocated obedience to plantation owners in an effort to assuage fears that the slaves would rebel. In the mid-19th century, Catholics and Anglicans also began converting slaves and free Blacks. To replace slave labor, indentured workers from India arrived in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, bringing Hinduism and Islam with them.

Fundamentalist churches have shown rapid growth in the past 50 years, a result of conservative American churches missionizing in the Caribbean after World War II. Many of the Antiguan church leaders combine the more conservative theology with distinctively Caribbean traits, such as shouting, charismatic worship, and the ritual experience of the Holy Spirit. Many Caribbean churches have asserted their independence from denominational control,

forming separate Caribbean faith organizations and their own distinctive worship styles. For example, Seventh-Day Adventist, Pentecostal, Baptist, and Church of God churches belong to the United Evangelical Association.

Rastafarianism has also grown since the 1960s, counting 1,000 to 1,500 islanders today. Since the government outlaws marijuana, which is used in Rastafarian rituals, some Rastafarians claim that the state oppresses their religion.

While Antigua and Barbuda is a secular nation, the government maintains close ties with the Antiguan Christian Council, which recruits ministers to the islands and observes four religious holidays as national holidays (Good Friday, Easter Monday, Whit Monday, and Christmas). In 2004, the prime minister took control of the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs. However, clergy members cannot run for political office.

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See also Anglicans; Caribbean; Missions and Missionaries; Virgin Islands (British); Virgin Islands (U.S.)

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ANTIMODERNISM

See Modernism

ANTI-SEMITISM

Anti-Semitism is the negative perception of Jews, manifestations of which range from verbally

expressed antipathy to physical violence toward Jewish individuals, their properties, institutions, communities, and the state of Israel. Expressions of anti-Semitism date back to ancient times and have been evolving ever since, having gone through periods of appeasement and escalation. Prejudice toward Jews can be rooted in a religious, ethnic, cultural, economic, or political background, depending on particular historical situations and social contexts. In the contemporary world, not only do all of these factors remain valid but anti-Semitic sentiment also has been altered by the processes of globalization and the globalization backlash. Therefore, in the 21st century, anti-Semitism constitutes a highly complex phenomenon and continues to be an influential ideology and a challenging social issue.

Throughout most of its existence, anti-Semitism has been based primarily on religious grounds. In pre-Christian times, most Jews refused to accept the dominant pagan beliefs and kept to their monotheistic religion, which made them unpopular. They were frequently treated as scapegoats, blamed for real and imagined hardships. Aversion to Jews resulted in their expulsion from their traditional homeland of Jerusalem, which began a long history of Jewish diasporas. With the spread of Christianity, Jews remained out of favor as differences between them and Christians became more and more manifest. Hostility toward Jews was principally stirred by their being held responsible for the crucifixion of Christ. From the fourth century, when Christianity was established as the official religion of the Roman Empire, their legal position was disadvantageous, especially in places where laws regulating Christian-Jewish relations were passed. In the Middle Ages, the so-called Blood Libel was added to the allegations against Jews. (It claimed that followers of Judaism murdered Christian children to procure human blood for the preparation of matzo bread.) Prejudice against and fear of Jews led to numerous pogroms and slaughters (e.g., during the Crusades and the Black Death), obligatory Christianization, confiscation of Jewish properties, and even expulsion from several countries (England in 1290, France in 1306 and 1394, Spain in 1492, and Portugal in 1497). Jews were also frequently isolated in designated areas (ghettos), forced to wear distinctive clothes, or permitted only certain professions such

as tax collection and lending money on usury, which consolidated their negative stereotype in the common consciousness.

The advent of modernity, with its emphasis on humanism and rationalism, failed to put an end to the lingering medieval convictions and discriminatory regulations. In the face of industrialization and secularization, religious arguments yielded to rational ones. Anti-Semitism changed shape in the 19th century, when economic and political aspects became vital motives for a negative attitude toward Jews. Jews were now deemed as unscrupulous competitors in economic life and pretenders to world rule. These conceptions were strengthened by modern ideologies. The birth of nationalism brought the ethnic dimension of anti-Semitism to the forefront. Its most severe expression occurred in Nazi Germany, where anti-Semitism became the core part of the Nazis' official ideology and resulted in the Holocaust. Distrust toward Jews was also an important element of communistic ideology, which pictured Jews as the exploitative class and as plotters against communist authorities.

In late-modern times, the idea of Zionism became essential to anti-Semitism. It was formulated at the end of the 19th century in response to the increasing numbers of anti-Semitic acts in many countries, where anti-Semitism was used as a tool to discredit opponents in political battles or to relieve social tensions (as in pogroms in the Russian Empire and eastern European countries). The main objective of Zionism, the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine, was eventually achieved on May 14, 1948. This date constitutes an important caesura in the history of anti-Semitism, as it marks the beginning of the Israeli-Arab conflict, which today plays the leading role in fueling contemporary anti-Semitism.

In present times, anti-Semitism has emerged as a new phenomenon integrating the old features (religious, cultural, racial, ethnic, economic, and political factors) and new ones stemming from the processes of globalization. Even though the importance of religious grounds has diminished, it has by no means disappeared. On the one hand, the Catholic Church changed its position dramatically in the second half of the 20th century, encompassing an ecumenical stance and promoting brotherhood with Jews in Christian countries; yet, on the other hand, the surge of Islamic fundamentalism has

increased hostility toward “infidels” in the Muslim world. These religious antagonisms, coupled with cultural dissimilarities as well as racial and ethnic conflicts, contribute to the clash of civilizations theory, which is eagerly used to explain world antagonisms and which situates Israeli-Arab conflict within the framework of a global clash between Western and Islamic civilizations.

While acknowledging the importance of the religious and cultural aspects, the political factor appears to be the one nurturing global anti-Semitism the most in the past few decades. The establishment of the Israeli state not only generated outrage among Arab nations but also raised massive controversy worldwide. Since then, anti-Semitism has been stirred by the cyclical intensification of the Israeli-Arab conflict as well as by manipulative endeavors such as the propagation of the “Protocols of the Elders of Zion” in the Arab world. (The “Protocols” is a fraudulent text describing Jewish plans to gain global domination that was first published in the Russian Empire at the beginning of the 20th century.) Another serious source of political criticism are Jewish-American relations and the concept of Jews as allies of the United States in its alleged imperial ambitions. Jews constitute only around 1.5% of the population of the United States, but their economic prosperity ensures their visibility and weight. The notion of a powerful Jewish lobby influencing principal decision makers in American politics was consolidated in the era of neoconservative orientation on the American political scene. The Jewish lobby was alleged to have had a big impact on American Middle Eastern policy, particularly on decisions regarding the 2003 Iraq War.

Apart from new cultural and political circumstances, contemporary anti-Semitism has several characteristics that distinguish it from the older versions. First of all, while in earlier stages, anti-Semitism was placed in a local context, it is now oriented globally. Jews, as the object of fear or hatred, are commonly conceived of as a global community, not as harmful or unwelcome individuals. Anti-Semitism tends to be aimed mainly at Jews in Israel and the United States rather than at Jewish minorities in other countries. Second, the main source of anti-Semitism relocated. With the creation of the state of Israel, it moved from Europe to the Middle East and now returns via increasing Arab

immigration to European countries. Furthermore, with the systematical addition of new concepts (Holocaust denial, new anti-Semitism), it tends to adopt the form of a postmodern phenomenon. In the globalized world, anti-Semitism does not refer to one concrete ideology anymore but to a range of convictions that serve individuals and groups as elements to construct their own personalized versions of discriminative ideology aimed at Jews.

The impact of globalization on contemporary ideologies lies also in the implosion of time and space induced by mass media, which precipitates the dissemination of concepts and beliefs and consequently gives vitality to ideological movements. In this way, contemporary anti-Semitism has been transmitted to numerous countries and communities where it traditionally was absent or unpopular. What is more, the message conveyed by modern mass media is highly appealing as it unites various types of charges and is enveloped in a catchy and often symbolic covering. Hence, the anti-Semitic message becomes an abstract idea, disconnected from traditional justification but easily distributed and adopted.

The forces of globalization not only accelerate the spread of ideologies but also favor their interference. Thus, globalized anti-Semitism is frequently identified with anti-Zionism (a politically oriented movement opposing a Jewish presence in the Middle East) and is also associated with anti-Americanism due to the negative perception of Jewish-American relations. Following this reasoning, since Americanization is universally equalized with globalization, the backlash against these phenomena affects anti-Semitism as well, transforming it into a component of an antiglobalization reaction. (The antiglobalization march at the 2003 World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, Brazil, when swastikas were displayed by some protesters, serves as an example.) The relationship between globalization and anti-Semitism therefore proves to be interdependent: Not only does globalization influence the condition and shape of anti-Semitism in the contemporary world, but anti-Semitism in return backfires against globalization by nurturing reactionary antiglobalization movements. This mutual dependence confirms the important role of anti-Semitism in contemporary globalized reality.

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See also Anti-Americanism; Clash of Civilizations Thesis; Globalization; Holocaust; Israel; Jewish Diaspora; Judaism

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APOCALYPTICISM

The term *apocalypticism*, broadly defined, commonly refers to “an apocalyptic doctrine or belief, esp. one based on an expectation of the imminent end of the present world order” (*Oxford English Dictionary*). The original term, *apocalypse*, deriving from the Greek *apokalypsis*, has a more specific definition, meaning “revelation,” specifically referring to the events described in the Book of Revelation. The term *apocalypse* as it is used in contemporary discussions of culture has a wide variety of definitions; John J. Collins uses it to classify a genre of literature possessing certain characteristics. The term is also used to describe the cataclysmic events of the end of time. More recently, its theological use has been extended to refer more generally to disasters of global proportions (see “apocalypse” in the *Oxford English Dictionary*). Though the term *apocalypse* originally described texts, movements, or doctrines (or all three) associated with the Christian tradition, the term is now used to describe a wide variety of phenomena pertaining to the imminent arrival of the end of the world—and the notion of a utopian existence correlated with this end—across religious traditions and in more “secular” contexts.

This entry describes the key features of apocalypticism as a phenomenon of religion, and its manifestations in religious movements, and concludes with a description of some of apocalypticism's recent cultural manifestations.

Scholars in the history of religions and biblical studies have attempted to delineate key features of apocalypticism. Generally, these scholars have noted the presence of some or all of the following characteristics:

1. The first is a dualistic, or polar view, of the world—a view of the world in which only good and evil exist.
2. A unity of history is constructed based on key mythic elements of the past, hidden until the present moment, when there is an uncovering of the significance of these past events in relation to the present. This uncovering may occur through a messianic figure, but does not have to.
3. The emphasis is on the importance of the present moment. This moment is often constructed as the culmination of all of history. It is during this time that history's secrets can finally be disclosed to the true believers.
4. The unique qualities of this present moment correlate to the end of time being near or here already, inaugurating a new existence of humanity in which evil and suffering are already or will be forever expunged from existence.
5. Finally, as Mircea Eliade has noted, this end of time frequently mirrors the beginning of time, a time when evil is all but absent from the world.

We can trace many of these themes operating together in the genesis of several religious traditions: early Christianity, Mormonism, Islam, and the Baha'i religion, to name just a few examples. In the Islamic case, for instance, the earliest revelations (*apokalypsis*) to Muhammad disclosed a new conception of time pointing to the potentially imminent Day of Judgment. This *yawm al-din* was accompanied by detailed depictions of an afterworld: the garden where those favored by the divine would dwell and the fire for those not so fortunate. As Michael Sells and others have observed, in these early revelations, belief in the idea of individual judgment became synonymous with belief in the

new religion itself. Indeed, the introduction of the Qur'an's revised moral code is fused to the results of the final judgment. Sura 107, for instance, makes clear that those who uphold the qualities enshrined by the new Islamic message—such as feeding the hungry, taking care of orphans, and performing the prayer—were to inhabit the garden; those who did not uphold these new precepts would find themselves in the fire. Apocalypticism often features prominently in the birth of new religious movements and religious renewals for a number of reasons. A new revelation offers a revised vision of both the meaning of the present existence and the afterlife. This vision is, in turn, “proven” by an uncovering of the significance of past events; these past events are structured to point to this present moment in time. Through this disclosure occurring at this unique moment in history, the apex of sacredness becomes reoriented: It now revolves around the people who uphold the precepts of this new revelation.

Apocalypticism's dualistic vision of the world aids in the construction and subsequent maintenance of a new societal creation. Those who do not participate in this new vision of the sacred are cast as unbelievers—those who will not be saved at the end of time. This dualism may even lead apocalyptically charged movements to separate themselves from other societies, and many of these movements may encourage the sharing of wealth and property.

Various strands of apocalypticism are apparent in countless religious and more “secular” social transformations throughout history. The Crusades, Christopher Columbus's “discovery” of the Americas, the American Revolution, the Shabbetai Tsevi movement, the 'Abbāsid revolution, communism, and even the rise of Barack Obama can all be seen as apocalyptic events, insofar as they frame a new utopian vision of existence in a unique moment of time, “proven” through specific events throughout history. While some scholars have observed that certain historical periods and places (e.g., 12th-century Europe and various Islamic lands, respectively) witness an upsurge of apocalyptic activity, there seems to be no consensus concerning the reasons why these movements may emerge at specific times. Work by Michael Barkun has suggested that the emergence of millenarian movements correlates to societal or natural upheaval, though disaster does not necessarily guarantee the emergence of apocalypticism.

The creation of a utopian kingdom may involve violence. In 1995, member of Aum Shinrikyō, a Japanese new religion, released sarin gas on multiple subway trains in Tokyo, injuring thousands and killing 12, in an attempt to bring about their leader's version of utopia. Mass suicides at Jonestown (1978) and violence directed toward federal agents by the Branch Davidians (1993) are other recent examples of apocalyptic groups committing violence to either preserve or carry out their millennial visions. Some of the reasons why these groups may turn violent are outlined by Wessinger and Juergensmeyer, among others.

Apocalyptic themes continue to permeate modern culture. The plot of the enormously successful *Left Behind* series revolves around the events of the rapture; the series has sold more than 11 million copies. Films such as *I Am Legend* (2007), starring Will Smith—based on a novel by Robert Neville in 1954 by the same name—envision a secularized version of the apocalypse in which the majority of the world's population is wiped out by a man-made virus and only the elect can save the few remaining members of society. Apocalyptic themes are often employed in politics. One form of this rhetoric may include the likening of candidates to messianic or antichrist figures, as occurred in the 2008 American presidential election. Another form of this rhetoric, as John Judis has observed, is the investing of a nation with a special, exclusive significance—that this nation's role on the world stage is, in part, predicated on bringing these exclusive, special qualities to other, less fortunate nations. (Cuba and the United States, among other nations, have at various points employed this rhetoric.) Each of these rhetorical structures is frequently paired with a sense of urgency, making the invocation of apocalyptic themes a particularly effective means of social mobilization.

While the origins of apocalypticism can be traced back more than 3,500 years, apocalyptic themes and symbols continue to help shape human history even today, providing potent symbolic currency for both the ordering of human existence and social transformations.

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See also Aum Shinrikyō; Baha'i; Branch Davidians; Christianity; Islam; Ismailis; Judaism

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APOSTLE PAUL (CA. 2–67 CE)

Paul (Saul of Tarsus) was the early Christian leader who is often considered to be the person responsible for making Christianity a world religion rather than a small sect of Judaism. Paul was born between 2 and 10 CE in Tarsus, a city located near the Mediterranean coast in what is today the country of Turkey. His Hebrew name was Saul, but on his conversion to Christianity, he took on the Roman name Paul. During his day, Tarsus served as the capital of Asia Minor, and its territory was considered free; thus, Saul was born a free man. Paul had a Pharisaic family origin. The Pharisees' school of thought was characterized by rigid obedience to Mosaic Law (the law given to Moses by God and, more generally, the laws of the Old Testament). Saul took rabbinical studies

in Jerusalem with the renowned teacher, Gamaliel, who personally tutored him.

Baptism

Saul witnessed the stoning of Stephen, who was later identified as the first Christian martyr. In 32 CE, Saul was given permission by the high priest to inspect the synagogues of Damascus for the emerging followers of Jesus and to bring those he found to Jerusalem for judicial investigation. According to the biblical account, on the road to Damascus, Saul had an encounter with a bright light appearing in front of him. The voice of Jesus asked him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" (King James Version, Acts of the Apostles 9:4), and Saul was struck blind. After 3 days of blindness while he was in Damascus, Saul was healed by Ananias, a disciple sent by Jesus to heal him. After his sight was restored, Saul was baptized and received the Holy Spirit of God.

Activity

Between 33 and 36 CE, Saul (now Paul) stayed in Damascus to preach the gospel that promotes Jesus as the Messiah. This provoked some leaders of the Jewish community, and they plotted to assassinate him. Luckily Paul found out about this conspiracy and fled the city by night. He then went to Arabia and stayed there for 3 years, preaching the gospel of Jesus.

In 36 CE, Paul went back to Damascus and then to Jerusalem. He faced serious opposition and rejection from his fellow Christians there, a situation that continued until Barnabas took his side and he was finally accepted. The Jewish parties subjected him to yet another assassination attempt, and the Christian brotherhoods sent him to Caesarea and then back home to Tarsus. There he stayed until 40 CE.

The assumption that Paul was married is primarily based on the social norms observed by the Pharisees, which required members of the Sanhedrin to be married. That implies that if he was married, he might have been a widower at the time of his ministry and preaching.

By 40 CE, Paul's help was being sought by Barnabas, who was sent to spread the Gospel among the Syrian Greeks in Antioch. Barnabas

traveled to Tarsus and asked for Paul's help in converting believers to the Church. Both of them stayed there and taught for a year.

Paul's Missionary Journeys

Agabus, an early follower of Christianity, mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles as a prophet, prophesied a great famine between 41 and 44 CE. Christians were mobilized to plant crops and gather food in order to help their Jewish brethren. Paul and Barnabas delivered supplies and provided famine relief to Jerusalem and returned to their post in Antioch. In 46 or 47 CE, accompanied by John Mark, both of them set off on what was to be their first evangelical missionary journey.

First Evangelical Missionary Journey (Acts of the Apostles 13:1–15:35)

They traveled to Cyprus, Barnabas's native island (13:4–12), and Perga (13:13). At Perga, John Mark returned home for what Paul considered insufficient reason (15:37ff.), but Paul and Barnabas continued their route through Pisidian Antioch (13:14–52), Iconium (14:1–6), Lystra (14:6–20), and Derbe (14:20–21). After they reached Attalia, they sailed back to Antioch. They stayed and preached the Gospel in Antioch until 49 CE.

A dispute between Paul and Barnabas occurred, causing them to separate; Barnabas wanted to take John Mark on their next journey, but Paul refused. Paul took Silas (Silvanus), a representative of the Jerusalem church and a Roman citizen, on a journey of revisiting cities, while Barnabas took John Mark and went to Cyprus.

Second Missionary Journey—48 to 51 CE (Acts of the Apostles 15:36–18:22)

Paul and Silas traveled to Tarsus and then to Derbe and Lystra. This time, Paul met Timothy, who later became his frequent companion. The three of them traveled through Pisidian, Antioch, to Troas, a city in Asia Minor. It is there that Paul had a vision of a holy man in Macedonia, across the Aegean Sea, calling to him for help (16:9–10). Paul treated the vision as a sign from God and set sail to Neapolis, from where they traveled to

Philippi. There they baptized a woman named Lydia, along with her entire family. In Philippi, Paul also performed an exorcism on a slave girl, which agitated her masters, who filed a complaint and started an uprising in the city against Paul and Silas. They were both arrested and imprisoned, but an earthquake made their escape possible.

From there they went to Thessalonica, and Paul preached the Gospel for three Sabbaths in a row, showing why Jesus is the savior mentioned in the Old Testament. There Jason, who was later accused and arrested by an angry Jewish mob that came looking for Paul and Silas but never found them, gave them refuge. Jason was later released, and Paul, Silas, and Timothy left for Beroea. Even there, he was hunted by the Jews from Thessalonica, which is why Paul left for Athens, leaving Silas and Timothy in Thessalonica. In Beroea (17:10–15), however, the Jewish group showed a far more open-minded approach to the study of the scriptures.

In Athens (17:16–34), Paul preached the Gospel, being greatly troubled by the number of false gods worshipped there. He sought help from Silas and Timothy, asking them to come to Athens while the Athenians were requesting that he elaborate on the Gospel. While there were several philosophical schools that believed in the immortality of the soul, the Greeks considered the idea of “bodily” resurrection as preposterous, and Athens generally proved to be a hard ground for the Gospel. Paul was invited to Mars Hill, where he used the existence of an altar with an inscription saying “To the Unknown God” to unveil the existence of a Creator God (17:22).

Following the completion of his second missionary journey around late 50 CE, and joined by Silas and Timothy, Paul set off for Corinth in the late summer of 50 CE. He received a vision from God saying that his preaching of the Gospel would bring results and merit. Paul stayed in Corinth and wrote his epistles, the First and Second Thessalonians. Between 50 and 51 CE, the Jewish community once again accused him before the Roman legal system, but charges were dropped when the governor refused to even hear the accusations. With Priscilla and Aquila, Paul set sail for Ephesus, a city that was serving as a bridge between the East and the West. There he preached in a synagogue, then went to Caesarea, finally ending up in Antioch by the end of 52 CE.

Between 52 and 53 CE, Paul preached in Antioch accompanied by Apostle Peter. They were gathered at a joint feast with the Gentiles and ate together, but when other Christians from Jerusalem arrived, Peter, Barnabas, and others stopped the feast. That act of hypocrisy provoked Paul, and he publicly corrected Peter, saying that he had moved away from the truth of God.

Third Missionary Journey
(Acts of the Apostles 18:23–21:16)

Paul's third missionary journey started in 53 CE (18:23). He traveled to Asia Minor to spread the Gospel and strengthen people's belief in it. Through Galatia and Phrygia, he came to Ephesus, where he stayed for approximately 3 years, after which he set out for Macedonia. During the brief 3 months that he stayed in Macedonia, he went to Corinth. He wrote the First Corinthians in the late winter of 56 CE, the Second Corinthians in the late summer of 57 CE, and the Book of Romans in the winter of 57 CE.

In 58 CE, Paul, together with his company, traveled through Macedonia to the city of Troas, where a feast sanctifying unleavened bread was being held. After that, his company sailed to Assos, while he got there on foot. From there, they went to Mitylene and finally to Miletus, from where Paul sought a visit from the elders in the Ephesian church. There, he warned them about an upcoming apostasy in the Church. Revelation 2:2 shows what notice the elders took of his warning.

Return to Jerusalem

Well into 58 CE, Paul traveled to Jerusalem, after visiting Coos, Rhodes, Patara, and Caesarea. He stayed in Caesarea for several days in the house of Phillip the Evangelist and then entered Jerusalem, even though he had been warned not to come. Taking with him four Jewish converts into the Temple area, he caused a riot. Roman troops rushed to his help, saving him from the crowds. They then sentenced him to scourging to find out what he had done to upset the crowd so much. However, he was freed from scourging by the chief captain after he learned that Paul was a Roman citizen. He was escorted from Rome by night to

the city of Caesarea, and its governor, Felix, was supposed to decide on Paul's fate.

Paul was a Roman prisoner in Caesarea between 58 and 60 CE (Acts of the Apostles 24–26). Paul appealed to Caesar: In 2 years, he defended his case three times. In late 60 CE, along with other prisoners, Paul embarked on a boat to Rome (Acts of the Apostles 27). The boat was controlled by a centurion named Julius, who disregarded Paul's advice not to set sail for Rome through the Mediterranean at that tumultuous time of the year (September/October). The ship was wrecked on the journey from Crete to Rome at the island of Malta. After a 3-month stay, Paul set sail for Putioli, and from there walked to Rome.

Paul was a prisoner once again in Rome from 61 to 63 CE (Acts of the Apostles 28:30). In the 2 years when he was a prisoner in Rome, only one watchman guarded Paul. He was allowed to live by himself and to receive visitors, as well as to preach the Gospel. He wrote the Letter to the Hebrews in the spring of 61 CE; during 62 CE, he wrote the letters to the Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon, and the books of First Timothy and Titus in 63 to 64 CE. During the whole time, he worked on and finished the Book of Acts, which is mostly about him.

Paul was released from prison in 63 CE, and he then traveled to Crete and then to Nicopolis in Macedonia. From 64 to 67 CE, he managed to complete his goal and visit Spain and Britain. Before coming to his death, Paul was yet again imprisoned in Rome, where he wrote Second Timothy, a letter to Timothy. That is his last writing before he died a martyr's death in about 67 CE. He is traditionally believed to have been beheaded.

Maja Muhic

See also Bible; Christianity; Mediterranean World; Turkey

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ARABIC

Arabic (*al-'arabiyya*, *lisān al-'Arab*—"the Arab tongue"; *al-fuṣḥā*, "purer Arabic") is one of the world's leading languages, with an estimated 221 million speakers, and its use as the canonical language of Islam is often credited with helping to give unity to global Muslim culture.

Among spoken languages, it ranks fifth after Mandarin Chinese, English, Spanish, and Hindi. It is the official language of 21 modern countries in North Africa (Algeria, Egypt, Chad, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia, and Sudan), the Arabian Peninsula (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen), the Levant (Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, and Syria), and the Horn of Africa (Djibouti and Somalia). It is also spoken in Palestine and Israel, in the west Saharan territory, in Eritrea, in parts of southern Turkey, in the Khuzistan province of southwestern Iran (also known as Arabistan), and by small minorities in Uzbekistan, Afghanistan, and Cyprus. Arab immigrants carried their native tongue to Europe and the Americas, particularly in the latter half of the 20th century.

Some 1.5 billion Muslims around the world regard Arabic as their sacred language because it is the language of the Qur'an, the Islamic holy book. Many Jews and Christians in the Middle East also use the language in their religious and intellectual life, as well as in their daily affairs. This entry discusses its classification, dialects, morphology, and alphabet; its religio-historical importance; and modern developments in the status of the language.

Classification, Dialects, Morphology, and the Alphabet

Arabic is classified by linguists as a member of the Semitic branch of the Afro-Asiatic languages. It therefore has affinity with ancient languages such as Hebrew, Aramaic, Syriac, and the Akkadian

language of Mesopotamia. It is also related to indigenous languages spoken today in Ethiopia and Eritrea (Ge'ez, Amharic, and Tigrinya). The Maltese language originated as an Arabic dialect, resulting from Arab cultural influence in Malta, Sicily, and southern Italy during the Middle Ages. Arabic is not philologically related to either Persian (classified as an Indo-European language) or the Turkic languages (classified as Altaic languages), although many Arabic loanwords have been assimilated by them. There are a number of subdivisions within the Arabic language itself, the most significant of which are formal literary Arabic and spoken (colloquial) Arabic. The former, known as "classical Arabic" or *al-fuṣḥā*, is the language of the Qur'an and an enormous body of written literature produced without significant interruption in Islamic lands between the 7th and 19th centuries. For generations, scholars and intellectuals studied and codified it, and it evolved into the formal Arabic written and spoken today (known to students in the West as Modern Standard Arabic).

Formal Arabic coexists with various local and regional vernacular Arabic dialects, a phenomenon known as diglossia. While formal Arabic is used in most writings and official and ceremonial addresses, the dialects (*lahjāt*) are used mainly in everyday speech. They differ significantly from formal Arabic, which native speakers tend to consider the superior form of the language. Moreover, some Arabic dialects differ from each other to such an extent that they are mutually unintelligible. This is especially the case with dialects from the western and eastern edges of Arab lands. Colloquial Egyptian, on the other hand, is widely understood in Arab countries because of the leading role Egypt plays in education, politics, and the production of movies and programming for radio and television. Through the centuries, literary and colloquial Arabic have influenced each other—a reason for the language's ongoing vitality.

As a Semitic language, Arabic verbs, nouns, and adjectives are typically formed from tri-consonantal word roots. Different stress and vowel patterns, infixes, and the addition of prefixes and suffixes help provide the root with specific meanings. For example, the root *r-f-q* underlies words relating to kindness and friendship, such as *rifq* ("kindness"), *rafiq* ("male companion"), *rafiqa*

(“female companion”), *mirfaq* (“convenience”), and *murāfaqa* (“accompaniment”), as well as verbal forms such as *rafaqa* (“he was kind”) and *taraffaqa* (“he showed kindness”).

The Arabic alphabet consists of 28 letters, written cursively from right to left. The shape of most of these letters is affected by their position in a word—initial, medial, or final. All of them are consonants, but three of them (*ā*, *ī*, and *ū*) are also used as long vowels. Short vowels are either not written or are represented by optional markings known as diacritics, placed above or below the consonants. In general, a person literate in Arabic is expected to know the correct vocalizations for each word even when they are not present. Indeed, most Arabic texts lack diacritics, with the exception of the Qur’an, Hadith collections, and pedagogical literature. The Arabic alphabet evolved from ancient Semitic scripts in northern Arabia and Syria but only gained widespread use with the appearance of Islam and the establishment of an Islamic empire. During the Medieval Period, Arabic calligraphy became a highly valued art form, often functioning in the place of figural art, which was condemned by the ulema. Indeed, the Arabic alphabet became so dominant and prestigious that it was also adapted by non-Arabs for writing their own languages, such as Persian, Turkish, Berber, Hebrew, and Mozarabic in medieval Spain and, later, Sudanese in Africa, Javanese and Malay in Southeast Asia, and Urdu in South Asia. In such instances, slight modifications were made in the script to allow the inclusion of sounds not found in formal literary Arabic (such as *ch* as in “chair,” *g* as in “game,” and *p* as in “people”).

Religio-Historical Importance

Arabic has been used continuously as a living, written, and spoken language for more than 1,400 years, originating in the Arabian Peninsula centuries before the rise of Islam (seventh century CE). Although it was spoken and used by Arabs in their oral poetry and for written contracts, treaties, and letters in the early stages, it only became a major language for written literature after the promulgation of the revelations of the Qur’an by Muhammad ibn ‘Abd Allah (ca. 570–632 CE), the Prophet of Islam, in the region of western Arabia. It is a central tenet of the Islamic religion that the Arabic of the Qur’an is God’s word, revealed “in plain Arabic

speech” (Qur’an 26:192–196). Scholars disagree over exactly which dialect it reflects, but whatever the case, the Qur’an became a canonical text under the authority of the early caliphs less than three decades after Muhammad’s death. Moreover, in Islam’s first centuries, Muslim scholars developed the doctrines of the Qur’an’s “uncreatedness” and miraculous inimitability (*i’jāz*), thus solidifying its sacred status among the faithful and ensuring that the Arabic text would not be imitated, corrupted, or replaced by foreign translations. As a consequence, Muslims everywhere, regardless of their native language, are required to learn the Qur’an in the original Arabic and recite it in performance of their ritual duties, particularly the daily prayer (*ṣalāt*).

With the establishment of the Islamic Empire in the 7th and 8th centuries, Arabic became the dominant trans-regional language used by Arabs and their subjects from North Africa to the Indian Ocean basin. The Umayyad caliph ‘Abd al-Malik bin Marwan (r. 685–705) made it the official language in fiscal affairs, replacing Greek and Persian. Arabic grammarians in the cities of Basra and Kufa (both in Iraq), the foremost of whom was the Persian scholar Sibawayhi (d. ca. 798), systematized and codified the language, thereby establishing a firm basis for literary expression. It thereafter became the language used in the creation and transmission of a great number of works on religion, history, biography, philosophy, and the sciences. The dominance of Arabic scholarship and letters was further enhanced by the introduction of paper-making technology from China in the middle of the 8th century. This made it possible to produce books in large quantities, which fostered the growth of libraries and literacy in the cities of Islamic lands from Spain to India and Central Asia. Starting in the 11th century, Arabic grammar (*naḥw*) and rhetoric (*‘ilm al-balāgha*) became compulsory subjects in the Islamic religious colleges (madrasas), and the study of Islamic law (*fiqh*) was emphasized.

The blossoming of Arabic literary production after the 9th century also benefited from the translation of texts from other traditions of learning. The most important were Greek philosophical, medical, and scientific texts, as well as Persian historical texts and manuals of political advice to rulers. Concomitantly, languages spoken by the native populations in lands incorporated into the Islamicate *oikoumene* gradually became isolated minority languages, such as Coptic in Egypt and

Aramaic in Mesopotamia (Iraq), or, like Persian, they were changed by the introduction of Arabic script, together with a significant number of Arabic loanwords and expressions. Turkish, Hindi, and Urdu also have a large number of Arabic loanwords as a result of the spread of Islamic religion and civilization. Arabic words gradually found their way into European languages, especially Spanish, which has as many as 4,000 words of Arabic origin (e.g., *algodón*, *arroz*, *azul*, *azúcar*, *alcalde*, *café*, *fulano*, *mandil*, *noria*, *ojalá*, *rincón*, *taza*, and *zalama*) as a result of the presence of Arab and Berber Muslims between the 8th and 17th centuries. Several dozen Arabic loanwords have also entered English, such as *admiral*, *adobe*, *cotton*, *lute*, *magazine*, *rice*, *safari*, *sherbet*, *sugar*, and even *coffee*.

Modern Developments

The status of Arabic has been significantly transformed by modernity. The onset of European colonialism in Ottoman-Arab lands in the 19th and 20th centuries was accompanied by the introduction of Western forms of knowledge and the communication of this knowledge through the medium of French and English *and* through its translation into Arabic. These processes, which undermined classical Arabic's supremacy, were made possible by the establishment of modern schools with Western curricula, the expansion of literacy to a new class of educated elites, and the rise of the print media, especially in Egypt, Tunisia, and Lebanon. Western agents and institutions played a significant role in the transformation of traditional systems of knowledge, but change was also carried forth in the Arabic language by a diverse group of reform-minded elites in these countries. These included members of the Muhammad 'Ali Dynasty, which ruled in Egypt from 1805 to 1953; Al-Azhar shaykhs like Rifa'a al-Tahtawi (1801–1873) and Muhammad 'Abduh (1849–1905); Ahmad Bey Husayn (r. 1837–1855) and Khayr al-Din of Tunis (d. 1889); and Lebanese Christians such as Butrus al-Bustani (1819–1883) and Jurji Zaydan (1861–1914).

As the classical formations of Arabic knowledge became more fragmented, new ones emerged that were promoted through modern national education systems, newspapers, magazines, and printed books. Certainly, traditional Arabic learning and

language study were still available in madrasas and in printed editions of classical Arabic texts, but even these were affected by the forces of change and reform. Instruction in classical Arabic was a required part of the curriculum in the Deobandi schools in South Asia, Saudi religious schools, and Iranian primary schools, especially after the Islamic Revolution of 1978 to 1979. Concomitantly, secular Arab nationalist movements and newly created Arab nation-states made preservation of the Arabic language and its adaptation to modernity essential tenets of their ideologies and policies, eventually leading to the establishment of Arabic language academies in a number of Arab capitals, starting with Damascus in 1919 and followed by Cairo in 1932. Despite efforts to preserve its linguistic purity and authenticity, classical Arabic evolved into Modern Standard Arabic (or Middle Arabic), which reflected infusions of French and English language style, syntax, and diction. Even religious writings by Muslim authors mirror this linguistic shift, as exemplified by the work of Arab intellectuals such as 'Ali 'Abd al-Raziq (1888–1966), Taha Husayn (1889–1973), Muhammad Khalaf Allah (1916–1997), Sadiq al-'Azm (b. 1936), Muhammad Shahrur (b. 1938), and Muhammad 'Imāra, as well as books and religious tracts written by Islamists like Sayyid Qutb (1906–1966), Muhammad al-Ghazali (1917–1996), Yusuf al-Qaradawi (b. 1926), Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr (1935–1980), and Rashid Ghannouchi (b. 1941).

In the area of Arabic *adab*, or *belles lettres*, Western influence is evident in the rise of the Arabic novel, short story writing, and modern poetry. An outstanding author in this regard is Naguib Mahfouz (1911–2006), who received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1988 for his moving portrayals of Egyptians contending with the moral ambiguities and forces of irreversible change in the 20th century. Additionally, modern education and feminist movements in Arab countries and the West have created unprecedented opportunities for women writing in Arabic, such as Ulfat Idilbi (1912–2007), Layla Ba'lbaki, Nawal al-Sa'dawi (b. 1931), Colette al-Khuri (b. 1931), Sahar Khalifa (b. 1942), and Hanan al-Shaykh (b. 1945).

A number of modern Arabic works have achieved global renown through translation into European languages, as well as through scholarly publications. Moreover, more and more writings from the classical Arabic textual tradition are being

published in modern editions and translations, thus expanding their readership and opening up new avenues for inter- and intracultural understanding, disputation, and interpretation. However, the Moroccan intellectual Abdelfattah Kilito is one of those who have objected that bilingualism and translation into Western languages may be forms of continued colonial domination and cultural violation. Indeed, the growth in Arabic language study in European American colleges and universities since the 1960s is not only motivated by intellectual curiosity and objective research projects. It has received much of its funding as a consequence of geopolitical concerns in the West stemming from its history of hegemonic involvement in Arab lands, the Cold War, the dependence on Arab petroleum resources, and, especially after September 11, 2001, the global “war on terror.”

Although Arabic no longer has the singular status it held in the premodern Middle East as a *lingua franca* and is an unrivalled vehicle for the transmission of knowledge, it has nonetheless been adapted by its speakers to the new audiovisual electronic media. Audio cassette tapes quickly became a popular means for circulating Qur’anic recitation, sermons, religious songs, and popular music in the 1980s and 1990s, followed by videotapes and CD-ROM diskettes. Local television programming has been available since the 1950s, but trans-regional Arabic-language satellite broadcasting is now available in all Arab countries, as evidenced by the creation of the Al-Jazeera and Al Arabiya television news channels in 1996 and 2003, respectively. Alongside religious and news programming, satellite stations also offer a variety of educational and entertainment programs in Arabic. Moreover, globalization of the Arabic language has been greatly enabled by the Internet, which carries an ever-expanding number of websites that post Islamic texts and offer different perspectives on religion, politics, society, and the world.

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See also Islam; Middle East; Qur’an

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ARGENTINA

Argentina is a Latin American country with a population of 40 million inhabitants distributed throughout a large territory, about 90% of whom live in cities. Most of the people are Catholic. Catholicism in Argentina is a wide social fact, not confined to the religious sphere. In the 16th century, the Spanish Conquest imposed a model of “Christianity” on the Argentinean territory. Catholicism became the monopolistic culture, not only subordinating those of Native Americans and African slaves but also excluding them from the public sphere altogether. Catholic culture established deep roots in Argentina, persisting postindependence, through liberal times, and well into the mid-20th century. However, modern Argentinean Catholicism is not the result of a parish civilization. It has been historically marked by the significance of urban structures and the persistent lack of priests. The discrepancy between the widespread (Catholic) belief and the low sacramental and parochial participation is one of the main characteristics of Argentina’s religious panorama.

In contemporary, global times, Argentina is a believing society; 91% of the population believes in God. The religious identification shows a

progressive pluralization; the percentage of Catholics in the country came down from 90% of the population in 1960 to 76.5% in 2008. The decline of the sense of belonging to Catholicism describes a fracture of the historical monopolistic cult, due to two main tendencies: (1) the growth of Pentecostal Protestantism and (2) an increase in religious indifference. Indeed, religiously indifferent people (agnostics, atheists, etc.) make up 11% of the population, and evangelical believers make up 9% of the population. In Argentina, there are other religious communities as well, such as Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, Jews, Muslims, Afro-Brazilians, and Buddhists. Jews in Argentina—approximately 300,000 persons, are the first Jewish community in Latin America. Argentina also became a place for the spread of religious movements. On the one hand, Pentecostal megachurches, such as the Igreja Universal do Reino de Deus (IURD; “Universal Church of the Kingdom of God”) and the Igreja Pentecostal Deus es amor (IPDA; “God Is Love Pentecostal Church”); indigenous beliefs; New Age manifestations; and Afro-Brazilian cults have consolidated their position assuming local features; on the other hand, Catholic and Pentecostal Protestant communities were born in the late 20th century and nowadays expand locally and globally.

Three main streams can be identified in the Argentinean religious landscape. First, the increasing quantity of people that define themselves as religiously indifferent confirms that people feel free to construct their identities beyond religious beliefs. Second, there is a new social space for beliefs other than Catholicism, such as the Pentecostal traditions, Native American religious traditions, Afro-Brazilian religions, and the multiple New Age manifestations, many of which express different subjectivities through corporal practices. Third, a deep process of de-institutionalization is in progress. We can perceive the inability of religious institutions to exert control over their parishioners. Most Argentineans relate to God in their own way, and only 2 out of 10 Argentineans attend a religious ceremony on a weekly basis.

We could say, as a form of conclusion, that the religious field in Argentina is a wide space with blurred boundaries that overlaps other social fields. This transformation during the past decades

has resulted in a diversified social and religious landscape that is both innovative and vital.

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See also Latin America; Pentecostal Movements in Latin America; Roman Catholicism

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ARMENIA

The formation of the Armenian nation in southeastern Europe started in the second millennium BCE and was completed by the end of the ninth century BCE, on creation of Urartu, the first united Armenian kingdom. Armenians were the first nation to declare Christianity a state religion in 301 CE by abandoning paganism. The Armenian Apostolic Church (AAC), one of the six ancient autocephalous Eastern churches, has emerged as the main religious organization in the country.

Christianity has traditionally played an important role in shaping the Armenian identity: Despite the secularization of the society during the Soviet Union, adherence to AAC continued to be one of the symbols of belonging to the Armenian nation.

Throughout history when Armenia was divided between different regional powers (e.g., the Ottoman, Persian, and Russian empires), the AAC adopted a political role and ensured the preservation of

Armenian culture and language among the Armenians living under the rule of different empires. It has often been suggested that the Armenian Church played more of a secular role than a religious one by guiding Armenians through liberation movements and political negotiations.

According to official sources, 77% of the population (98% ethnic Armenian) are followers of the AAC; however, there are no reliable data on the religious affiliation of citizens, and nonofficial estimates of different religious congregations vary significantly from the official data. Nine percent of the population belong to minority religious groups, which include Roman Catholics, Armenian Uniate (Mekhitarist) Catholics, Orthodox Christians, Armenian Evangelical Christians, Molokans, Pentecostals, Seventh-Day Adventists, Baptists, various groups of charismatic Christians, Jehovah's Witnesses, members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Mormons), Yezidis (non-Muslim Kurds who practice Yezidism), Jews, Sunnī Muslim Kurds, Shi'a Muslims, and Baha'is. About 14% of the population are atheists or nonreligious agnostics, although this is not reflected in the official statistics.

Based on the data provided by the Department for Ethnic Minorities and Religious Affairs of the Government of Armenia, the palette of the religious organizations registered in Armenia are as follows:

- Four traditional Christian churches: AAC, Roman Catholic Church, Russian Orthodox, and Eastern Nestorian
- Four Protestant churches: Evangelical, Baptist, Adventist, and Pentecostal
- Six organizations of the new religious movements
- One ecumenical church
- One Jewish religious community
- One Pagan religious community
- Two Zoroastrian communities

The Armenian constitution, adopted in 1995 and amended in 2005, provides for freedom of religion and the rights to practice, choose, or change religious belief. Nevertheless, Article 8.1 of the Constitution recognizes “the exclusive mission of the Armenian Church as a national church in the spiritual life, development of the national

culture, and preservation of the national identity of the people of Armenia.” Thus, although the Constitution and the Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations establish the separation of church and state, they grant the Armenian Church official status as the national church. The April 2007 Law on the Relations of the Republic of Armenia and the Armenian Church regulates the special relations between the state and the Armenian Church and grants certain privileges to the Armenian Church that are not available to other religious groups.

In 2009, amendments to the Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations passed the first reading in the parliament, which defines the term *proselytizing* to effectively ban any activity directed at preaching to and influencing citizens with different religious views without their consent or request.

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See also Christianity; Ottoman Empire; Russian Federation

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ART

In both historical and contemporary contexts, global religion is intimately connected to art, or the material production of images and symbols. Traditionally, scholarship within academic fields such as religious studies has relied heavily on textual sources. Art and other material objects are often seen as accessory to the findings related to these sources. Such objects might include icons, or images, that represent figures sacred to some religious traditions; paintings that depict the occurrence of sacred events; art used in religious rituals;

and architecture connected to sacred space. When found within the context of religion, art objects are often described as representational, as opposed to the foundational religious experience or its aspects. Yet, as becomes clear both from the historical developments of religions throughout the world and from the art objects themselves as they exist today, people also use art as a material means of expressing, developing, and empowering their religions, not just for the purpose of representing religious figures or symbols. This entry opens with a discussion of the early symbiosis of art and religion; then examines architecture and sacred space, art as religious representation, religious experience, and artistic practice; and, finally, explains the clash between art and religion.

Early Symbiosis of Art and Religion

Right from the beginnings of art history, religion is present in the way humans perceived and represented their experiences in the world. Evidence from some of the earliest forms of art, as found in European cave paintings that date back to the Late Stone Age or the Upper Paleolithic Age (50,000–10,000 BCE), indicates that art and religious activity were bound to one another in a powerful way from early in the history of humankind. These paintings, which are devoted especially to the naturalistic depiction of animals, are found deep within several cave complexes located in southern France and northern Spain, the most famous of which is known as Lascaux, in Dordogne, France. The remote location of the paintings within the caves and the realistic quality of the animals depicted, combined with the fact that the painted scenes all relate to hunting, suggest that the space of the cave was magical or ritualistic in nature. Researchers have speculated that artist-hunters used the paintings in a sacred, ritualistic way, envisioning the painted animal as a powerful symbol of the real, hunted animal as it existed in the natural world.

Architecture and Sacred Space

Throughout history and in many cultures around the world, art and architecture have provided the means through which different social groups have constructed sacred spaces for their religious practices. In ancient Egypt, for example, the Egyptians

used imperishable stone to construct the massive pyramids and statues that would define the sacred spaces devoted to their immortal gods. This building activity peaked during the time of Egypt's Old Kingdom in the third millennium BCE, at which point Egyptian civilization was at one of its highest points of achievement. It was during this period that famous structures such as the three pyramids of Gizeh were built, providing an immortalized sacred space in which the bodies and spirits of the Egyptian god-kings could be preserved. Equally impressive is the Great Sphinx, a massive figure with the head of a human and body of a lion, carved from rock to act as guardian to the Pyramid of Khafre.

Many other sacred spaces in which art and religion coalesce are found throughout the world today. While some such as those in Egypt are primarily of historical import, others are crucial to the contemporary functioning of today's religions. In Mecca (Makkah), Saudi Arabia, the Kaabah ("cube" in Arabic) is an ancient cube-shaped building that represents the most sacred site of Islam. Found within the courtyard of the Grand Mosque of Mecca, the Kaabah is the symbolic center of the Islamic religion and the shrine to which Muslims around the world must turn each day during their prayer. All Muslims must make the pilgrimage to Mecca at least once in their lifetime, where they partake in rituals surrounding the Kaabah. In addition to its architecture, artistic details of the Kaabah, such as the gold embroidery of verses from the Qur'an on its *kiswah* (the "robe" covering the shrine) are artistic manifestations of the sacred in Islam.

Art as Religious Representation

Religious groups have also used art as a way of representing the histories of their sacred events. We see these representations in all forms of artistic media, including paintings, statues, reliefs, engravings, and drawings. During the Italian Renaissance (14th–17th century CE), artists frequently used fresco paintings to depict biblical scenes sacred to the Christian religion. This manner of painting (*fresco* is Italian for "fresh"), which involves the application of pigments on fresh plaster, had become popular in various artistic circles of the Mediterranean world since the time of the Minoans

(ca. 1650 BCE). In Italy, famous Renaissance frescoes include those of Giotto di Bondone (1266–1377 CE), which are found on the walls of the Arena Chapel in Florence, and those of Michelangelo Buonarroti (1475–1564 CE), found on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in Rome and commissioned by Pope Julius II (1443–1513 CE). These paintings represent important events from the Bible and are located within the sacred space of the Christian church.

In similar fashion, the art of Hindu temples found in India and elsewhere in South Asia commonly depicts events described within the rich histories of Hinduism's mythological tradition. Primarily represented in the form of painting, sculpture, and relief carvings, this art acts on one level to illustrate and narrate important episodes from the epic stories of the Hindu gods. Yet for the Hindu worshipper, art also functions as a sacred means through which divine and semidivine beings may take on a visible, physical form. Icons found both in temples and in the worshipper's home, for example, act as objects that connect the human world to the cosmological realm of the gods.

Religious Experience and Artistic Practice

Religious experience and artistic practice are in some cultures often woven together. One finds this occurrence in some of the fascinating developments that have taken place in the material culture of Daoism, a religion indigenous to China. As part of their religious practices, Daoists engage in activities that focus on cultivation of the human body such that it accords with nature and the cosmos. To aid them, Daoists have developed a visual tool to represent both the internal processes of human bodies as well as the relationship of these bodies and processes to the external world. This visual tool is a map or chart (*tu*) of the body. Such representations offered their viewers the visualization of a system of microcosmic and macrocosmic correspondences perceived to be at work between the body and world. In these map images, or body charts, Daoists depict the human body as a microcosm containing inner landscapes of both natural and cosmic dimensions. As such, they represent human bodies as regulated by complex systems of internal processes that also resonate with the natural world. These body charts, some of which are

used in Daoism today, are alchemical representations whose origins possibly correlate with the rise of internal alchemy (*neidan*) during China's Song period (960–1279 CE). In this context, it has been through artistic means that Daoists have been able to visualize their religious experiences.

In some traditions, there is no clear divide between the sacred and the secular or between artistic practice and religious practice. Such is the case for Native Americans, for whom art and the material world are sacred. From the architectural features of their homes to the designs on their clothing, pottery, carvings, and other objects, art is the creative process through which many objects become meaningful. A unique art form central to Native American ritual practice is the sandpainting tradition of the Navajo culture. Using sand that has been colored using pigments found in the natural mineral materials of the earth, Navajos create elaborate and beautiful paintings on the floors of their homes (*hogans*). The paintings are used specifically as part of a healing ceremony, their images representing stories of heroes and heroines who have suffered and been cured of illness. During the ceremony, the person to be treated enters the painting and sits on it, after which point a medicine man ritualistically treats the person, smearing his or her body with sand particles taken from the afflicted figures represented in the sandpainting. Importantly, the sandpainting is destroyed after it has been used for its ritualistic purposes.

Within the context of contemporary art, a strong influence of religion is often present. Anselm Kiefer, a German artist, is an important representative of the New German School of artists—a group that came together in the 1980s and that is often seen as a counterpart to the 1950s North American art movement, abstract expressionism. Art historians view both movements as interrelated developments that occurred in the wake of World War II. Using a variety of artistic media to create his works, Kiefer has claimed that he is interested in connecting to the past via the reconstruction of symbols. In particular, the artist is attracted to the symbolic aspects of Judaism, especially to the symbols found within the mysticism of the Kabbalah. His work *Merkaba* (1996), for example, is related to the ancient symbol of the chariot described in Kabbalah as operating between earth and seven heavenly palaces. Kiefer also

describes a richness in the mythologies of Judaism and Gnosticism that does not exist in Christianity, which in limiting its imagery to that of the Trinity also made rigid the knowledge attached to its tradition. Both the history of the Holocaust and the state of Germany after World War II have clearly had the most profound effects on Kiefer's art, and the artist uses his art form to demonstrate how Judaism is an intimate part of German culture.

The Clash of Art and Religion

Throughout history, the art and religion of many cultures have developed a symbiotic relationship free of discord. Moments of conflict between art and religion, however, also mark the history of global religion. In the context of Christianity, the most famous of these is the treatment of art as it stemmed from the 16th-century ideology of the Protestant Reformation and the subsequent Catholic Counter-Reformation. Martin Luther (1483–1546), the German priest and professor of theology who led the initial movements of the Reformation, warned his followers that religious imagery had the capacity to come in the way of or corrupt a Christian believer's relationship with God. *Idolatry*, or the worship of an image instead of God, was the primary concern of Luther and other Protestant leaders. When they developed the Protestant Ten Commandments, which differ slightly from those of the Catholic Church, they devised their Second Commandment such that it acted as a proscription against the veneration of religious imagery. Following in the wake of the Reformation's ideological developments, waves of *iconoclasm*, or the destruction of religious icons, swept across areas of Europe during the middle of the 16th century. This especially occurred in Switzerland, Germany, The Netherlands, and northern France, where fanatic Protestant Calvinists entered Catholic churches and destroyed statues, paintings, stained glass windows, and other art objects. In building their churches, Protestants strived to make their places of worship austere and minus the elaborate artworks that had become essential to the making of a Catholic church.

Many other examples of the interaction between art and religion exist in cultures found throughout the world, providing evidence that throughout human history art and representation have often

been just as influential to religious developments and experiences as have been texts and rituals. The symbiosis between nonmaterial religious activities, such as prayer and visualization, and the material output of art is often pivotal, as opposed to being an accessory to the religions of different groups of people. An understanding of how art and material culture relate to religion contributes to how we acknowledge religious experiences as bound to human interaction with the material world.

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See also China; Christianity; Daoism; Egypt; Hinduism; Islam; Italy; Judaism; Mecca; Mediterranean World; Mosques; Native North American Religion; Protestant Christianity; Roman Catholicism; Sacred Places; Vatican City State and the Holy See

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ARUBA

Located 20 miles off the Venezuelan coast, Aruba is the most southwestern island of the Caribbean archipelago. Aruba has an area of 70 square miles and an official population of more than 95,000. More than 90% of Arubans are Christians. According to the 2006 *CIA Factbook*, Roman Catholics constitute more than 81% of the population, Protestants are 9%, and Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, and Jews make up 6%; those professing "none or other" make up 4%. There are

743 Jehovah's Witnesses and 460 Seventh-Day Adventists on the island. Prominent religious buildings include the following: Beth Israel Synagogue, Bible-Way Baptist Church, Church of Christ, a Mormon church, Evangelical Church of San Nicolas, Community Church, Iglesia Evangelica Pentecostal, Holy Cross Anglican Church, a Methodist church, New Apostolic Church, Pentecostal Apostolic Assembly, Faith Revival Center, and a Baha'i center.

As noted, Roman Catholicism has long been the dominant religion on the island. Aruba has eight parishes. The first Catholic chapel—Alta Vista—was built in 1750 and affords sweeping views of the surrounding sea from its perch on the northeastern tip of the island. Closer to downtown Oranjestad, the *Santa Ana Church* was built in 1776 and is noted for its hand-carved neo-Gothic altar.

Protestantism—the religion of 19th-century Dutch elites—currently represents the religious affiliation of less than 3% of the population. The first Protestant Church of Aruba was founded in 1822 by members of the Lutheran and Dutch Reformed churches. The Reformed tradition continues as the United Protestant Church of Aruba. Presently, there are three Reformed churches on the island.

Twentieth-century migration led to the appearance of other groups such as Jehovah's Witnesses, Methodists, and evangelical sects from Suriname and the United States as well as Anglicans, Adventists, Buddhists, Muslims, and Jews. The Muslim community migrated from Curaçao. The Jewish community also migrated to Aruba from Curaçao. Aruban Jews dedicated a new synagogue in 1962. As previously noted, 2% to 3% of Arubans claim to be atheists and/or state that they have no religion at all. The number of individuals participating in African-derived religions (e.g., Santería and Winti) is increasing, as is participation in evangelical and Pentecostal groups. Religious pluralism, while present, is not as common in Aruba as on other Caribbean islands. Some Arubans compartmentalize religion. Saturdays are devoted to calypso, while Sundays are given over to religious observances.

A number of seemingly secular rituals have religious origins; for example, *Dera Gai*, or Saint John's Day (June 24), is celebrated with bonfires

and a ceremony known as “burying the rooster.” A rooster is buried with its head hidden under a calabash above the ground. Blindfolded dancers try to hit the calabash with a stick while a band plays the traditional songs associated with Saint John. In recent years, *Dera Gai* is observed with calabashes and sticks—but without the rooster. In the 20th century, the Carnivale was introduced to the island by Caribbean migrants and has become a preeminent festival. Of special importance are celebrations surrounding an individual's 15th, 50th, and 75th birthdays.

Aruban opinions on death and the afterlife vary but are mostly influenced by Roman Catholicism. Traditional wakes—called *Ocho Dias* (“8 days”)—reflect the duration of the customary mourning period. On the final night, the altar is disassembled, and chairs are turned upside down. House windows are opened to enable the spirit of the deceased to leave.

Traditional Aruban ideas concerning relations with the supernatural are known collectively as *brua*. The term *brua* may have had its origins in the Spanish word *bruja* (“witch”) but differs from European notions of witchcraft. *Brua* encompasses magic, fortune-telling, healing, and beliefs about both good and evil. Magic is performed by a *hacido di brua* (“practitioner of *brua*”) and—according to custom—can be used for both good and evil.

Along with Curaçao and Bonaire, Aruba is considered a part of the Dutch Leeward or ABC islands. The island possesses a mixed Caribbean/Latin American culture. Aruba was claimed by Spain in 1499 but was never colonized. Serious settlement was first undertaken by the Dutch in 1816. Aruba's economy (and population) did not grow substantially until the 1920s, with the arrival of the oil industry. After the Aruba oil industry declined in the 1950s, tourism became the island's economic mainstay. Much of the recent population growth is attributed to immigration from South America and other Caribbean islands. An estimated 5,000 illegal immigrants brings the total island population to more than 100,000. The proportion of foreign-born Arubans increased from 18.5% of the population in 1981 to more than 28% in 1994. This trend has continued and has had a profound impact on religion in Aruba.

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See also Caribbean; New Religions in South America; Roman Catholicism; Shamanism; Venezuela

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ARYANS

In a general sense, *Aryan* is the term used for the people and culture of the ancient Indo-European civilization that spanned the continents thousands of years before the time of Christ. As it has been used in the past century in the English language, the term Aryan can be distinguished from its etymological roots and usage in Hindi in the same period. Of the two languages, the Hindi usage is longer and has a more complex history than its English-language usage. Located within the Indo-European family of languages, the term has mutually exclusive meanings depending on whether it is used in the Indo-Persian or the modern English language. In the Indo-Persian language context, its meaning has religious and moral elements, while in English it is virtually synonymous with racism. The divergent racist meaning in English has resulted from historical events in 20th-century Europe. The more ancient Indo-Persian usage is more sophisticated and continues to be used in literature and discussions without reference to genetics or racism. In modern Indian Hindi linguistic usage, for instance, there is a distinction

between *Ary* and *Arya*, which is obscured when the terms are transliterated and rendered in English as “Aryan.”

In the Indo-Persian linguistic script and usage, *Ary* without the *a* is a self-referential term used to distinguish between the local community and the others without reference to genetics. The antonym *Anaryan* or *Unaryan* is used to refer to the “others,” or those who are not members of the reference group. An Aryan in this sense is one with membership in the local geographical and sociological group with social responsibilities. In this geographical sense, Aryan has been in continuous use since about 3000 BCE.

Additionally in Hindi, *Ary* without the *a* has a moral or class significance. It is a masculine adjective meaning respectable, from a good family, noble, or honorable; that is, an Aryan is a morally honorable person or someone of noble family. The honorific *Aryaputr* used by a wife addressing her husband means literally a “son” (*putr*) of a noble (*ary*) or “Honorable One.” The feminine noun *Arya* refers either to the goddess Parvati or to one’s mother-in-law or grandmother, and an Aryan is a devotee of Parvati or a female relative. Also, *Aryavarth* in Hindi is a masculine noun referring to the geographic region in northern India between the Himalayas and the Vindhya mountains.

An example of current usage in Hindi and its rendering into English script may be seen in the organization known as the *Arya Samaj*. Founded in 1875 in Mumbai, India, by Maharishi Dayanand Saraswati, before and unrelated to the Nazi party, the Samaj uses *Arya* in English, while in Hindi it does not include the *a* ending. The descriptive *Ary* aspect of the name may be noted in the members’ principles, which draw on teachings of the Vedas to make the world inclusive of all races noble. This requires spiritual, moral, and ethical inclusionary conduct seeking the good of all. As there are religious features to the Vedas, being Aryan in this context has religious significance, which is contrary to racism.

In modern English, the usage of “Aryan” by itself, as distinct from *Ary* or *Arya*, gained prominence when it was appropriated with other symbols and used by Adolf Hitler after 1920 in the Nazi agenda of “racial hygiene” and eugenics. The trauma from this has been profound, and the experience includes the Holocaust, which conditions the meaning of

the word. Consequently, in English, racism and Aryan are now inseparable.

However, circumstances do change. The emerging global profile of persons accustomed to ancient Indo-Persian religious traditions and organizations such as the Arya Samaj may help contextualize the Nazi racist usage as aberrant and a distortion contrived for purposes antithetical to the good of humanity.

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See also Ancient Near Eastern Religions; Hinduism; India; Iran; Sanskrit

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ASAHARA, SHÔKÔ (B. 1955)

Shôkô Asahara is the founder of the Japanese movement *Aum Shinrikyô*, responsible for the use of chemical weapons on the Tokyo subway in 1995. He is significant also as an example of a prophetic millennial religious leader whose visions gave rise to apocalyptic teachings and to mass violence committed by his disciples.

Partially blind at birth, Asahara was sent to a boarding school for the blind while young, an alienating experience that influenced his later estrangement from his family. After his applications to university were rejected (possibly due to his blindness), he turned to alternative medicine. In

1977, he moved to Tokyo, married, raised six children, and engaged in alternative healing practices. He was arraigned in 1982 for selling fake remedies. He later joined the new religion Agonshû, engaging in austerities (ascetic practices), before, in 1984, forming a yoga and meditation group, which later became Aum Shinrikyô. In 1986, Asahara underwent austerities in India and claimed that he achieved enlightenment there. Emphasizing asceticism as the key to enlightenment, he proclaimed himself the supreme spiritual teacher of the age with a mission to save the world from apocalypse, renew it spiritually, and inaugurate a new postmillennial civilization. In Asahara's view, the world was polarized between good and evil, with Aum fighting a cosmic war for truth.

According to his disciples, Asahara was a skillful and compassionate but demanding teacher, who forced them, sometimes violently, to perform austerities in order to save themselves. He attracted opposition from dissident ex-disciples, the families of converts, and neighbors of Aum's communes, whom he often treated with disdain and who portrayed him as a manipulative megalomaniac. Such opposition, coupled with the failure of Asahara's grandiose plans to spread his movement globally, caused his visions of world salvation to turn into visions of world destruction. Claiming that enemies were conspiring to destroy Aum and to stop him from saving the world, his paranoia grew when the political party he established to promote Aum failed catastrophically in the 1990 Japanese parliamentary elections, causing the media to publicly ridicule him. By now, Asahara's insistence on enforced austerities had led to violence against disciples who demurred, the accidental death of a disciple, and the spread of violence within and subsequently outside the movement. Asahara's increasing obsession with apocalypse and conspiracies against Aum further promoted such violence as he argued that Aum had to fight and kill its enemies in order to achieve its sacred mission. Ultimately, Asahara ordered his disciples to make sarin nerve gas and use it on March 20, 1995, in Tokyo—a deed that brought about Asahara's arrest, along with senior disciples, on murder and conspiracy charges. He was found guilty and sentenced to death in 2004.

Ian Reader

See also Aum Shinrikyô; Japan; Mahayana Buddhism; New Religions; New Religions in Japan; Terrorism; Violence

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ASCETICISM

Asceticism, from the Greek word *askeo* (“to exercise”), involves disciplining the body for spiritual purposes. Most global religions include a variety of ascetic practices, such as fasting, chastity, social isolation or withdrawal, sleep deprivation, and other forms of bodily control or even torture. In some religions such as Buddhism, Hinduism, and non-Protestant Christianity, distinct categories of people known as ascetics have frequently played prominent roles. In other religious traditions such as Judaism their roles have been more circumscribed. Influential ascetic groups are usually given titles specific to their tradition, including monks (in Christianity); sufis or fakirs (in Islam); sadhus, *ṣaṇyāsins*, or *babas* (in Hinduism); and *bhikṣus* (in Buddhism). However, even when ascetic groups do not figure prominently in a religion, ascetic practices are often a part of the common spiritual practices of the individual—for example, fasting on Yom Kippur in Judaism or self-flagellation during the Shi’a Muslim festival of Ashura. As a field of academic inquiry, cross-cultural asceticism has often suffered from a sort of ex post facto intellectual history—ascetic examples were corralled into an “ism” before asceticism itself was subjected to scrutiny. The result has been a long, sometimes frustrating, attempt to develop a framework that adequately defines asceticism generally while also accounting for the culturally specific contexts of global religions.

During the century following the 1880s, when the academic reflection on asceticism began,

asceticism was seen as a deliberate rejection or repulsion of “natural” desires for food, sex, and social intercourse, and thus a morbid denial of life. Most of these Protestant-influenced theologians and historians looked on ascetics of all traditions with suspicion, if not contempt, as misguided Christians, exoticized easterners, or superstitious savages, who were all willfully alien from “true” religion.

For psychologists of this early period, asceticism was seen as a pathological neurosis, a sign of an unhealthy and masochistic mind. In 1938, Karl Menninger argued that asceticism is nothing more than a form of slow suicide. Not all psychologists saw asceticism as inherently destructive, however. Sigmund Freud and his daughter Anna identified an *ascetic phase* through which all humans pass, in which they deny themselves as a way to internalize paternal and cultural norms. This view of asceticism as a universal and necessary stage in individual development eventually led to Geoffrey Harpham’s more recent 1987 argument that asceticism acts as a sort of underlying operating system through which different cultural programs and norms are inscribed on individuals. Thus, some believe that asceticism plays a positive and indeed critical constructive function in the formation of every cultural system across time and place.

Philosophers such as Arthur Schopenhauer and Frederick Nietzsche also recognized a value of asceticism, which they saw as a natural (if weak) response to a candid assessment of a world marked by misery and suffering. However, they believed that the triumph of humanity required the rejection or at least restriction of asceticism.

The theoretical focus on the negating aspect of asceticism dominated speculation on asceticism until the work of Margaret Miles and Michel Foucault in the early 1980s. While coming from vastly different perspectives, these two authors dramatically shifted the discussion of asceticism away from its negating principles by highlighting the positive construction of a new “self” through asceticism. This “subjectivity” platform emphasized the transformative process of asceticism—the way in which the negation of the existent self was matched by a simultaneous *positive* movement that constructed a new higher self in its place. For example, the monk is not just rejecting his prior self but actively seeking to become a saint. Thus

understood, asceticism was not solely a negative process of self-denial but a largely positive vehicle of self-transformation.

This new paradigm led to fresh questions that scholars addressed throughout the 1990s. What are the political and power dimensions of these transformations historically? Who gains when certain ascetic groups ascend in social or political status? Why do ascetics arise when they do and where they do? How does this ascetic transformation occur psychologically in the individual? Can asceticism be seen as a social-psychological model of compensations in which ascetics give up certain things (status, pleasure, livelihood, etc.) to gain other things (salvation, freedom, powers, etc.)? Furthermore, this subjectivity schema provided a tradition-neutral tool for analyzing asceticism cross-culturally.

The first—and to date only—book on comparative ascetics across religious traditions is Oscar Hardman's 1924 monograph, *The Ideals of Asceticism: An Essay in the Comparative Study of Religion*. Hardman organized ascetic traditions by their overall motivation. He identified three categories: (1) the mystical ideal, in which ascetic acts are seen as vehicles for fellowship with the divine; (2) the disciplinary ideal, in which the aim is to obtain righteousness before God; and (3) the sacrificial ideal, in which the ascetic seeks atonement for wrong action. Hardman's legacy lies in his attempt to discern global patterns between the ascetic's internal motivation and external action.

The scholarly approach of aligning motivations and behaviors is not without problems, because the same external behavior may be motivated by different intentions. Fasting, for example, may be motivated by a desire to punish the body, heal the body, or gain control over bodily passions. Also, when scholars have focused on presumed internal motivation, they have discovered different external behaviors that have been employed, even within the same tradition. Rejection of social customs, for example, may be achieved by shaving one's head, growing one's hair long, or a variety of other behaviors having nothing to do with hair. Accepted behavioral signs depend highly on culture. Scholars inevitably have tended to privilege either external behavior or internal motivation, leading to definitions that are either so expansive as to encompass any behavior related to a goal or so restrictive as to limit asceticism to a list of particular, largely Western, behaviors.

The subjectivity platform provides new fertile ground for the development of a truly cross-cultural platform for the study of asceticism. In the first contemporary study to take into account the subjectivity platform in a global field, Richard Valantasis identified five patterns or types of ascetic transformations:

1. The combative model, in which the ascetic approaches the destruction of the former self in terms of continual warfare
2. The integrative model, in which the ascetic emphasizes a deepening and maturing of the dominant cultural ideal rather than a rejection of it
3. The educative model, in which the ascetic submits to a master so as to absorb his wisdom, powers, and abilities
4. The pilgrim model, in which the new subjectivity is engendered through the acquisition of numerous experiences in multiple encounters with holy people and places
5. The revelatory model, in which ascetic activity "prepares" the subject for some form of revelation or enlightenment

Each of these five examples represents a model for a type of "ascetic" change that can be seen across global religions.

As a growing body of scholars recognize, new approaches must take into account the radically social character of ascetic transformations. Asceticism is by nature a contextual phenomenon that is determined only in relationship to the norms of culture and thus cannot be understood apart from social context. Behavior that is ascetic in one time and place is not necessarily ascetic in a different context. Walking without shoes may be normal on a Tahitian island; the same behavior in a Tibetan winter would be ascetic. Recognizing an activity as "ascetic" depends not on the activity itself but on its relationship to cultural and contextual norms. This is particularly evident in the ascetic act par excellence—withdrawal from the world. While many have seen withdrawal as the quintessential individual act, one easily forgets that it gains its meaning only from being in relationship to a group. Without the community from which the

ascetic removes himself or herself, the act of withdrawal is incoherent.

Furthermore, identifying something or someone as ascetic is a designation made *by others* within defined social and power structures. There are no “natural” ascetics. The *ascetic* label arises through the same social mechanisms as other social categories in society, such as a widow or the insane: They are defined by others due to a single attribute, in this case the transformation of the self through the use and abuse of the body relative to the norms of society. Asceticism is thus inherently externalizing and performative. Poverty, emaciation, flagellation, and chastity can always be seen and witnessed, unlike other spiritual elements such as mystical union or spiritual enlightenment. Ascetic acts may be hidden but can never be “de-corporalized,” regardless of the purpose. The relationship to others plays a critical role in the cross-cultural analysis of asceticism.

As ever-present elements of human existence, the physical body and the spiritual life inevitably intertwine. The task of the religious studies scholar is to understand this complex relationship across religious traditions. As religious practitioners have often argued, however, academics may debate the purpose and forms of asceticism, but, in the midst of an extended fast, ascetics rarely do.

Stephen R. Lloyd-Moffett

See also Foucault, Michel; Monasticism; Mysticism; Sangha; Sexuality; Sufism

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ASHKANAZ

Ashkanaz, or Ashkenazi Jews, are a segment of the Jewish people descended from central and eastern Europe. As an ethnic group, they constitute the largest segment of the Jewish population in the world today, with estimates varying between 8 and

11 million people, or about 80% of the global Jewish population. Now living throughout the Jewish Diaspora as well as in Israel, they developed into a distinct group in western Germany and northeastern France, near the banks of the Rhine River, in the eighth and ninth centuries. Literally meaning “German Jews,” the term *Ashkanaz* comes from the old Hebrew word for Germany.

Together with Sephardic and Mizrahi Jews (who are usually grouped together demographically), Ashkenazi Jews make up nearly the entire population of Jews in the world. There are many cultural differences between the two subgroups—the result of centuries of geographical separation due to the different regions the Jewish Diaspora settled in. For centuries after Roman exile, Sephardic Jews lived primarily on the Iberian Peninsula and migrated to North Africa and the Ottoman Empire. Ashkenazi Jews, on the other hand, lived throughout central and eastern Europe after many moved on from Germany and France, settling in modern-day countries such as Poland, Lithuania, Hungary, The Netherlands, Ukraine, Latvia, Romania, and Russia. One key difference between the Ashkenazi and Sephardic Jews that led to their divergent cultures is that the Ashkenazi lived primarily under a Christian majority, while the Sephardic lived under Muslim rulers.

Early in its history, beginning in the ninth century, Ashkenazi Judaism was centered along the Rhineland and northeastern France. These Jews benefited from strong trading connections with the Mediterranean, and many worked as artisans and craftsmen. In towns and cities such as Worms and Mainz in Germany, and Troyes and Sens in France, they generally lived independently from the Christian majority, organizing themselves under an elected board. They also had their own judicial courts, which they based on the Halakha, or Jewish religious law. Focusing heavily on biblical and Talmudic studies, they built many centers of religious scholarship in their towns. Jews in Europe at this time also adhered more closely to the teachings of the rabbis encoded in the Talmud, rather than directly to biblical law. One major scholarly figure who emerged out of this early Ashkenazic period was Rashi (Rabbi Shlomo Itzhaqi, 1040–1105), born in Troyes. His commentary on the Bible and the Talmud is considered an integral part of Yeshiva study to this day.

In the 15th century, many Ashkenazi Jews began to migrate out of the Rhineland after being expelled from France in 1182 (and then again in 1394) and facing anti-Semitism in Germany. They began settling in other parts of Europe, with most moving eastward into parts of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Lithuania, and as far as Russia. They carried with them the same Jewish traditions that they had developed throughout their time in the Rhineland, and they continued to focus their studies on the Torah. Many of these Jews in eastern Europe lived in *shtetles*, the Yiddish word for a small town where a majority of the population consisted of Jews. Prohibited from working in certain professions, a large number of them worked as financiers and moneylenders to the majority Christian population, as Christians were not allowed to charge interest on loans among themselves. The Jewish community in Poland grew to become the largest Jewish population in the world, beginning in the 16th century, and would remain so until the Holocaust in the 1930s and 1940s. Prominent Jewish scholars from eastern Europe around this time included Rema (Rabbi Moshe Isserlis, 1520–1572), born in Cracow, Poland, and known for his fundamental work of Halakha titled *HaMapa*, and Baal Shem Tov (Rabbi Israel Ben Eliezer, 1698–1760), born in Okopy, Poland, and the founder of Hasidic Judaism. Outside the realm of religious study, the composer Felix Mendelssohn (1809–1847), the writer Franz Kafka (1883–1924), the psychologist Sigmund Freud (1856–1939), and the physicist Albert Einstein (1879–1955) were all Ashkenazi Jews who contributed greatly to the advancement of society.

The distinctive Ashkenazi culture has always been a point of discrepancy between Ashkenazi Jews and their Christian neighbors, and even Sephardic Jews. Yiddish was, for centuries, the language spoken almost exclusively among the Jews of Europe. Literally meaning “Jewish” in its own language, Yiddish is basically a combination of German and Hebrew with some Slavic influences. It was first spoken among the Ashkenazi when they lived in the Rhineland, and it followed them as they moved eastward and eventually around the world. It took a major hit in total number of speakers, however, with the destruction of European Jewry during the Holocaust.

Some distinctive Ashkenazi foods that originated from Europe include cold borsht, gefilte fish, and *kneidlach* (“matzo ball”) soup. Additionally, klezmer music, a genre that relies heavily on violins, accordions, and clarinets, and contains mostly Yiddish lyrics, is closely identified with the Ashkenazi Jews of eastern Europe. There are also practical religious differences between Ashkenazi Jews and Jews of other ethnicities, most notably Sephardic Jews. The two groups have differing melodies for most prayer songs sung in synagogues and also pronounce many liturgical words differently. This does not present a problem, however, since, throughout the world, the two groups usually pray in their own synagogues. Another practical difference is that during Ashkenazi prayer services, the Torah scroll is laid flat when read, while in Sephardic synagogues, the scroll is tilted. Yet another difference that exists today is that during the Passover, when Jews are forbidden to eat bread and grains, Sephardic Jews eat rice, while Ashkenazi Jews do not.

Although eastern Europe contained the highest number of Ashkenazi Jews until the Holocaust and World War II, many had already begun to move to other parts of the world as early as the 17th century. The Chmielnicki massacres in Poland in 1648 forced many Jews to move back westward to England, France, and The Netherlands. Many Ashkenazi Jews had already crossed the Atlantic and moved to the American colonies by 1750, where they made up the majority of the 2,500 Jews living there. Ashkenazi Jews were also moving to Australia, South Africa, and other parts of North America, largely as a result of persecution in Russia. By the end of the 19th century, Ashkenazi Jews outnumbered Sephardic Jews everywhere in the world except Italy, the Muslim countries, and some other parts of Asia. Nevertheless, although they had moved to all corners of the world, the stronghold of the Ashkenazi Jewry would continue to be in Europe until the Holocaust.

Ashkenazi Jews today make up approximately 10 million of the 13 million Jews worldwide. They had made up about 92% of world Jewry in 1931, but their figures sharply declined due to the Holocaust, which cost the lives of 6 million Jews in Europe, or about two thirds of their population. They are the largest group of Jews in the United States at 85% of 7 million, and they make up about half the population of Jews in Israel today. They

were among the first Jews to resettle Palestine as part of the Zionist movement at the beginning of the 20th century, and they have dominated the politics of Israel since the establishment of the state in 1948. A major development in Ashkenazi Jewry has been the migration of Jews from Russia and the former Soviet Union. In 1989, the Jewish population in Russia (made up almost entirely of Ashkenazi Jews) was about 1.45 million. The 1990s saw mass migration of Jews from Russia to other countries, with more than half moving to Israel; today, they constitute the largest foreign-born population of Jews in Israel. The United States, Germany, and Canada have also seen a large number of Russian Jews immigrating to their respective countries.

Recently, Ashkenazi Jews have been the subject of genetic and DNA research as a result of their high degree of genetic homogeneity. Researchers have discovered that nearly all of the Ashkenazi Jews in the world are descendants of a relatively small group of people living in Europe more than 1,000 years ago. This is a prime example of a phenomenon known as the founder effect, whereby a population's genes can be traced back to a few "founders" whose genes have been passed down through generations of very limited reproduction with other communities. New evidence from mitochondrial DNA, however, has found that as few as four women who lived in the Middle East between 2,000 and 3,000 years ago could be the ancestors of 40% of Ashkenazi Jews in the world today. This maternal linkage corroborates the existing belief that the Ashkenazi Jews came from the Middle East to the Rhineland through modern-day Italy after the destruction of the Second Temple by the Roman Empire in the year 70 CE. A negative effect of this genetic homogeneity has been the prevalence of certain genetic disorders among Ashkenazi Jews. Tay-Sachs disease, Canavan disease, familial dysautonomia, and Gaucher disease are just a few of the hereditary disorders that affect Ashkenazi Jews between 20 and 100 times more frequently than other segments of the world population, including even Sephardic Jews. Tay-Sachs disease, in particular, has been identified since its discovery in the late 1800s as a genetic disease linked to Ashkenazi Jews. It has been traced back to a small group of Jews living in eastern Europe during the 17th century.

Zion Zohar

See also Europe; Holocaust; Israel; Jewish Diaspora; Judaism; Lithuania; Poland; Russian Federation; Yiddish

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ASOKA (R. 273–226 BCE)

Asoka was a great emperor of ancient India who had both Hindu and Buddhist sensibilities and left an indelible imprint on ancient world civilization. His policy of dharma (Sanskrit) or *dhamma* (Prakrit) was not religion in its traditional sense. It connoted a righteous path and piety. The son of

the Mauryan emperor Bindusara (r. 298–273 BCE) and Queen Subhadrangi, Asoka embraced Buddhism after the famous Kalinga War of 261 BCE. A transformation took place, and he became *Dharmasoka* (“Righteous Asoka”) from *Chandasoka* (“Cruel Asoka”). The wanton destruction and casualties of the war moved the Emperor. He eschewed *digvijaya* (“victory by war”) for *dhamma vijaya* (“moral conquest”). His path of self-righteousness based on moral and ethical principles was in conformity with Indian religions. Albeit inspired by Buddhism to a considerable extent, it charted a new direction of lofty idealism.

As a patron of Buddhism, Asoka changed the course of history not only in the Indian subcontinent but also in the Far East and in Southeast Asia. Buddhist missionaries were dispatched all over to propagate the ideals of *dhamma*. Two of them, Sona and Uttara, were sent to Burma (Myanmar). The brother and sister team of Mahinda and Samghamitta went to Ceylon (Sri Lanka). In his domain, the Emperor granted religious endowments, built *viharas* (“monasteries”), constructed 84,000 stupas (“reliquary mounds”), and erected commemorative pillars for the propagation of Buddhism. Asoka as a patron of Buddhism constructed some of the finest Buddhist monuments in the subcontinent. The monolithic stone columns were architectural wonders. The Sanchi Stupa of Bhopal has remained a place of tourist attraction. The Rock Edict of Asoka, found in India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan, was another vehicle for circulating Asoka’s *dhamma*. The *dhammahammattas* (“officers of righteousness”) were appointed to propagate the *dhamma*. The Third Buddhist Council was convened in 251 BCE to prevent schism within Buddhism. It was decided to compile the *Saddhammasamgaha* (“true Buddhist doctrine”).

Asoka was concerned with the material and moral welfare of his subjects. He also set a high ideal for himself. Here was an emperor who proclaimed, “All men are my children.” Donning the title of *Devanampiya Piyadasi* (“Beloved of Gods, one looking to please”), Asoka preached ethical principles governing the individual in society. He emphasized respect toward parents, preceptors, Brahmans, monks, friends, the poor, and so on. Honesty, truthfulness, liberalism, compassion, and so on were the cardinal principles governing the

life of a person. An individual was advised to give up cruelty, anger, pride, and jealousy. Asoka advocated ahimsa (nonviolence), stressing the sanctity of life.

Although a Buddhist, the Emperor was very liberal in outlook. He did not oppose orthodox Brahmanism. Religious tolerance was his motto. He initiated the policy of *dhamma* with the precise motive of unifying political units and people professing different faiths. The position of Asoka was consolidated, and his *dhamma* became a cementing force for the centralized empire. But these motives did not take away the credit due to the Emperor, who was very much interested in the moral uplifting of people and the general good of the society.

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See also Dharma, Karma, and Samsara; Hinduism; India; Nonviolence; Theravada Buddhism

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ASSIMILATION

In the context of globalization—the global movement of religious systems, organizations, and people—*assimilation* refers to a mode of religious settlement in which the “arriving” group becomes over time indistinguishable from the “receiving”

or “host” community or society. “They” become sufficiently like “us” so that “we” no longer sense that “they” are alien, different, strange, or otherwise “other.” They change enough for us to accept them as “one of us.” It is also assumed that the assimilation process will leave the “host” society intact and unchanged. “We” have no need to change and in fact do not. Assimilation has been and still is the declared immigration policy of some nations and is proclaimed as the desirable settlement outcome by some in many nations. This entry first presents three case studies and then discusses religious settlement and other challenges to assimilation.

Case Studies

Three case studies drawn from Australia, one of the world’s most religiously diverse and self-consciously multicultural societies, will help draw out the issues raised in considering the concept of assimilation.

The first case involves Dutch and German migrants to Australia, who are said to be models of assimilation. They arrived in substantial numbers immediately following World War II. They came, shed most of their European ways, learned English, worked hard, bought homes in ethnically mixed suburbs, and for all intents and purposes “disappeared” into the larger society. Schmidt and Smit became Smith as many anglicized their names. The fact that a few shops, such as the *Hollandse Winkel*, catered to the peculiar tastes of these migrants was seen as part of fitting in alongside those that sold English and Scottish goods. While some found it necessary to establish a different form of Christianity than was previously available in Australia—the Reformed Churches of Australia and the German Evangelical Lutheran Church are examples—most joined the already existing churches. Dutch Reformed became Presbyterians, staying within a Calvinist theological frame but shifting to a British variety of it. While the arriving Catholics largely went to Australian Catholic parishes, there were complaints that the Catholic Church was too Irish. The children of these migrants entered the larger mate selection pool and had comparatively low rates of in-marriage. The Dutch and Germans assimilated within one generation, sufficiently enough to become essentially invisible

by the end of the 1960s. During this time, Australia and Australians did little to accommodate these migrants, being neither much affected by them nor adopting much from them.

Not so for the Italians and Greeks who followed the Dutch and Germans in the migrations of the 1960s and 1970s. The cultural differences were greater. There were differences in language, dress, cuisine, physical appearance, and religion. There were also significantly more of these groups than of the Germans and the Dutch. Rather than refugees from war-torn Europe, these groups became the leading edge of migration brought to Australia to supply unskilled factory labor and tended to be of working-class and agrarian origins. They painted their houses different colors, planted different gardens, insisted on good coffee, and provided a very different cuisine. They stood out on the streets and in the school yards and established increasing numbers of shopping areas catering to their tastes and religious requirements. They also opened large numbers of restaurants that not only served their tastes but radically transformed Australia’s dining-out expectations. The Italians substantially swelled the ranks of the Catholic Church over time along with other migrant groups, making it more numerous than the previously dominant Anglican Church. Greeks greatly expanded the numbers of Orthodox Christians in Australia and made Melbourne the third largest Greek city in the world. While still being distinctive, Australians of Greek and Italian origin are no longer seen as foreign, and life in Australia is inconceivable without their flavors in the mix of things Australian. But have they (been) assimilated? Neither they nor the “host” society have been unchanged in the process. With 24% of Australians born overseas and 50% having at least one parent born overseas and coming from hundreds of countries, Australia now sees itself as having many cultures within the one society and has little occupational, residential, or other clumping of migrant groups. The Italians and Greeks had the leading edge in those changes that transformed Australia from a British Protestant society to one that is both multicultural and religiously diverse.

Arriving later in the 1960s and 1970s were migrants from Turkey and Lebanon. These Turks and Lebanese formed the core of a growing range of Muslim communities in Australia drawn from

more than 65 different countries. They too “stood out.” While both of these groups were “Mediterranean” and in many ways similar to the Greeks and Italians, their religious differences were greater. Like other migrants they, over time, have built community centers, mosques, and schools suited to their needs, along with shopping centers and restaurants offering halal food. The Turks and Lebanese were well on their way to full acceptance in Australia before the events of September 11, 2001. Indeed, the greater migration concern in the 1990s related to the question of whether “Asians” could be integrated into Australian society following the reception of the Vietnamese “Boat People,” Chinese students following Tiananmen Square, and rising migration from other parts of Asia. Since 9/11 an anti-Islamic and anti-Muslim discourse emerged that has set back the integration of Muslims. While cultural acceptance is not as complete as for Greeks and Italians, the economic dependence on Muslims and other groups, along with the steady movement into all aspects of Australian society of persons from Muslim backgrounds, makes the stridency of the claims that Australia cannot cope with Muslims an ideological concern rather than a practical one. Australia has shifted to accommodate Muslim migrants. Islamic schools take their place alongside other faith-based schools—Jewish, Anglican, Presbyterian, “Christian,” and many others—all funded by government grants. Muslims may bury their dead according to their religious requirements. Muslims sit with others representing the diversity of religions in Australia on boards of reference and policy groups advising governments at all levels. Many employers make provision for prayer times and dress codes. On the other hand, Australian Muslims lead the global discourse on how to be a Muslim in a Muslim-minority society. Both the “host” society and those arriving change in the process of religious settlement.

Religious Settlement

These cases can be described as examples of religious settlement, the process by which a religion moves from one place to another and becomes a part of the new place. The movement of religions may take the form of the migration of people who take with them their religion, or it can be the result

of the expansion of empires that carried a religion with them or the result of missionary work. Until a few decades ago, most Buddhists in Australia were converts attracted to Buddhism by itinerant monks and others. Recent migration from Southeast Asia has swelled the ranks of Buddhists to nearly 3% of the population of Australia and they are now predominantly foreign-born or of parents born overseas. There seems to be no undue concern among Australians regarding the assimilation of Buddhists. Missionary work has also brought Scientology, Brahma Kumaris, Sūkyō Mahikari, and a host of other new religious movements. The assimilation of these groups has concerned some societies more than others.

In the processes of religious settlement, both the religious group and the host society change. The religious group learns how to operate and meet its needs in the new society. In doing so, it may adopt new forms of organization to relate to the larger society, which may expect different styles of organization than are prevalent in the countries of origin. As they settle, religious groups pick up local color and orientations, relate to local issues, and help their people settle. At the very least, the receiving society changes its perception to being self-aware of including a wider diversity than before. Often the changes in the host society are greater, including a wider diversity of cuisine, of color in celebrations, and of languages heard in the street and seen on signs, and greater attention paid to cultural and linguistic issues in service provision. Germany claims to want to assimilate Turkish Muslim migrants, but most fast-food outlets in Germany now are kebab shops and mosques are increasingly purpose-built buildings of architectural note. Both the cuisine and the visual landscape have changed.

Challenges to Assimilation

These case studies make clear that there are dimensions and degrees of difference that present various challenges to assimilation. Not all difference is unassimilable, nor are all differences equally easy to assimilate. Essentially, the issue boils down to what is made of a particular difference in a particular society or group. A difference not noticed and not treated as important is neither assimilated nor unassimilated; for all intents and purposes, it

does not exist. For example, while much has been made of skin color, little is made of hair or eye color, or height. The complexities associated with several dimensions of difference will be considered—religion, color, and dress.

At this time, much is being made about the difficulties of assimilating or incorporating Muslims. One does not hear questions about other groups, such as Buddhists. What makes a religion more or less assimilable? The answer lies in the nature of the reaction of the host society to the “new” religion. What shapes such reactions? What differences can be made the subject of a “reaction” by those who would seek to benefit from the marginalization or exclusion of a religion? Acts of terrorism associated with a religion can certainly lead to negative discourse about that religion. However, somehow the Hindus have kept the violence perpetrated by Hindu nationalists from poisoning their global image, as have Buddhists, who have been largely untainted by the violence committed by Buddhist nationalists in Sri Lanka and the Buddhist military regime in Myanmar.

The example of the anti-Muslim discourse is instructive in examining the role of religious beliefs in determining the assimilability of a group. Some policy makers and researchers make much of the degree of values similarity in assimilation or integration processes. However, as noted above, there is little values disparity between social groups. They all want the same things—education, health, employment and dignity. However, some religious groups are thought to hold beliefs that would be difficult or impossible to assimilate. If I believe you intend to take over my society and change it in ways I do not like, I may be more resistant to your presence than if I believed that you simply wanted to make your way alongside others. However, in this case, the issue is less what the group in fact believes and how they seek to realize their beliefs than the host community’s beliefs about the beliefs of the group in question. It is not so much what Muslims believe but what I believe they believe. In these ways, religious beliefs—the beliefs actually held by a religious group or, more important, those imputed to it—may shape the degree to which it is assimilable.

Groups that are visibly distinct pose a greater challenge to assimilation. Skin color is hard not to notice and has been made much of in different ways in most parts of the world. Greeks and

Italians were “olive skinned” as well as not being of the dominant British Protestant brands of Christianity. The management of color shaped many policies in the British Empire. For example, Australia at its foundation as a single nation in 1901 passed legislation establishing the “White Australia Policy,” which declared that only Whites were acceptable as migrants. This was done in the face of the history of open migration the gold rushes had brought in the mid-19th century. After 50 years of strict enforcement, the policy was undone through a series of executive decisions regarding the acceptability of first Italians, then Greeks, and then Turks and Egyptians. By the 1970s, it had become an embarrassment and was officially rescinded.

Distinctive clothing also is hard not to notice. Some clothing is worn out of adherence to religious norms and expectations. Such clothing has the secondary effect of declaring one’s religious identity. Except for the special clothes of religious professionals—clerical collars, turbans, and other insignia—such clothing is not primarily worn to display identity. The hijab is primarily worn to cover, for the sake of modesty. The *kipa* is worn out of respect for the One above all. Reactions to distinctive clothing can indicate a negative appreciation of religious difference, or they can be a response to the degree of commitment to religion the person is showing; either or both may violate norms of the host society about difference or about acceptable levels of piety.

Arriving religious groups may also bring with them dietary norms—halal, kosher, vegetarian, no beef—as well as a different set of holy days and marital and funeral practices. Accommodating these religious and cultural needs of migrants has occasioned both highly creative responses and strong resistance. Part of the resistance arises from those who feel the dominance of their group passing as others are given space and resource within their once (supposedly) monocultural society.

In each of these examples of difference, it becomes clear that the operative element in assimilating or integrating new groups is not found in the difference itself but in what the host society makes of the difference. The arriving group is virtually passive. Rather, some features are highlighted and defined as problematic by elements of the receiving society.

These cases also point up the great fallacy of the ambitions of assimilationist policies—the assumption that the receiving society will not change. Settler societies that have received a high rate of migration are changing to see themselves as multicultural and religiously diverse rather than as monocultural colonial outposts of some empire. Some of the antipathy to migrants is a displaced hostility to social changes that are happening, changes that in themselves may have nothing to do with migration or migrants. Societies are living entities that are constantly changing and developing. The incorporation of groups with different backgrounds and cultures feeds into this process, but it proceeds in different ways in each society. Take sport for an example; does the fact that foreign students in the quadrangle outside my office are playing cricket mean that they have assimilated to Australia? Probably not. They are from India, Pakistan, and other parts of the former British Empire where cricket is even more popular than here. They might even play a critical role in keeping cricket alive in Australia. The fact that soccer is slowly displacing Australian rules football—our very own version of the sport—and giving rugby a run for its money does suggest that migrants who are more likely to play and promote soccer are changing Australian society. Cricket, like its cultural cousin British Protestantism, is on the wane, not because of migration but due to the decline of the empire with which they are both associated.

While some see assimilation as essential to social cohesion, it is not at all clear that social cohesion is best produced by cultural singularity. Disparaging the cultures and ways of minority groups produces discontent, division, and anger. The incorporation of differences—accepting people as they are and providing access to education, social services, and health—produces high levels of commitment to the welcoming country. Again, assimilation is seen to be not so much a well-thought-out and evidence-based social policy as the product of a monocultural ideology.

The sociocultural context makes a great difference in the perceptions and ambitions of those who promote assimilation as a social policy to promote social cohesion. For example, assimilation means very different things in settler versus nonsettler societies. Settler societies, such as

Australia, have high proportions of people who were born elsewhere (more than 25% in Australia) or who have at least one parent born elsewhere (more than 50%). What does it mean to assimilate into a multicultural society? European societies have much lower proportions of foreign-born people and can sustain the myth of a long-standing cultural integrity that if not unchanged is at least associated with people in a particular place for centuries.

While the numbers migrating to a society is a critical factor in the assimilability of a group, it being easier to assimilate or at least ignore small groups, the official policies of governments make a considerable difference to “assimilation.” For example, Muslims make up the same proportion of the populations of Australia and Germany. While Germany has insisted on assimilation, and was largely unwelcoming of Muslim migrants, Australia offered full citizenship, social security, and health benefits, as well as full participation from the start, and its policies of inclusion have produced a very different context for intergroup relations. Pro-migration policies coupled with strong leadership at all levels of a society, but particularly from the top, facilitate the integration of migrant groups. As has been seen in parts of Europe, strong negative leadership at the top can undo pro-migration policies and programs.

Assimilation represents less a workable policy program than an ideological reaction to social and cultural change. It is an impossible dream in an age of the global movement of people, cultures, and capital.

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See also Australia; Global Migration; Pluralism; Religious Minority-Majority Relations; Tolerance

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ASSYRIAN CHURCH OF THE EAST

The Holy Apostolic Catholic Assyrian Church of the East is a Christian communion that is a religious minority presence found worldwide. Originally located primarily in what is modern-day Iraq, Iran, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon, the Assyrian Church currently has ecclesiastical jurisdictions throughout the world, with an estimated 400,000 adherents. Its own distinct identity dates to 424 CE, when Persian bishops decided in council to reject the theological and disciplinary authority of the Byzantine bishops. Although the Assyrian Church is often referred to as the “Nestorian Church,” this is due to the mistaken notion that it arose as a result of the Council of Ephesus in 431,

which condemned the Christology of Nestorius, the archbishop of Constantinople. The “Persian Church,” as it is sometimes called, did give refuge to Nestorius and highly regards the theology of his mentor, Theodore of Mopsuestia. However, the use of the term *Nestorian* for the Assyrian Church is considered inaccurate and pejorative, as it has been historically used to marginalize the Assyrian Church as heretical.

Like the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches, the Assyrian Church of the East is an ancient Christian church that traces its origins to the earliest days of Christianity, to Jesus and his apostles. It adheres to the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed; practices liturgical worship; follows a developed ecclesiastical calendar; is governed by bishops, priests, and deacons; and holds a high view of sacraments. Distinctive characteristics of the Assyrian Church include its use of the Syriac language and the Liturgy of Saints Mari and Addai. The Assyrian Church also practices active ecumenical dialogue with Eastern Orthodox Christians and Roman Catholics. It issued a joint Christological statement with Pope John Paul II in 1994, and Isaac of Nineveh, an Assyrian bishop of the seventh century, is venerated as a saint by the Eastern Orthodox Church as a result of his profound impact on Orthodox monasticism.

The Assyrian Church of the East has engaged in significant missionary activity during its history, reaching India, China, Mongolia, Korea, and Japan. The Assyrian Church is likely the earliest Christian presence in China, as demonstrated by the “Nestorian stele,” a stone monument in the Xi’an province that dates to 781 and confirms that the church was officially recognized by the Tang Dynasty in 635. Its recent spread throughout the globe, however, is largely the result of 20th-century emigration from the Middle East to Europe, North America, and Australia. As a result of persecution in Iraq, the Assyrian Church moved its headquarters to the United States and is currently based in Chicago. In 1964, the church suffered a schism, which led to the formation of the rival “Ancient Church of the East.”

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See also Eastern Orthodox Christianity; Heresy; Iran; Iraq; Roman Catholicism

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ASTRONOMY

The modern science of astronomy has its roots in the earliest civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece, China, India, and Mesoamerica, where it interacted with religious traditions. Ancient astronomy was concerned primarily with the positions and motions of visible celestial bodies, whereas modern astronomy studies all bodies and matter in the universe, including also their compositions, histories, and destinies. In ancient societies, astronomical calculations were fundamental to the development of both *calendars* and *astrology*—the science and art of finding in the movements of heavenly bodies either predictions of, or causes for, human behavior and natural events on earth. However, the distinction of astronomy as a science and astrology as a divinatory practice is a modern one, as it is predicated on modern ideas of what constitutes scientific thought. In Christianity and Judaism, advances in modern astronomy, alongside those in geology and biology, have created new hermeneutical stresses on the interpretation of the creation stories and motifs found in the Hebrew and Christian Bibles. These stresses have been most keenly felt in post-Reformation Protestantism, with its focus on the Bible as the sole authority for salvation.

Astronomers in the medieval Islamic world improved on the Greek astronomer Ptolemy's geocentric model of the universe by incorporating additional learning from Persia, India, and China. Muslim astronomers developed a robust tradition of observational astronomy aided by applied trigonometry and detailed astronomical tables. This tradition was transmitted to Europe during the Middle Ages.

The age of modern astronomy begins in the 16th century with Nicolaus Copernicus, who, drawing on the work of Ibn al-Shāṭir, proposed a

heliocentric solar system. In the 17th century, Galileo Galilei demonstrated the utility of the telescope in astronomical observation and in so doing provided significant evidence for Copernicus's theory, and Johannes Kepler refined the Copernican system by developing the laws of planetary motion. Kepler's laws were soon corroborated and generalized by Isaac Newton's laws of motion and universal gravitation. In the early 20th century, Edwin Hubble provided convincing empirical evidence that the universe is expanding; by the 1960s, the age of the universe was calculated to be approximately 14 billion years, having emerged suddenly from an extremely hot and dense singularity in an event known as the Big Bang.

Ethnoastronomy is the study of how celestial phenomena are perceived, understood, and used by contemporary peoples not subscribing to modern astronomical paradigms. This field combines knowledge of modern astronomy with ethnographic fieldwork. *Archaeoastronomy* is the study of past peoples' astronomies, and as such, it combines astronomical knowledge with archaeological and historical methods. Both disciplines emerged in the 1970s and have tended to concentrate on the astronomies of the indigenous peoples of the Americas, for whom astronomical beliefs play an important role in their rich and diverse mythologies and ritual practices.

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See also Bible; Christianity; Myth

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ATHEISM

Atheism is literally the belief in no God and in general refers to the rejection of religion. The

great psychologist of religion, William James (1897/1956), described religion as “faith in the existence of an unseen order of some kind in which the riddles of the natural order may be found explained” (p. 51). Atheists (derived from the Greek *atheos*, or “godless”) are those who do not believe that such an unseen order exists and assume that this world (with its natural order) is the only one. Each religion offers a unique description of the spirit world and how we should negotiate with it. While the majority of humanity is made up of believers, from conflicting religious traditions, atheists do not believe in any religion or god. They reject all forms of supernaturalism, including deism and other professions of belief in a “higher power.” This is in contrast to agnostics (from the Greek *agnostos*, or “unknowable”), who refrain from decisive judgments on such claims but clearly do not share the believers’ certainty and commitment. Despite their differences, atheists and agnostics are often grouped together as “nonbelievers.” This entry first discusses the history of atheism, the number of atheists worldwide, and global secularization; then it presents a case study of the United States; and, last, it examines attitudes toward atheists and the atheist label and touches on atheism and intellectualism.

History

Rituals related to spirits and deities were deeply embedded in every known culture of the ancient world. In the West, the concept of atheism arose in Greece in the second half of the 5th century. But even then, according to J. M. Bremmer, the term *atheist* was generally used as an accusation rather than as a self-description. The first prominent philosopher to be labeled an atheist, Protagoras of Abdera (ca. 490–420 BCE), was by his own words an agnostic. Socrates (ca. 470–399 BCE) was charged with refusing to acknowledge the gods of Athens, yet he was not clearly an atheist. Epicurus (341–270 BCE) came close to atheism in his atomistic materialism, which influenced later thinkers such as the German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900). Epicurus held that nothing should be believed except that which was tested through direct observation and logical deduction. As noted by Bremmer, Epicurus held that to attain pleasure

in moderation was the highest good, that the soul does not survive beyond death, and that the gods have no influence on humanity.

Atheism reemerged in Western thought during the Enlightenment, the 18th-century European intellectual movement that put reason above faith. The Scottish philosopher David Hume (1711–1776) developed a naturalist philosophy that verged on atheism, although Hume professed to believe in God. More openly atheistic was Hume’s French contemporary Denis Diderot (1713–1784), general editor of the *Encyclopédie*. Scientific discoveries such as Charles Darwin’s theory of evolution strengthened the case for atheism in the 19th century. Karl Marx described religion as the opium of the people, while Nietzsche built his entire oeuvre on his conviction that God is dead.

By the 20th century, atheism had become dominant in many intellectual circles, as well as a founding principle of the communist regimes of the Soviet Union and China. In the West, Bertrand Russell (1872–1970), mathematician and philosopher, helped set the course of thought with his 1927 pamphlet *Why I Am Not a Christian*. But contrary to the expectations of secularization theorists, religious belief hardly withered away as the 20th century wore on. At the start of the 21st century, a new school of militant atheists renewed the attack on religion.

Estimating the Number of Atheists Worldwide

How many atheists are there in the world? It depends on how one asks the question. The most straightforward approach uses surveys that ask people directly about their religious identification. Yet there are other ways to count nonbelievers. Different definitions will yield different population counts of atheists or nonbelievers. Phil Zuckerman (2007) draws on a variety of sources and different survey methodologies for his estimate in the *Cambridge Companion to Atheism* that there are between 500 million and 750 million worldwide “who currently do not believe in God” (p. 26). He provides country-by-country estimates of the top 50 countries containing the highest percentage of people who identify as “atheist, agnostic or nonbeliever in a ‘personal’ God” (pp.15–17). This definition obviously

encompasses many people who would not describe themselves as atheists.

Zuckerman finds that Sweden, Vietnam, Denmark, Norway, Japan, the Czech Republic, Finland, France, South Korea, and Estonia are the top 10 countries when ranked by the proportion of the population who identify as atheist, agnostic, or nonbeliever in a personal God.

In Sweden, the percentage ranges from 46% to 85%, depending on which survey is to be believed. It is 81% in Vietnam and 64% to 65% in Japan according to Phil Zuckerman. Although China is officially atheist, researchers believe that only about 10% of its population is atheist. (About 80% of Chinese do not affiliate with any religion according to the Pew Global Attitudes Project in 2006.) If we expand the list to include all nations with at least 10% nonbelievers, which gives us 40, they can be divided into several blocs: Europe and the English-speaking nations, communist and former communist nations, and East Asian nations. Vietnam and China combine communist regimes and East Asian culture.

The United States is an anomaly in the Western world in that it ranks near the bottom in irreligion, with just 3% to 9% of the population identifying as atheist, agnostic, or nonbeliever in a personal God, according to Zuckerman. According to the American Religious Identification Survey in 2008 (ARIS; Kosmin, Keysar, Cragun, & Navarro-Rivera, 2009), 0.7% of the overall adult population described their religious identification as atheist and 0.9% as agnostic.

General labels such as “atheist” and “believer” mask a wide range of individual beliefs. In the United States, the General Social Survey question regarding belief in God gets at some of this variety. It is often repeated in various international surveys. The first option, “I don’t believe in God,” would apply to atheists, as they firmly believe that there is no such entity as God; those who choose the second option, “I don’t know whether there is a God, and I don’t believe there is any way to find out,” can be called agnostics because they do not completely reject the possibility of God’s existence; the third option, “I don’t believe in a personal God, but I do believe in a Higher Power of some kind,” captures a deistic or spiritual stance; those who choose the final option, “While I have doubts, I feel that I do believe in God,” are the believers.

“Hard Core atheists,” as classified by Wolfgang Jagodzinski and Andrew Greeley, based on the International Social Survey Program’s study of religion from 1991, which administered the above question on belief in God, also include those who “firmly reject the possibility of life after death.” The authors note that “the proportion of Hard Core atheists is relatively small in all countries except east Germany (42.7%).”

Unlike the findings reported by Zuckerman, which lumps together atheists, agnostics, and nonbelievers, a 2006 Financial Times/Harris Poll makes finer distinctions based on self-labeling. In France, 32% of adults identified themselves as atheists, as did 20% of Germans, 17% of British, 11% of Spanish, 7% of Italians, and 4% of Americans. One quarter to one third of adults in European countries identified themselves as agnostics (35% in Great Britain; 32% in France; 30% in Spain; 25% in Germany; and 20% in Italy).

Global Secularization

Secularization is the historical process through which both society and individuals move away from the dominance of religious institutions and religious ideation. Looking at global history over the past three centuries, there can be no doubt that the importance of religion in the life of humanity has declined over time. In modern, technologically advanced societies, the institution of religion (in the sociological sense) and the religious institutions within society are kept separate from the other institutions of society: politics, the economy, domestic life, art, and entertainment.

Secularization means both the relegation of religion to the private sphere and the decline in observance at a personal level. The two generally, but not always, go together. At the state level, the relegation of religion to the private sphere may take the form of the separation of religion and state and the abolition of religious laws and prohibitions. Thus, the Italians (1974), the Argentineans (1990), and the Irish (1995) have ended the prohibition on divorce, connected to the historical dominance of the Roman Catholic Church, and adopted civil law in marital questions. Away from Europe, one can point to the secular constitutions of the republics of Mexico, Turkey, and India.

At the same time, there has been a decline in religious observance—the second form of secularization. Trend data indicate a broad increase in the share of nonbelievers in the general population worldwide, which most likely indicates a rise in the share of atheists as well. Atheism is rarely a majority option; when people fall away from faith, it is generally into agnosticism rather than atheism.

A series of Gallup surveys as well as the World Values Survey/European Values Survey show that belief in God declined in many developed countries between 1947 and 2001. The proportion of the public expressing belief in God declined drastically in that period from 80% to 46% in Sweden, from 95% to 75% in Australia, and from 66% to 56% in France according to Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart. There are other economically advanced countries where belief in God has undergone little change over time. Japan is an example of very low and stable belief rates—38% of Japanese expressed belief in God in 1975 and 35% did in 2001. The United States follows a similar pattern yet on another extreme, a sustained high belief in God—94% expressed belief in God in 1947 and likewise 94% did in 2001.

Outside the communist countries, where atheism is a state doctrine, it is highly correlated with economic development. Among the Group of Eight (leading economic powers in the world), consisting of Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, and the United States, only the United States has a population that is well under 10% atheist. Looking more broadly at a list of 25 developed economies consisting of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Britain, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Mexico, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, and the United States, most have a significant atheist presence. The six exceptions are Greece, Ireland, Mexico, Portugal, Turkey, and the United States.

If we look at the ratings in the Human Development Report, published annually by the United Nations, which ranks nations in terms of life expectancy at birth, adult literacy rate, per capita income, and educational attainment, we discover that the top-ranking countries have a significant atheist presence. They include the usual candidates, namely, Norway, Sweden, Canada,

Australia, and The Netherlands. As Phil Zuckerman pointed out, the bottom 50 nations on this list lack any significant atheist presence.

William Sims Bainbridge links high rates of atheism with low fertility rates. He argues that atheism correlates with a lack of interpersonal social obligations, which in turn is associated with a collapse of fertility. He cites European countries and Australia as examples of countries with below-replacement fertility levels and high percentages of atheists, as compared with, for example, the United States and Mexico.

Case Study: The United States

The United States is used here as a case study because of the reliability of findings about atheists in the United States. The following analysis draws on the ARIS 2008, perhaps the only national survey that is large enough to provide a reliable socio-demographic portrait of minority groups as small as those of atheists and agnostics.

With its sample of 54,461 adult respondents, ARIS 2008 used an open-ended survey question, “What is your religion, if any?”—which yielded three distinct groups: (1) self-identified atheists, (2) self-identified agnostics, and (3) those who answered “none.” The first two groups were quite small, together amounting to less than 2% of the U.S. adult population. The third group, termed the “no-religion group,” was about 13% of the population. Together, the three groups increased from about 14 million in 1990 to more than 34 million in 2008 according to Barry Kosmin and Ariela Keysar.

In the United States, atheists are predominantly male. In the U.S. population as a whole in 2008, males accounted for 75% of atheists, 65% of agnostics, and 60% of the no-religion group. This may reflect women’s well-known higher religiosity, according to Benjamin Beit-Hallahmi and Michael Argyle, and possibly men’s greater tendency to disbelieve and reject authority. Opinion polls on belief in Great Britain in 2007 also show major gender gaps among atheists: While 22% of men opted for an atheist option, “I am an atheist. The whole notion of supernatural God is nonsense,” only 10% of British women chose likewise. Males (11%) in Great Britain were also more likely than females (7%) to describe themselves as agnostics: “I am an

agnostic. I don't think it is possible to know if there is God or not."

Atheists are also predominantly young. Fully 48% of American atheists in 2008 were under 35 years of age, and only 22% were 50 and over, versus 40% of all Americans, according to ARIS 2008. In Great Britain, the estimates for "convinced atheist" in 1999 were only 2% among people aged 60 and over but 9% among those between 18 and 29 years, according to the European Values Survey.

Agnostics clearly have the highest educational attainment, with 44% being college graduates or having postgraduate education, compared with 36% of atheists. The relatively low educational level of atheists may be simply a result of younger age. Some atheists may not yet be old enough to have earned a college or postgraduate degree.

Agnostics in the United States were concentrated in the West. More than one third (39%) of agnostics resided in the West in 2008 compared with 23% of the total U.S. adult population. In contrast, the South was home to just 25% of agnostics and 32% of atheists but 37% of all Americans. At the same time, atheists have become more common in the Northeast (25%) according to ARIS 2008.

The U.S. population is distributed among Democrats, Republicans, and independents. However, in 2008, 40% of atheists and agnostics were politically independent. Atheists were far less likely than the general public to be Republicans (8% compared with 24% in the general population). The percentage of atheists who were Democrats was slightly higher (35%) than that of the total U.S. population (33%) yet lower than the percentage of agnostics (42%). Not only are atheists indifferent to supernaturalist ideas but they are also the most likely to be alienated from the two main political parties.

Attitudes Toward Atheists and the Atheist Label

In Saudi Arabia, it is illegal to espouse atheism publicly, while at the opposite extreme, in China, atheism remains part of the official state dogma. Western nations range closer to the center of the spectrum. Nevertheless, worldwide, almost in every

country, there are more people who say that they do not believe in God than people who identify themselves as atheists or agnostics. The different levels of antagonism toward atheism, as will be shown here, are associated with its local prevalence. Namely, atheists tend to be distrusted in societies where they are a marginal and uncommon part of society. In contrast, in countries with a relatively longer historical prevalence of nonbelievers, such as France, atheism is less stigmatized.

In European countries, politicians represent the full spectrum of religiosity, as well as no religion, and they can also be self-declared atheists. In the British Cabinet in 2007, of 22 members, 8 claimed to be believers, while 2 declared atheism. The remaining 12 embraced various shades of agnosticism. In 2004, the French politician Bernard Kouchner mocked "talks about good and God" saying, "The days of [religious] hallucinations are over" (Sancton, 2004, p. 52).

In contrast, in the United States, we find a long history of unflattering opinions about atheists tracked in public opinion polls. The Pew Research Center's poll on "religion and public life" in 2003 asked people about their attitudes toward a variety of groups, including atheists. According to the Pew 2003 poll, 8% of Americans would refuse to vote for a Catholic for president, 10% for someone Jewish, 38% for a Muslim, and 50% for an atheist.

Penny Edgell, Joseph Gerteis, and Douglas Hartmann found that for the U.S. public, atheists represented a general lack of morality, sometimes associated with criminality and danger to public order. This is hardly a new idea: In his *Letter Concerning Toleration* (1685), the English philosopher John Locke wrote, "Promises, covenants, and oaths, which are the bonds of human society, can have no hold upon an atheist." In the 19th-century reaction to the Enlightenment, there arose the notion of a moral collapse without religion. Ivan Karamazov, a character in Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* (1880), says that if God does not exist, everything is permitted.

Today, the problem of the atheist is perceived to be a problem of self-interest, an excessive individualism that undermines trust. This perception of atheists as being beyond the pale, morally and socially, is far more prevalent in the United States

than in other advanced economies around the globe. Many nonbelieving societies such as the Scandinavian nations are marked by high levels of solidarity and low rates of social pathology such as violence and corruption. The prisons are not overcrowded in such nations. It has been noted long ago that atheists are underrepresented among criminals.

Atheism and Intellectualism

According to Benjamin Beit-Hallahmi, academia and the world of science have been called “the atheist bastions.” While it is clear that not all atheists are intellectuals, it has been consistently found that among academics and scientists, atheists are often a majority, depending on academic discipline and individual achievement. Early studies have shown that academics are likely to be much less religious than the general population, that those working in the human sciences are less religious than those in the natural sciences, and that the more eminent scientists are the least likely to be believers.

Surveys of U.S. academics and scientists that replicated the early-20th-century work by Leuba found a remarkable degree of consistency among rank-and-file scientists, with 60% of them being nonbelievers according to Edward J. Larson and Larry Witham. A survey among members of the U.S. National Academy of Sciences showed that 93% were nonbelievers, with about 80% being atheists. A 2008 survey of Indian scientists conducted by Ariela Keysar and Barry Kosmin showed that one fourth of them embrace an atheistic or agnostic position and only one fourth are firm religious believers.

Summary

The inclusion of an entry on atheism in the *Encyclopedia of Global Religion* reflects global reality in the 21st century. Atheism is not a religion, but it is part of the religious landscape, as a growing number of individuals worldwide reject religion in any form. Atheism has not swept the field, as proponents such as Marx and Nietzsche might once have expected or hoped. But it is an important force nonetheless. Theologically, atheism matters because it is a frontal challenge to

religious orthodoxy. Socially and politically, it matters because it is the belief system of a large portion of the scientific and intellectual elite worldwide as well as a meaningful share of the public at large in the developed world and the communist or postcommunist nations.

Ariela Keysar

See also Enlightenment; God; Marxism; Secularism; Secularization

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ATTA, MOHAMMAD (1968–2001)

Photos of a stone-faced Mohammad Atta are now emblematic of the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the Pentagon and the Twin Towers of the U.S. World Trade Center. As the eldest (age 33) and most educated (MA, 1999) of the 19 suicide bombers, Atta is credited with coordinating the attacks, which were conceived by Ramzi Binalshibh and Khalid Sheikh Muhammad on behalf of al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden (d. 2011). At 8:46 a.m., Atta flew the hijacked American Airlines Flight 11 into the North Tower of the World Trade Center, thereby awakening Americans to the specter of Islamic terrorism. The three other attacks followed within minutes. Thousands died.

Mohammad el-Amir Atta was born into comfortable circumstances. His father was an Egyptian lawyer committed to a superior education for his two daughters and one son. The daughters earned advanced degrees in the sciences from Cairo University, and Mohammad el-Amir earned a degree in architecture. When Atta was rejected for graduate study in Cairo, his father insisted he study for a doctorate in Germany, partly to distance Atta from his mother. His father arranged for him to stay with a German host family, who eventually asked Atta to leave because of his mounting discomfort with European social and religious liberalism.

Atta studied architecture at the Technical University of Harburg-Hamburg sporadically from 1992 to 1999 and also became immersed in jihadist ideology at al Quds mosque. Attractive to foreign students and Turkish immigrants, al-Quds sponsored taped sermons by, among others, the London-based Abu Qatada, who propagated *The Neglected Duty* of Abd al-Salam Faraj. Executed in 1982 for the assassination of the Egyptian president Anwar Sadat, Faraj had espoused the establishment of an Islamic caliphate in predominantly Muslim countries and eventually over the whole world. The insular group at al Quds, which produced three of the 9/11 pilots, argued together about jihadist ideals, some espousing a spiritual view—a duty to strive against personal obstacles to one’s faith—and others embracing a war against a perceived Zionist-American coalition of Islam’s enemies. Although Islam forbids suicide, the group debated circumstances that might permit it, namely, against *fitna* (“confusion,” “oppression”) and in defense of Islam. Traditional war songs and tales of glamorous fighting in Bosnia and Chechnya permeated the culture of al-Quds mosque.

During this period, Osama bin Laden’s letters declaring war against “Americans in the holy lands” (1996) and “Jews and Crusaders” (1998) were circulated. Atta was late to commit to Osama bin Laden’s war, but in December 1999 in Kandahar, Atta and others from the Hamburg group pledged loyalty to the man. Bin Laden is said to have chosen Atta personally to lead the group on a mission that required them to fly commercial airplanes into U.S. landmarks. From May 2000 until September 2001, Atta and accomplices trained in the United States to do just that, resulting in the terrorist acts of 9/11.

Along with Abdul Aziz al-Omari, Atta has been suggested as a possible author of the suicide bombers' Final Instructions, which envisions the terrorist attacks as exalted replicas of the formative battles in early Islam.

Margo Kitts

See also al Qaeda; Islamism (Political Islam); September 11, 2001; Terrorism; War on Terrorism

AUGUSTINE (354–430)

Along with Paul and Thomas Aquinas, Augustine is one of the most groundbreaking and influential figures in the history of Christianity and in Western philosophy and politics. His works intertwined Christianity and Platonism and offered original, creative insights into the relations of reason and faith and of works and grace as well as the doctrine of original sin. He also presents a compelling figure of a converted sinner who struggles with temptations as he comes to live an exemplary Christian life. Augustine's importance is so paramount that the early-modern theological battles waged during the Protestant Reformation and Catholic Counter-Reformation can be viewed as (in part) a battle over whose would be the definitive interpretation of Augustine's thought.

Aurelius Augustinus lived from 354 to 430, almost entirely in northern Africa (in present-day Algeria). His mother, Monica, was a devout and pious Christian, but her young son did not follow in her footsteps. Augustine spent his youth mired in sin, leading a life of pleasure that included fathering a son, Adeodatus, out of wedlock. He also joined the Manichees, a sect that preached a dualistic worldview, according to which evil emerged from a cosmic clash between Light and Dark, or ideal and material realities. Manicheism combined with Augustine's education in classical rhetoric (especially Cicero) to form his intellectual foundation, to which he added Neoplatonic influences such as Plotinus and Porphyry. In 384, Augustine met Ambrose, a Christian bishop, who began to turn Augustine toward Christianity. This intellectual turn was followed by a spiritual turn, a "conversion of the

heart," in 386, culminating in a mystical experience in 387.

These experiences Augustine narrates in his *Confessions*, which charts his personal journey from sin through spiritual struggle to conversion. He offers a written version of the Christian ritual of (the then public) confession, in the form of an extended prayer addressed to God. In doing so, he writes what is often regarded as the first Western autobiography and shapes notions of the self and the will that still exert influence. Along with his extended self-examination, his *Confessions* includes creative meditations on the nature of God and of evil as well as original theories of memory and of time. It concludes with an inventive interpretation of the opening chapters of the Genesis.

Augustine wrote his *Confessions* just after being appointed bishop of Hippo in 396. He continued to produce influential texts such as *On Christian Doctrine* and *The Trinity* in addition to sermons and commentaries on biblical texts. His impressive corpus concludes with *The City of God*, a massive tome written between 413 and 426 as a critique of Roman moral and religious traditions and as a defense of a Platonic-Christian social vision of just living that concludes with accounts of apocalypse, judgment, and eternity.

William Robert

See also Christianity; Ethics; Mediterranean World

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AUM SHINRIKYÔ

Aum Shinrikyô is a millennial Japanese new religion that attained notoriety through its March 1995 nerve gas attack on the Tokyo subway. It is significant because it manufactured and used

chemical and biological weapons against civilian populations and because its violence was redolent with religious meanings and underpinned by doctrines and apocalyptic visions that made it view violence and killing as legitimate. Thus, it is a striking example of apocalyptic millennialism and a prominent case study in the examination of the relationship between religion and violence.

Aum, Millennialism, and Mission

Founded in the 1980s by Asahara Shôkô (b. 1955), a blind prophet and guru (as his disciples called him), Aum Shinrikyô (“Aum Supreme Truth”) was legally registered as a religious organization in 1989, and it grew to around 10,000 members in Japan (of whom around 1,100 lived in its communes) by 1995. It taught that the world was entering an apocalyptic age in which a final conflict between the forces of good (led by itself) and evil (epitomized by the forces of materialism) would occur and through which the world would either be destroyed or a new spiritual age would emerge. Aum saw itself as charged to bring about this transformation, although initially members were more focused on practices such as yoga and meditation, designed to bring about their own enlightenment. It was highly syncretic, drawing on Buddhism, Hinduism, contemporary mysticism, and Christianity, from which it appropriated the term *Armageddon* to signify its end-time visions. Asahara publicized the movement by claiming spiritual powers, including the ability to levitate, and that he was the supreme spiritual master of the age with a mission to save humanity. An accomplished yoga and meditation teacher, he claimed to have attained enlightenment in India in 1986 and incorporated veneration of the Hindu deity Shiva into his movement.

Aum’s millennialism was grounded in numerous texts—from the Book of Revelation to the prophecies of Nostradamus, to the Buddhist *Kalachakra Tantra*—that posited apocalyptic scenarios and end-time battles between good and evil. It viewed the phenomenal world as evil and obsessed with materialism. The consequence of living in such a realm was the accumulation of bad karma, which would drag the spirit into the Buddhist hells at death; the only way to avoid this was to follow Asahara, reject the world, and undertake austerities

(ascetic practices) in Aum. Initially, the movement believed that the world could be transformed spiritually and that a new age in which materialism and evil would be destroyed could be achieved by spreading Aum’s message globally and recruiting an army of spiritual warriors to overcome the world’s negative karma. To this end, Aum built communes known as “Lotus villages” as a basis for its envisioned utopian order, to which disciples retreated, after having broken all links with their families and pledged absolute devotion to Asahara, to immerse themselves in austerities.

The Turn to Violence

Aum’s relationship with the world rapidly became confrontational as its visions of world salvation were replaced by beliefs that only the select few who accepted Aum’s truths and Asahara as guru were worthy of salvation and that violence was needed to change the world. This transformation was rooted in Asahara’s increasing paranoia coupled with the experiences of the movement, which became embroiled in disputes with the families of disciples, with neighbors of its communes, and with various civil authorities whose rules it flouted. Moreover, although Asahara claimed he could save the world by training thousands of sacred warriors, the numbers who renounced the world were inadequate to fulfill his mission. The sense of failure this engendered coupled with external opposition gave rise to increasingly paranoid attitudes inside Aum; Asahara interpreted such things as signs that the world was so corrupt that it could not be saved and that all who lived in it deserved to be punished. He began to claim that a world conspiracy existed to prevent Aum from accomplishing its mission, with any setback being seen in this light until Aum’s self-induced persecution complex embraced the entire world, apart from the Aum faithful, who were the only beings worthy of salvation. The rest of humanity, in contrast, had rejected the truth and thus merited destruction in the cosmic war that Asahara prophesied would occur by the end of the 20th century.

Internal problems exacerbated this transformation. Asahara stated that austerities were essential for disciples to save themselves and become enlightened; those who were reluctant were coerced, with Asahara deeming it legitimate to force them to

perform austerities for their own good. However, this led to the accidental death of a follower in the autumn of 1988—an event Aum covered up to protect the movement's name. However, when in early 1989 a disciple, Taguchi Shuji, threatened to blow the whistle on this incident, he was killed on Asahara's orders; Asahara legitimated the killing by arguing that if Taguchi had gone ahead, he would have destroyed Aum's mission—an act that would bring immense bad karma and consign him to hell. By killing Taguchi, Aum was thus “saving” him—a doctrinal stance subsequently known in Aum as *poa* (which in effect meant killing someone to “save” them). This event was seminal in Aum's turn to violence, providing it with a means of legitimating violence while also creating a dark secret that Aum's leaders had to conceal at any cost.

In the spring of 1990, Aum's sense of rejection reached its apex after Asahara formed a political party (*Shinritô*, or “Party of Truth”) to fight the Japanese general election. The party lost disastrously, and the media was highly critical of Asahara and his followers. The debacle further convinced Asahara that the world needed to be punished for its rejection of the “truth” and that a final, actual war, in which Aum had to confront its enemies, was inevitable.

In this increasingly fraught context, Asahara argued that it was the spiritual duty of Aum's sacred warriors to kill the “enemies of the truth” in order to defend their mission. By doing so, they would (under the doctrine of *poa*) also “save” such unbelievers from accumulating bad karma and falling into hell. Thus, killing became elevated into a spiritually meritorious act of salvation—a vision that, wedded to Aum's belief in the inevitability of a final war, was instrumental in Aum's endeavors, from 1990 on, to develop biological, chemical, and other weapons with which to fight this war and punish all who rejected Aum.

This program of weapons development, conducted clandestinely by an inner circle, was accompanied by attacks on individual opponents and on members who tried to defect. By spring 1995, Aum was widely suspected of numerous attacks, including using the nerve gas sarin in the town of Matsumoto in June 1994 (aimed, it later transpired, against three judges trying a case involving Aum). Aware that the police were about to raid its premises, Asahara ordered his disciples to attack

the Tokyo subway using sarin. It is unclear whether this was a diversionary tactic designed to forestall police raids or a dramatic gesture by a leader determined to ensure that Aum made a global impact before he was arrested. Besides killing 12 and injuring thousands, the attack—on a subway station at the heart of Japan's government office district—was symbolically a blow against the Japanese state. Shortly afterward, the police raided Aum's premises throughout Japan, arrested hundreds of devotees, and charged Asahara and several others with crimes including murder. Asahara and several others have been sentenced to death, although no executions (as of March 2008) have been carried out.

Aum After the Attacks

The Japanese government considered proscribing Aum but decided that this was not constitutionally possible. However, it revoked Aum's status as a registered religious organization in 1995, although members can still meet and pursue collective worship. Their numbers have been greatly reduced; as knowledge of their leaders' deeds emerged, many left Aum, while the loss of its leadership and the stigma of their leader's crimes left the movement highly vulnerable. Its assets were sequestered to compensate its victims, and its centers were closed. Yet (according to government statistics) around 1,000 people continue to remain faithful to a movement that has now officially apologized for its acts and has dropped its teachings related to *poa* and the legitimation of violence. In 1999, seeking to amend its image, Aum changed its name to Aleph; however, the Japanese public remains highly suspicious of it, and Aum members continue to face hostility from local communities.

The remaining members still perform austerities and believe that an apocalyptic end-time is imminent. The movement has, however, split over Asahara. Although he officially stepped down as leader in 1996 and has no contact with members, his influence still pervades the movement and its public image. Some devotees believe that he is still their guru and that his actions were part of an inspired plan whose truth will become known eventually. They assume that he will be executed but view this as evidence of the evil nature of the

human world they reject. However, others believe that the movement has no future unless it can break free from Asahara's image, and secessionist groups based on Aum's teachings while distancing themselves from its founder have emerged. This has further fragmented the movement, making its future increasingly uncertain.

Ian Reader

See also Asahara, Shôkô; Japan; New Religions; New Religions in Japan; Terrorism; Violence

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AUROVILLE

Auroville, "the city of dawn," is a religiously based community in South India with a utopian, global vision. Founded on Wednesday, February 28, 1968, in Villipuram District in the state of Tamil Nadu, 10 kilometers north of Pondicherry in South India, its mission statement states that it aims to be "a universal town where men and women of all countries are able to live in peace and progressive harmony above all creeds, all politics, and all nationalities." The purpose of Auroville is to realize human unity. These are the words of its founder, Mirra Alfassa (1878–1973), more widely known as "The Mother."

Mirra was born in Paris to a Turkish father and an Egyptian mother. In 1906, she founded *L'Idée*, a

small group dedicated to spiritual experimentation. In 1909, she married Paul Richard. The following year, he traveled to Pondicherry in French India, where he met Aurobindo Ghose (1872–1950). Mirra joined him and on meeting Aurobindo claimed to have immediately recognized him as the figure in her visions whom she had identified as Krishna. After a year with Aurobindo, she left India and spent some time in Japan. In 1920, she returned to Pondicherry and stayed in India until her death 53 years later.

Aurobindo's "integral yoga" and philosophy, which informed all Mirra's work, claimed a knowledge of reality from "supramental" planes of consciousness above the normal human level. Central to his thinking is the evolution of reality away from the material and the release of the conscious mind. Central to this process is a cosmic energy (Shakti), which he identified as a goddess—"the Mother." The point is that he identified Mirra herself in terms of the descent of the divine to the earthly plane. Hence, as "the Mother," Mirra was at the heart of Aurobindo's mission. In 1926, she took over the leadership of the ashram.

Mirra was concerned that there should be a place where people could live in harmony and focus on the development of the inner life. She also felt that the ashram was not providing this and began to develop the idea of an experimental community, a spiritual laboratory—Auroville. In 1960, she established the Sri Aurobindo Society in Pondicherry, which acquired legal status through its registration in Calcutta (now Kolkata) under the 1961 Bengal Societies Registration Act. As such, it became the organization legally responsible for Auroville and, in 1968, the overseer of its finances and the official channel of funds from UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) and the Indian government.

In 1962, at the age of 84, she withdrew from close physical contact with the ashram but continued to work on the Auroville project. In 1966, Auroville received an endorsement from the Indian government, and the General Assembly of UNESCO "approved" the plan for the township.

Auroville's inauguration in 1968 was attended by delegates from 124 nations. Its perceived potential was evident in UNESCO's third resolution (1970), which stated that steps should be taken within the

budgetary provisions to promote the development of Auroville as a significant international cultural program.

An impressive architectural feature of Auroville, which has its origins in a vision of the Mother in 1970, is the *Matrimandir* ("Temple of the Mother"), a large, golden metallic sphere. This is "the soul of the city," its spiritual heart.

Since the death of the Mother in 1973, difficulties emerged, largely because the Mother identified no successor. Hence, the Sri Aurobindo Society assumed the role. Aurovillians, however, refused to recognize the authority of the society, citing the Mother's teaching regarding "divine anarchy": There should be no rules. Authority is located within each individual. However, the society was able to make policy and financial decisions because it received the funding and, through the "General Fund," managed Auroville's economy. Indeed, although no Aurovillians were represented in the society, they were nevertheless expected to give their personal possessions to the fund. In 1976, the society even terminated funding to Auroville, accusing it of moral laxity and of being a conduit for the CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) to interfere in Indian affairs. In June 1976, representatives of Aurobindo centers in nine European countries issued a declaration to the Indian government stating that they no longer had confidence in the society and that they were withdrawing their support, financial and otherwise. Finally, in September 1988, after a series of legal battles, the Auroville Foundation Act was passed. All the property and assets of Auroville were transferred to the Indian government. Auroville is now separate from the society, with a "Governing Board" established by the government. Although many Aurovillians understood this intervention as the continued action of the Mother, others view this forced centralization of authority as a long way from the Mother's vision of a society guided by "divine anarchy."

Christopher Partridge

See also Global Cities; Hinduism; India; New Religions

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AUSTRALIA

Australia, a large island nation in the southwest Pacific Ocean, is a multicultural society. It contains numerous religions and spiritualities developing under their own impulses as well as through the impact of the media, immigration, and links with overseas authorities or movements. This variety is mostly quite recent, though, and a majority of Australians still identify with Christian denominations introduced from Great Britain and Ireland. Many now reject formal religion, and religious sentiment is usually unobtrusive, but it can sometimes be very public and controversial. Indigenous Australians include Aborigines on the continent and Tasmanian and Melanesian Torres Strait Islanders; the latter are mostly Anglicans.

Aboriginal Australians

For at least 45,000 years, continental Australia was inhabited by hunter-gatherers, speaking more than 200 languages and forming perhaps 500 cultural groups by 1788. Attempts to reconstruct Aboriginal religion are frustrated by the disruption, adaptation, and cultural extinction wrought by colonization, but a key feature was the linkage between tribal groups and their places of origin. A concept now called the Dreaming (less accurately, the Dreamtime) was, or became, almost universal. In the Dreaming, more linked to place than to time, both social mores and the natural environment were formed by powerful ancestral beings. These left traces of themselves in the features and forces of the heavens and the landscape as well as

in its people and other inhabitants. The Dreaming—and the cosmos itself—was perpetuated through retelling myths, performing rituals, and adhering to ancestral mores. Knowledge of traditional beliefs and practices was commonly restricted by age and gender, with an individual's passage to adulthood typically marked by initiation in a sacred place.

Disease, massacres, and land seizure drastically reduced the Aboriginal population. Early efforts to promote “civilization” (settled agriculture and Christianity) were usually underresourced and undermined by cultural and linguistic incomprehension. Some successes were achieved where viable settlements were established and missionaries learned the local language. Interaction with Europeans led to reworkings of traditional myth and practice incorporating elements of Christianity or to maintaining both religions simultaneously without reconciliation. More recently, many Aborigines have integrated traditional art and dance and respect for Mother Earth into evangelical Christianity, and the proportion of Christians is comparable with the national average.

European Settlers

Britain established a penal colony at Sydney Cove in 1788, and similar settlements followed until transportation ended in 1889. From the First Fleet, there were also free settlers, whose arrival accelerated from the 1830s. Until World War II, immigrants overwhelmingly came from Great Britain and Ireland, though in numbers that created a unique mix of religious affiliations. In proportions varying from place to place, English Anglicans mingled with Scottish Presbyterians and Irish Catholics (and other combinations) as well as with increasing numbers of Methodists (augmented by revivals), not to mention Baptists, Congregationalists, and Quakers. Most British Protestants shared an evangelical ethos, as did Lutherans, who, dissenting from the newly established Prussian state church, were unusual both as Continentals and as religious refugees. Missionaries representing new American churches and sects, such as Seventh-Day Adventists, also had a marked impact. Reacting principally against Chinese immigration, Australian governments developed a “White Australia” policy—largely endorsed by the churches—that

limited immigrant diversity before the 1970s. More varied nationalities began to arrive in the interwar and postwar years, however, such as Italian and other Catholics, Greek and other Orthodox Christians, Ashkenazi and Sephardic Jews, and Dutch settlers both Catholic and Reformed.

Occasionally, local conditions (notably the sparsely populated “outback”) necessitated innovations such as the Bush Brotherhoods, composed of itinerant Anglo-Catholic clergymen. The Flying Doctor service was initiated by the Australian Inland Mission, founded by the Presbyterian John Flynn (1880–1951). Lacking long-standing endowments and a tradition of deference, the Anglican Church had to become more democratic than at home.

Church and Society

The first chaplains in the Australian penal colonies were effectively state employees, more valued for maintaining discipline than for offering pastoral care. Beginning in 1836, Church Acts subsidizing other denominations' buildings and stipends thwarted Anglican aspirations toward establishment status. By the time the Commonwealth of Australia was formed from the six colonies in 1901, such aid had long been phased out. The preface to the new constitution acknowledged reliance on “the blessing of Almighty God,” but Section 116 (influenced by the U.S. Constitution) prohibited the federal government from establishing any religion, obliging religious observance, forbidding the free exercise of religion, or imposing a religious test for public office. Prayers at the opening of Parliament and aid to religious schools (resumed in 1963) are not deemed unconstitutional: Populist pragmatism has trumped legalistic consistency. Most state governments have legislated against religious discrimination.

While the prevailing ethos holds religion to be a private matter, churches and religiously motivated individuals have influenced politics, and before the 1960s, the Catholic-Protestant tension, sharpened by Irish nationalism, was a significant force. Most churchmen applauded Australia's contribution to the Great War, but Melbourne's Archbishop Daniel Mannix (1864–1963) was widely vilified for campaigning against conscription. Catholics long

influenced the Australian Labor Party, but their anticommunist campaign caused a split in it in 1954.

Historically, the churches have provided welfare and promoted public morality, replicating North American institutions such as the Women's Christian Temperance Union and the Young Men's Christian Association. Protestants long sought to constrain the sale of alcohol, prevent the secularization of the Sunday "Sabbath," and inculcate faith through Sunday schools. Catholics prioritized schools staffed by the religious—including the Josephite sisters, founded by Saint Mary MacKillop (1842–1909). Nowadays, religious people—of any affiliation—regularly express opposing views on moral issues, including the rights of indigenous peoples, refugees, women, and homosexuals, and on the morality of abortion, reproductive technology, war, and euthanasia. The Uniting Church (created by Congregationalists, Methodists, and Presbyterians in 1977) has consistently promoted Aboriginal land rights but has suffered defections over the issue of homosexual clergy. Conservative Christian lobbyists were linked to John Howard's Liberal-National Coalition Government (1996–2007), while Prime Minister Kevin Rudd (2007–) advocates Christian Social Democracy.

Current Trends

Recent religious developments reflect international trends, including the popularity of eclectic spiritualities (often incorporating indigenous, ecological, and New Age themes), clerical sexual-abuse scandals, theological polarization within churches but rapprochement among the like-minded across denominations, and the growth of fundamentalism and Pentecostalism, including megachurches that promote conservative moral agendas. The most notable is the Sydney-based Hillsong, which has established congregations in Europe and screens services worldwide. While the status of women has been enhanced in most Protestant churches, for some time Sydney's conservative Evangelical Anglican diocese did not ordain women and blocked their ordination elsewhere.

In the 2006 census, 63.9% of the total population (approaching 20 million) declared themselves Christians—a decline from 96.9% in 1921. (Fewer

than 10% attend church weekly and fewer than 25% monthly.) Meanwhile, the growing numbers of nonreligious people (including Humanists), reached 18.7%, and 11.2% did not report a religious affiliation. If some are immigrants (e.g., from China), most are unchurched Australians. The Anglican Church, comprising 43.7% of the population in 1921, dropped to 18.7% by 2006 and is declining relatively and absolutely as membership ages rapidly. Both the Uniting Church (5.7%) and the Presbyterian and Reformed churches (combined at 3.0%) have similar profiles. Catholics, maintaining greater intergenerational loyalty through their schools, overtook Anglicans as the largest denomination in 1986 and peaked at 27.3% of Australians in 1991. They had fallen back to 25.8% by 2006, but their actual numbers were still growing thanks in large part to recent immigration (including from the Philippines). Recently, many "new" varieties of Christianity have also become firmly established, such as the Coptic Orthodox.

Chinese Buddhists and "Afghan" Muslims have been represented in Australia since the 1850s and 1860s, but only since the 1970s have large numbers of non-Europeans arrived. In 2006, Buddhists (many Vietnamese or Chinese) made up 2.1% of the population, Muslims 1.7%, and Hindus 0.7%. The most ethnically diverse and (especially in the case of Lebanese migrants) the most difficult to accommodate have been Muslims, inevitably associated with events such as 9/11, the 2002 Bali bombings (killing 88 Australians and 114 others), and Australia's participation in the 2003 invasion of Iraq. The 2005 Cronulla riots revealed ethnic as much as religious tensions, while Sheikh Taj al-Din al-Hilali's 2006 remarks blaming immodest women for rape and adultery highlighted contrasting values—to the embarrassment of other Muslims.

Megachurches and Orthodox cathedrals, along with mosques and temples, frequented by both immigrants and converts, signal profound changes in the Australian religious landscape. With almost a quarter of resident Australians born overseas, a new era of religious diversity is well under way.

Christopher John van der Krogt

See also Anglicans; Christianity; Indigenous Religions; New Zealand

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AUSTRIA

The history of the eastern European country of Austria is linked to that of the Catholic Habsburg Dynasty. While providing most of the emperors to the Holy Roman Empire (962–1806), Austria presided for more than six centuries (1273–1918) over the destiny of the Austrian monarchy as well as over a number of states and kingdoms, constituting a multinational and multiconfessional empire, before giving up its dreams of European hegemony at the end of World War I. Austria then became a small federal Danubian republic of homogeneous religious confession, representing approximately the limits of the hereditary countries of “the House of Austria” (around 8 million inhabitants in 2001). This dynasty never developed a national consciousness; however, its identity was built in its will to assert the unity of the Catholic faith and in the religious contests/fights against heretics (Protestants) in the frame of the Counter-Reformation or against the unfaithful (Muslims) when it was the rampart of Christendom against the Ottoman Empire (with the Vienna sieges in 1529 and 1683 and its victory in 1697). However, the dynasty had to deal with pluralism: namely, the *Toleranzpatent* (“Edict of Toleration”) of Joseph II, granting to Protestants the right to private practice of their religion in 1781; the *Protestantpatent* (“Protestant Patent”) of 1861, conferring to them parity with Catholics and the status of a public law corporation; and recognition granted to the Islamic Hanefite rite in 1912.

In terms of religion, the basis of the Austrian judicial and legal order rests on various sources, reflecting many layers and milestones in the country’s constitutional history. Religious freedom is guaranteed individually and collectively on the basis of Articles 14 and 15 of the Staatsgrundgesetz (StGG) of 1867—incorporated since 1920 in Article 149 of the Austrian constitution (Bundesverfassungsgesetz, BV-G); in Article 63 Section 2 of the Treaty of Saint-Germain (1919), granting the right to practice cult worship publicly, even when the cult is not officially recognized; as well as in Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights, all of which are relevant to the legal status of religious freedom. As in Germany, due to the rejection of the state church and the neutrality of the state, state and church are separate, even though a certain number of domains are managed jointly (*res mixtae*): for example, religious instruction in schools, theology faculties, and army chaplaincy. One went from a state church marked with the Josephist stamp (the enlightened absolutism of Joseph II in the 18th century) to a coordination and partnership principle imposed around 1960 (the recognition and development in 1957 of the concordat of 1933/1934). The main coordination organ is the Kulutramt institution (culture office) under the cultural federal minister, which has branches in the nine federal states (*Bundesländer*) that constitute the Austrian Republic. Previously in charge of supervising the state church system, it is today a facilitating office for religious groups and provides protection to minority religious communities. Since the adoption in 1998 of the federal law on the Legal Personality of Registered Religious (RRBG, BGBl, I Nr. 19/1998), there are three categories of religious societies: (1) those recognized by the state (14 in 2010)—for example, the Catholic Church (73.66% of the inhabitants in 2001), the traditional Protestant churches (4.68%), the Orthodox churches (2.7%), Judaism (0.1%), and Islam (4.3%)—having the status of public law corporations, with certain para-public privileges (religious instruction in schools, help from the state in the collection of church contributions [*Kirchenbeitrag*]); (2) those registered by the state (10) and thus having legal status under private law; and (3) those that can only lay claim to the status of an association.

The Catholic Church was for a long time part of a strong support system, structuring the public and private spaces of Austrian society, but its influence on the latter has lessened since the 1950s. It went through various crises (e.g., the scandal surrounding the Archbishop of Vienna, Mgr. Groer, in 1995). Since the 1970s, religious confession/faith has played a diminishing role in electoral decisions. The *Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreichs* (SPÖ; “Social Christians”) reconciled with the Catholic Church thanks to the efforts of both Bruno Kreisky (1911–1990) and Mgr. König (1903–2004) in the 1970s. The Catholic Church condemned the xenophobic ideas of the *Freiheitlichen Partei Österreichs* (FPÖ; “Freedom Party of Austria”). Christian values are gradually losing their place in society, as evidenced, for example, by the controversy in 2009 regarding hanging a crucifix in nursery school and kindergarten classrooms and the experimental introduction of a course of ethics as an alternative to religious instruction in 1997. The absence of religious affiliation increased (from 0.1% in 1910 to nearly 12% in 2001) and affects close to 50% of the population in Vienna, to the point that Catholic religious instruction has little demand and will be abolished in some schools. Islam is relatively well integrated, as evidenced by the introduction of Islamic religious instruction in Austrian public schools in 1983 and the founding of a pedagogical academy for Islamic religious instruction in 1988.

Sylvie Le Grand
(translated by Denise Le Boëdec)

See also Enlightenment; Islam; Laicization; Protestant Christianity; Religion and State; Roman Catholicism

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AUTHORITY

The concept of authority varies among religious, political, and cultural traditions and may be perceived and encountered according to the order and arrangement of each society. In a dynamic world, the perception of the locus and operation of authority in society varies similarly. Since authority is closely related to power and legitimacy, where and how it is encountered affects everyone who is involved in the exercise of authority. From their roots in Latin, the terms *author* (Latin *auctor*) and *authority* (Latin *auctoritas*) have associated meanings. A significant distinction is that an author can operate in isolation but authority requires a social context. Consequently, authority unlike authorship cannot exist or operate without more than one party. These parties minimally involve those who claim authority and those who refer to that authority with acceptance, implying the possibility of rejection. The experience of authority in human communities can have all the complexity of human interactions, involving perceptions, differences in power, and roles or positions in societies. It is possible to view ultimate authority in temporality not only in communities but also in nature, as well as other than in temporality.

Perceptions

Recognition of authority arises when power is exercised to issue and enforce laws or norms. Authority then operates to bring order into a society. At the same time, since authority is not unique

to an individual or otherwise singular but plural, both in its location and in its operation, in any societal context, there are multiple immediate or mediated authorities that arrange themselves dynamically. For instance, there can be a plurality of religious authorities as well as civil authorities all contemporaneously operating in a single societal context. Where a society has competing authorities, the exercise of authority could be perceived as a crisis that some people, following Jürgen Habermas, might refer to as a deficit of legitimacy.

The perception of authority is of course conditioned by the cultural experience—the location and power of the observer in particular contexts. A powerful person who is vested with authority would reasonably have a different experience of that authority and other authorities than a weaker person in the same context regardless of culture. Additionally, views of what constitutes order can be culturally different. For example, in some cultural contexts, order and coexistence and hence authority exist and are maintained by a sense of duty rather than as individual or human rights, as may be found in other societies.

With a multiplicity of authorities in a given society, according to some scholars, in particular Asian contexts, coexistence in society may be established through a social valuation of harmony rather than through concepts of pluralism, as in some Western societies. The concept of harmony itself may be a cultural value.

The Exercise of Authority

Authority can operate systemically, as in the act of naming. In such a process, to name involves selecting descriptors and applying classifications or names. The act of naming itself being an exercise of power, to name that which is named is a capacity to make a selection; it provides a foundation for the exercise of authority by all parties.

Although authority can be distinguished from responsibility, the two cannot be separated. The one with authority retains responsibility for the exercise of that authority whether it is delegated to an agent or not. In this concept, as long as the agent operates within the scope of the delegated authority, responsibility for actions attach to the delegator. For instance, at work, where the employee does

what the boss instructs, the responsibility for the consequences remains with the boss. Of course, the employee can and sometimes does decide to exercise independence from the boss and acts differently than instructed. Where there is a difference, the employee asserts a separate authority and could then be held responsible for the consequences.

The exercise of authority may be either beneficial or damaging and not unusually results in both. For instance, the interest of authorities in preserving or establishing social order has been cited as the motivation for the interventions of advocates of democracy as well as for the resistance to it. The issue may in fact be which social order is relevant to a particular authority. Additionally, differing concepts of democracy applied by authorities may also be pertinent. So in France, allegedly democratic authority is exercised to prohibit wearing articles of clothing prescribed by nonstate authorities in the interests of social order. In China, state authority resists the democracy advocated by the French as allegedly being contrary to social order. In the Chinese order, specified religious practices are also prohibited. Thus, in all exercises of authority by humans in the interests of order in society, choices are made and boundaries established with consequences. In a more complex discussion, biological determinants as well as social determinants operate to authoritatively affect each person in varying ways. In some contexts, there is a further distinction between religious and secular authorities. Religious authorities may be human or otherwise.

Nature

Where humans have been prompted to act out of a sense of authority and dominance, those who believe in an untrammelled obligation to “subdue the earth” may also be reasonably susceptible to the consequences. It is in this sense that some would hold humans responsible for actions and treatment of nature. In response, some understand the experience of nature when encountered in an overwhelming manner to also be an authority. Nature in this sense includes the biological and the social and is often viewed from the perspective of a human being. Nature from the human perspective may be individualized and genetically influenced at the subcellular level or at scales larger

than the social human community, such as the biospheric, the geospheric, or the cosmic.

In this classification of nature, astrological authorities may be recognized by some as incorporating elements of nature in a unique configuration. Accepting the authority of nature is seen in cancer researchers, who investigate the genetic and proteomic authorship of human experience. Similarly, some ecologists postulate that the earth or the cosmos as a whole is the authority, which, even if impersonal, still operates to order and enforce its own rules. Accepting the authority of nature may also result in evaluating people in relation to nature as authority.

Differences

Different authorities may establish different agendas and operate differently in similar circumstances. In the previous example, both the French and the Chinese authorities opposed selected practices mandated by the practitioner's religious authorities. In other words, both the French and the Chinese authorities elected to be in conflict with particular nonstate or alternate authorities, albeit different authorities, when those alternate authorities are perceived to be a threat to their security. In this sense, authorities have the capacity to determine choices and act if and when an alternate authority interacts with their own. This interaction is a feature of coexisting heritages as well as authority in crisis.

A gender-based analysis can provide an example of an authority in crisis. In such an approach, authority is described or characterized as patriarchal, with attendant consequences for the exercise of that authority. An alternative preference could be a matriarchal authority, which may be different from one consistent with feminist principles.

Received Authority

Received authority is that which one has experienced by tradition and is distinct from authority that one elects to accept and also distinct from competing authority that is imposed contrary to the preferred authority. Received authority includes some characteristics of imposed and elected authorities but is distinguishable from them. In particular, received authority serves as an

introductory experience of authority against which subsequent elections or impositions may occur. In practice, one could elect to continue with received authority either as elected authority or as imposed authority. Thus, a child encounters the authority of parents as received authority, which can be discarded for elected authority or continued either as elected or as imposed authority. A prisoner would presumptively be under imposed authority; but where a prisoner prefers the familiarity of life under prison authorities to the unaccustomed orders of life outside, prison authority would be a choice rather than an imposed authority.

Where there is an assertion of authority, challenges to it are a constant feature. Typically, it is not a question of whether or not there are competing authorities but rather the identity, circumstances, and trajectories of those interacting authorities. Coexistence of authorities is possible but not permanent. While crises of authorities have always been present in human societies everywhere, they may be differentiated by their circumstances. Some scholars distinguish a "modern" crisis of authority, which is marked by the experience of a problematic relationship with the past. In the modern frame, one must choose between preferred and alternative versions of heritage. From a past in which there have been traditional certainties with cosmology and community reflecting each other, modernity distinguishes and discontinues the association between cosmology and history.

Competition Between Authorities

Competition between religious and state authorities is not universal. Where these authorities are dominant and contemporaneous, their operations are modified by the larger societies in which they are to be found. For instance, in the tradition of the British, the dominant authority in society is alleged to be the "rule of law." The British monarchy is therefore described as a constitutional monarchy subject to the authority of the law. The same monarch is the ruler of 23 kingdoms, each with a configuration distinct from the others. For example, the Queen of England is also the Queen of Canada and Australia. However, these jurisdictions have constitutions that are neither the same as the English one nor the same as each other. Additionally, the same Queen is also the head of

the religious organization known as the Church of England. Any description of the authority of the Queen of England or other such authorities may therefore be considerably complex.

Determinants of social distinctions between heritage authorities results in unevenness. For instance, not all societies distinguish between religion and the secular, as is common in modern dominant regimes principally associated with the United States and Europe. Where such modern distinctions have interacted with some of the more enduring heritage authorities, they are not uniform across cultures. India, for example, claims to be a secular state, apparently in conformance with modernity, but does acknowledge the validity and enforceability of Hindu and Muslim religious laws in particular circumstances. In North America, by comparison, a substantial portion of allegedly modern secular state legal regimes may be indistinguishable from the heritage of some Christian denominations.

Modernity

At the nexus of intersecting authorities, whether heritage or modern, complex dynamics operate. Within the realm of modern secular authority, ecclesiastical or religious authorities can be recognized in various places. For instance, in modern secular India, social authorities can derive from traditions that may or may not include enumerations such as the Laws of Manu. Additionally, the modern concept of religion is not in the Hindu traditions—there is no word in Hindi that directly translates the English word *religion*. Religious authority in this context does not have the same profile as it would in England. The implication is that contests between religious and secular authorities could have widely divergent meanings in England and in India.

The interaction of modern authorities with the heritages of aboriginal peoples in various parts of the world has operated in an imperial manner, which may have been clearly at variance with their own traditional authorities. Whether these traditional authorities are termed religious or not, they are usually distinct from the other contemporaneous authorities. Authority may therefore operate regardless of whether a society is more regular and crystalline or diffuse and amorphous.

Modern scientific authorities have developed and operated differently than other heritage authorities to play a dominant role in contemporary societies. Authority in this context is achieved and validated through rigorous compliance with the scientific method. The same scientific authority can also recognize the authority and laws of nature. A distinction between authority such as DNA and the social contextual authority is sometimes referred to as a distinction between nature and nurture.

Community

In the arena of social interaction, community authority may be expressed through democratic or other processes and embodied in the state. State authority then may represent community interests in one form or another. In some configurations, such as a federation, state authority may be distributed across various offices, including a federal authority. Conceptually, in the context of federated states such as Canada and the United States, constitutional authority is located in the state and delegated either federally or locally to municipalities. In this sense, it is appropriate to distinguish between original and delegated authorities. The original authority includes the capability of unilaterally withdrawing the delegated authority. Similar concepts arise under the concept of agency and its regulatory regimes. In some circumstances, delegated authority can also include fiduciary obligations. For example, when one is authorized to use the resources of another, it could be found to be a matter of trust that bears its own accountability and responsibilities. An executor of a will or someone named as power of attorney or a trustee has fiduciary obligations.

Etymologically, fiduciary, from the Latin *fides*, is also related to the term *trust*, which is an aspect of “faith.” In the interests of the community, authority is public, in that the community expects it to include a sense of trust and faith between the parties involved. This trust is not exclusive to forms of authority but may present differing characteristics in varying contexts. For some, faith in God and the authority of God is an originating principle from which to consider reality. For others, it is the perceived betrayal of the exercise of fiduciary authority that leads to a rejection of that

authority, whether human, divine, or otherwise. For the authority invested with fiduciary characteristics, there are consequences enforced by the community.

Systemic Temporality

From a systemic perspective, it is the arrangement of power gradients that remains an essential consideration. Power gradients in authority can also operate through impersonal expressions, which can distinguish dogma from opinion or classification of a language as distinct from a dialect. Authority competing in a more dramatic expression can be seen in contexts of terrorism, torture, and invasive forms of interrogation. The exercise of imperial authority may be associated with modern and religious enterprises. Not all religious authorities operate in an imperial mode. Proselytizing activities that are integral responsibilities of some religious traditions can be constructive and involve competition with existing authorities regardless of their origins. Such authorities may also present socially in charismatic forms.

Paradoxically, authority can be rejected and revered at the same time, as may be encountered more usually in heritage authority relationships such as family and religious communities. Whether heritage or modern, authority preserves and validates the views of those who subscribe to the orthodox views or dispute the same views. Evolving or, perhaps more correctly, changing circumstances are not unusual, and the experience of transitions between authorities may be a normal condition of life. In this sense, authority is encountered as a temporal matter. However, the location of ultimate authority, whether religious or not, is not always described as being within temporality.

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See also Ethics; Politics and Religion; Religion and State; Secularism

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AUTOCHTHONOUS CHRISTIANS IN LATIN AMERICA

In Latin America, the term *autochthonous Christians* does not refer to the totality of Latin Americans who profess a Christian faith; rather, it refers specifically to the Native Americans—that is, the indigenous population evangelized by the Catholic Church within the framework of Spanish colonization. The demographic estimate of this population is problematic due to the permeability of the borders between the indigenous world and the mestizo society. Thus, their respective delineation depends on ethnic, cultural, and social criteria, which are constantly debated in the social sciences. Indigenous cultures are principally located in Mesoamerica (Guatemala and Mexico) and in the central Andes (Bolivia, Peru, and Ecuador), with majority populations in Bolivia and Guatemala and minority populations in all other countries of the region.

Beyond the demographic aspect, the indigenous inheritance is notable for its importance in the Latin American collective imagination while simultaneously carrying social stigma and being a factor for discrimination. Syncretism characterizes indigenous religiosity; the combination of Catholic elements with native cultural traits distinguishes it from traditional Catholicism. Historically, there are notable exceptions to the Catholic hegemony over indigenous religiosity, such as the conversion of the Misquitos of the Nicaraguan and Honduran Caribbean to the Moravian Church in the 19th century.

Currently, indigenous religiosity is mobilized in movements related to the affirmation of indigenous cultural identity. Their demands have often been promoted by the Catholic Church in places such as Chiapas, Mexico, where, in 1960, the San Cristobal de las Casas diocese, led by Bishop Samuel Ruiz, initiated a project to build an “autochthonous church.” This project attempted to respond to the shortage of Catholic clergy in the area with the training of indigenous deacons. Furthermore, the autochthonous church project was aligned with Liberation Theology, intending to link the political commitment to social change with the defense of the indigenous people’s collective rights. The “conscientization” work of the pastoral agents of the diocese in indigenous communities showed its impact with

the Zapatista Army for National Liberation uprising in 1994. At other times, the same demands escaped the Catholic Church's control, as in the Bolivian attempt, promoted by the government of Evo Morales with the objective of decolonizing indigenous beliefs, to reconstruct the Andean religion, which is still marked by the Catholic influence.

Although historically linked to Catholicism, the syncretism (the combination of different forms of belief) of indigenous religiosity is also implicated in the current erosion of the Catholic faith throughout Latin America and the growth of new religious denominations, mainly the evangelical and Pentecostal churches. This process, which is particularly acute in territories with a strong indigenous presence, is a testament to the dynamism of the indigenous world and to the breaches with their traditional customs in a regional context of sociopolitical change. Pluralism within the indigenous world has exceeded the limits of Catholicism as well as the ideological framework of political demands for a substantive indigenous identity, thereby paradoxically affirming itself in an apparently alien religious universe.

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See also Indigenous Religions; Latin America; New Religions in South America; Roman Catholicism

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AXIAL AGE

The Axial Age was a significant moment in the development of ancient religious cultures. In 1949, the German philosopher Karl Jaspers (1883–1969) suggested the term *Axial Age*, or *Axial Turn*, for the period around the fifth century BCE, a time when, throughout much of the world, a new kind of thinking gained force. It questioned wisdom based on tribe, tradition, or shamanic mysticism, offering instead new answers, grounded at least in part in intellectual analysis,

concerning the gods, the nature of the universe, and the meaning of human life, and emphasizing individual freedom and moral responsibility. Jaspers also stressed that while in pre-Axial societies the spiritual world tended to be close to earth and a model of the earthly world, now the divine was far more transcendent, and salvation was a matter of individually bridging that divide.

These were the years of Confucius and Lao Ze in China, the Buddha and the Upanishads in India, perhaps Zarathustra in Persia, the earliest Greek philosophers, and the greatest Hebrew prophets. Some religious studies scholars have expanded the Axial Age to include the emergence of the major global religions, including Christianity and Islam, or at least have recognized the significance of the Axial Age in their prehistorical development. The later evolution of Judaism and the spread of Hellenism in the wake of Alexander the Great, with their subsequent immense influence on religion and culture, are no less products of the Axial Age.

The Axial Age, and the appearance of individual religious prophets and founders, was undoubtedly a result of the earlier invention of writing, which led to recorded awareness of history and individual experience and made scriptures possible. After the fifth century BCE, the major literate religions can be viewed in terms of three principles that, while they certainly had earlier antecedents, were especially well honed by the Axial Age kind of consciousness. These principles are as follows: (1) an awareness that human life is lived in the context of historical time, within which new revelations can be received or teachings uttered and which itself can have spiritual meaning as the arena of spiritual warfare and (even if ultimately cyclical) is bounded by creation and consummation; (2) the realization that individual humans can be the agents of these revelations and can achieve spiritual eminence in historical time, as did Confucius, the Buddha, Jesus, and Muhammad; and (3) recognition to a radical degree that the spiritual destiny of the individual is based on his or her own choices, whether expressed in the language of karma and reincarnation or of sin, faith, and forgiveness.

The Axial Age wrought a vast and potentially global change in human consciousness, though of course it took many centuries for its impact to permeate the globe.

Robert Ellwood

See also Alexander the Great; Christianity; Confucianism; Islam; Mahayana Buddhism; Theravada Buddhism; Vajrayana, Tibetan; Zoroastrianism (and Parsis)

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AYAHUASCA RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS

Ayahuasca, or yagé, is an entheogenic (psychoactive substance used in a religious context) brew ritually used by at least 70 tribes in the greater Amazon rainforest since prehistoric times. The word *ayahuasca* in Quechua means “vine of the soul,” connoting its spiritual usage. It is made by boiling a jungle vine (*Banisteriopsis caapi*) with various admixture plants in a unique synergistic combination that renders it strongly psychoactive. Since the 20th century, ritual use of the brew has spread from indigenous groups to mestizo healers and to organized syncretic churches (those formed from the combination of different beliefs) that have attracted members throughout the industrialized world.

Each of the native tribes has distinct traditions, but most use ayahuasca in small ceremonies at night accompanied by chanting and a rattle or drum. Along with mythological significance, it is believed that ayahuasca provides the possibility of a connection between the human world and that of the spirits, ancestors. Ayahuasca is also associated with the origins of language and humankind.

In frontier communities, mestizo healers called *vegetalistas* use yagé’s purgative effects to treat parasites, and its visionary power is used

by a trained *vegetalista* to determine the cause of disease and produce a spiritual cure for the patient. Since interest in psychedelics arose in the United States and Europe in the 1960s, there have been a growing number of *vegetalistas* who have toured in these countries offering yagé rituals.

In the 20th century, the brew spawned new religious movements in Brazil that have become global in scope. The União do Vegetal (UDV) Church and the Santo Daime Church have each established centers in many other countries in the Americas, Europe, Africa, Japan, and Australia. Santo Daime ceremonies are characterized by group singing of hymns, periods of silent concentration, and mediumship sessions when mediums channel the spirits of *caboclos* (“Brazilian Indians”) and other guides for the healing of other participants. The União do Vegetal is a more rationalized tradition; its meetings consist of silence or recorded music followed by sermons and discussion, with no mediumship. Both of these traditions represent a religious innovation that brought the ritual use of ayahuasca out of its indigenous context in the forest and combined it with elements of folk Catholicism, Afro-Brazilian religions, and a neo-esoteric doctrine.

In addition to the organized churches, use of the brew has also spawned a number of smaller neo-ayahuasca religious groups that combine the entheogen with pagan, New Age, or text-based shamanic practices. The draw of the religious ayahuasca experience has also created a flourishing tourism industry, bringing foreigners to retreat centers in the Amazon. With the inevitable addition of more such groups, ayahuasca religion will likely continue to grow as a global phenomenon.

Brian Clearwater

See also Brazil; Faith Tourism; Hybridization; Indigenous Religions; Jurema of the Brazilian North; Native Latin American Religion; Neo-Shamanisms; New Religions in South America; Syncretism; Yagé

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AYODHYA MOSQUE ATTACK

Ayodhya is a town in northern India that has been the location of a contested sacred site revered by both Muslims and Hindus. The conflict—and the dramatic destruction of the site’s mosque—has had national and even global political implications. The 1992 confrontation at the site is regarded as a benchmark in the global rise of religious activism against the secular state.

The town of Ayodhya is the capital of the old princely state of Awadh, and archaeological evidence indicates that it was also the location of an ancient Hindu temple. According to many Hindus, the ancient temple site is significant indeed; they claim that it is in fact the location of the birthplace of the god Ram. It was on this site that the Moghul emperor Babar constructed a mosque in 1528, perhaps demolishing the earlier temple to do so.

In the 1980s, with the rise of a new Hindu nationalism led by the right-wing political movement the *Vishwa Hindu Parishad* (VHP), Ayodhya became the center of a political battle. The Babri Mosque became the symbol of the Indian government’s secular stance—a position that protected all religious sites equally, including Muslim sites located on contested lands. The VHP wanted to make the point that the secularism of the government was in fact a pro-Muslim and anti-Hindu attitude. The rising anger of the Hindu activists was aimed as much at the secular state as at the Muslim community in India, which revered the mosque.

In 1992, the VHP sponsored a rally in Ayodhya to protest the Indian government’s continued protection of the Babri Mosque. Though the town had less than 50,000 inhabitants, a crowd three times that size appeared at the location, demanding access to the site. The small police force guarding the mosque was quickly overwhelmed, and the crowd swarmed over the building, using sticks and broken fences to beat down the ancient edifice into pieces.

The destruction of the mosque led to tensions between Hindu and Muslim groups throughout

the country. Although leaders of the new religious party, the *Bharatiya Janata Party* (BJP), distanced themselves from the actions of the mob, the rising sense of Hindu political power that the Ayodhya event symbolized helped bolster the strength of the party. A series of electoral successes ensued, and from 1998 to 2004, the BJP led India as the ruling party of a coalition government.

The site of the demolished mosque remained vacant after the 1992 destruction, protected by government security forces. In 2010, the Lucknow bench of the Allahabad High Court proclaimed its long-awaited verdict on which religious groups should have rights to the disputed land. In a Solomon-like decision, the court awarded stewardship of the site to both Hindu and Muslim organizations, but the decision was subsequently stayed by the Supreme Court on appeal and uncertainty about its fate continued for some time after.

Mark Juergensmeyer

See also Bharatiya Janata Party; Hinduism; India; Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh; Religious Nationalism; Violence

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AZERBAIJAN

The Azerbaijani nation in southeast Europe was formed as a result of the invasion of Turkic-speaking

nomadic tribes into the South Caucasus in the 11th century, followed by a complex process of consolidation of Turkic and local Iranian groups.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Azerbaijan became an independent republic. Azerbaijan was secularized during the Soviet era. This feature of the Soviet Azerbaijan has been formally endorsed in the constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan; however, a slight trend of religious revival in Azerbaijan has emerged since the country's independence.

According to the official statistics, 97% of Azerbaijan's population is Muslim. Russian Orthodox Christians (also Armenian Orthodox before the breakup of the Soviet Union) and Jews are the largest religious minority groups; also, small congregations of Roman Catholics, Protestant denominations, Seventh-Day Adventists, Molokans (Russian Orthodox Old Believers), and Baha'is have been present in Azerbaijan for more than a century. New religious groups have emerged in the country during the past 15 years, including Wahhabi Muslims, Pentecostal and evangelical Christians, Jehovah's Witnesses, and Hare Krishnas.

According to the State Committee on Work With Religious Associations of Azerbaijan, the Muslim denomination ratio is 65% Shi'a and 35% Sunnī. However, religious observance among the followers of both denominations is not high, with intergroup differences weakly defined. Also, Muslim identity is based more on ethnicity and culture than on religion. A Gallup poll on Religion in the World conducted in 2009 demonstrated that only 14% of the Azerbaijani respondents pray every day, 30% admit that they do so "less often," and 25% of the Azeri's say that they never bow in the direction of Mecca (Makkah). The depth of Azerbaijan's secularity has both Soviet and pre-Soviet history. The country's own version of Islam, one that has been heavily influenced by Sufi mystics over the centuries, has contributed to the undogmatic interpretation of religious decrees that is characteristic of secular nations such as Azerbaijan.

According to the provisions of the constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan, persons of all faiths may choose and practice their religion without restriction by joining or establishing the religious group of their choice. The Law on Religious Freedom prohibits the government from interfering in the religious activities of any individual or

group. The law, however, allows the state to interfere if the activities of a religious group threaten public order and stability and prohibits foreigners from proselytizing. The law also requires all religious organizations, including congregations of denominations, to pass through a seven-step application process in order to be registered by the government registration. Unregistered organizations are not considered legal entities and are vulnerable to attacks and closures by the authorities. Some human right groups characterize similar requirements as restrictive and enable the government to regulate the religious realm.

Tigran Tshorokhyan

See also Eastern Orthodox Christianity; Europe; Islam; Russia

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AZTECS

Aztecs are a people and culture of ancient Central America. What is often referred to as "Aztec" should properly be understood with the much more limited referent, Tenochca. *Aztec* is a term constructed in the 19th century to refer to the culture of an empire ruled by an alliance of three cities in the Basin of Mexico. The Tenochca lineage, a subgroup of the Mexica, held the lead position in the Aztec Triple Alliance. Much of what we recognize today as Aztec religion, therefore, should properly be considered the religion of one ethnicity—that of the Tenochca—inflated to constitute a state religion. This entry reviews some Aztec and Tenochca religions as well as some of their ideological descendants.

Origins

During the postclassic period (900–1500 CE), the dominant lineages within the Basin of Mexico

placed their origin in the mythical location of *Chicomoztoc* (“Seven Caves Place”). Seven distinct tribes left these caves in primordial times to populate the Basin of Mexico. One tribe, however, traced its origin to the city of *Aztlan* (“Place of Herons”). It is unclear whether *Aztlan* was a place within *Chicomoztoc* or whether it was a separate place entirely. Regardless, this tribe left *Aztlan*, following its leader Mexi to become known as the Mexica.

Mexi led his people following a *teotl* known as *Huitzilopochtli* (“Hummingbird of the South”). The term *teotl* is often translated as “god,” “deity,” or “a personification of some force of nature.” None of these is entirely accurate, but each hints at the roles of *teteo* (plural of *teotl*) in important ways. Although abstract, one should think of *teteo* as complex entities of power that interact with each other and with humans in multiple ways. *Huitzilopochtli*’s mythic birth sheds light on his character as the primary *teotl* of the Mexica. The story begins with his mother, *Coatlicue* (“Serpent Skirt”), sweeping the steps of her home. A ball of feathers stirred up by her sweeping lands in her bosom and magically impregnates her. Her pregnancy causes controversy among *Coatlicue*’s grown children, who are led by the eldest, *Coyolxauhqui* (“Bells on Her Face”). *Coyolxauhqui* plots with her brothers to kill her mother before the baby is born, but the child within, *Huitzilopochtli*, discovers the plan and consoles his mother. He is then born in full battle regalia and immediately attacks and disposes of his sister, *Coyolxauhqui*, along with their 400 brothers. Having defeated his adversaries, *Huitzilopochtli* becomes a *teotl* of war with a solar affiliation.

In historic times, *Huitzilopochtli* communicated with the Mexica priests through their dreams along an epic journey from *Aztlan*. The tribe traveled as *chichimeca* (“nomadic people”), killing rabbits for food and engaging cities in battle. They soon established a reputation as warriors and were from time to time brought into alliances with established cities as mercenaries.

Along their journey, the Mexica fractured into opposing lineages. The lineage that would continue on, the Tenochca, remained dedicated to *Huitzilopochtli* and the quest for their promised

land: *Tenochtitlán* (“Place of Stone and Cactus”). When they finally arrived at the site of a cactus so tall that an eagle kept its nest at the top, in the early 14th century, they found the land to be virtually inhospitable. They worked tirelessly, adapting the agricultural practices of their neighbors to transform *Tenochtitlán* into an island city, which almost 200 years later the Spaniard Bernal Díaz del Castillo described as “rising from the water, all made of stone, seem[ing] like an enchanted vision from the tale of [Atlantis]. Indeed, some of our soldiers asked whether it was not all a dream” (1984, p. 16).

Using their military prowess, the Tenochca became powerful among the cities controlling the Basin of Mexico. During the mid-15th century, they entered an alliance with the cities of Texcoco and Tlacopan, which went on to conquer much of Mesoamerica. In the process, the tribal religion of the Tenochca was transformed into a religion of the imperial government. Much of the specific adaptation was brought about under the counsel of Tlacaoel, advisor to the fifth *tlatoani* (“one who speaks,” “ruler”), Motecuhzoma Ilhuicamina (namesake of the ninth *tlatoani*, who would meet Hernán Cortés).

Imperial Religion

The city of *Tenochtitlán* itself was built to reflect a conflation of the tribe specific with the regionally universal. The dominant physical structure at the center of the city—now mostly underneath Mexico City—is known as the Templo Mayor. The Templo Mayor’s large pyramidal base resembled most other temples throughout Mesoamerica, but it bucked tradition with two small temples at its top rather than one. Each of these temples was dedicated to a different deity: one to *Huitzilopochtli* as a *teotl* of war and fire and the other to *Tlaloc*, the regional (and quite ancient) storm *teotl*. Thus, “fire” and “water” sat at the top of the primary temple at *Tenochtitlán*. In central Mexican codices, the glyph of “burning water” represented “war”; thus, the Tenochca made it clear that their civilization was founded on and maintained by war.

Along with *Tlaloc*, the imperial Aztec religion honored *Quetzalcoatl* with a temple across the

central plaza from the Templo Mayor. The concept of “quetzalcoatl” is a strong example of a *teotl*, used for a primordial “god,” a historic figure, and the highest order of the Aztec priesthood. The name itself is also provocative, constituted by a bird (*quetzal*) and a reptile (*coatl*, for “serpent”). This combination of creatures would have had access to all three levels of the Aztec cosmos (the upper as that above the trees, including the stars; the middle as that on the surface of the earth; and the lower as that below the surface of the earth). The human Quetzalcoatl lived at the historical place of origin for all city-dwelling members of the Basin of Mexico: Tollan (the archaeological site of Tula). Here, Quetzalcoatl reigned as a peaceful lord of the Toltecs but banished himself after he was tricked by his nemesis. Legend has it that he went east, where he boarded a raft of snakes and sailed across the ocean to become Venus, the morning star.

In ordering the empire, the Tenochca followed the practice of all of Mesoamerica in tracking time according to two primary calendric elements: the *tonalpohualli* and the *xiuhpohualli*. The *tonalpohualli* comprised 13 numbers and 20 day signs to produce a 260-day round. The day signs carried oracular meanings, which were often tied to specific *teteo*, so a child’s birth date carried with it something of the fate of the child. The *xiuhpohualli* functioned more like a solar year, made up of 18 months of 20 days each and 1 month of 5 days. The government sponsored great celebrations at the inauguration of each month, consuming much of the tribute gathered from throughout the empire.

Many of the elements of the calendric system are captured in what today is known as the Aztec calendar stone. More properly considered a cosmogram, the stone sculpture depicts the order of the universe under Aztec rule. The central face is that of the Fifth Sun; the Aztecs recognized four previous “suns” or eras, each ending in disaster. The Fifth Sun, beginning on the Day 4 *ollin* (meaning “movement”) in the *tonalpohualli* was predicted to end with earthquakes. The inaugural dates for the previous suns are all contained within the inner cartouche of the calendar stone, which is in turn contained within a ring of the 20 day signs. Various other calendric elements make up the rest

of the stone, and stellar constellations were carved around the border.

In considering Aztec religion, much is often made of the role of human sacrifice. Sixteenth-century chroniclers provide records of tremendous sacrificial spectacles said to propitiate “the gods.” This issue leads to the central issue in describing Aztec religion: The sources are exceedingly difficult to interpret. The eyewitness accounts (of which there are only two) were recorded in documents intended to justify their own acts of unprovoked war against the Aztecs. All of the other accounts are based on retrospective hearsay or come from Western interpretations of native books (codices) recording mythological or possibly metaphoric information. This is not to suggest that human sacrifice was not practiced in Aztec society; but it is more productive to consider it as a technology of the state, just as it functioned in many ancient societies, rather than as a fundamental religious tenet.

Religious Descendants

One might be tempted to claim that the Aztec religion ended with the conquest of the Aztec Empire, but that would be to buy into the fiction of the term itself. On the other hand, to identify “Aztec” with the constellation of beliefs, rituals, and traditions common within the empire is to open up the recognition of several descendants or at least relatives of Aztec religion. For one, Spanish missionary “conversions” most often resulted in the integration of Christianity with indigenous religions. These have propagated into contemporary times and can be witnessed in rural Mexico and Central America in Catholic churches through conflation of Jesus with the Sun and through the use of copal as incense and tortillas as “the bread of Christ.” The origin of the Virgen de Guadalupe in the indigenous *Tonantzin* (“Our Dear Mother”) is another well-known example.

Not all indigenous communities welcomed conversion, though, and many of these maintained indigenous religious traditions resonant with those of the Aztec. Some of these traditions persisted through the colonial period and coalesced during the early 20th century around a ritual dance known as *danza Azteca* or *danza de los concheros*.

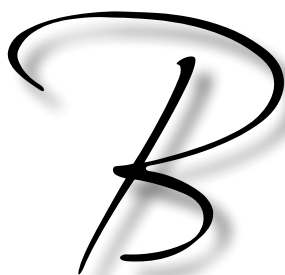
The Chicano movement in California, the Southwest, and the northern Midwest then brought Danza Azteca into the United States via the 1960s civil rights movement. Chicana and Chicano activists, artists, and scholars drew and continue to draw from Danza and various sources of Aztec religion in their cultural production. It is important to recognize that, again, these are not properly “Aztec” either; modern manifestations are agglutinizations of various religious sources, brought together by survival tactics or, more recently, by economic convenience generated through globalization.

Gerardo Aldana

See also Indigenous Religions; Mesoamerican Religions; Mexican *Concheros*; Mexico; Our Lady of Guadalupe

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BAB, SAYYID ‘ALI MUHAMMAD (1819–1850)

Sayyid ‘Ali Muhammad Shirazi (the Bab), a merchant from Shiraz in southern Iran and direct descendant of the prophet Muhammad, was the founder of the Babi movement, the precursor of the Baha’i Faith. Despite the fact that he had had no formal training in Arabic or the religious sciences, the Bab began in 1844 to write Arabic books that he claimed were from God. At first, his claim appeared to be that he was the Bab (lit. “Gate”), the intermediary between the people and the Shi’a messianic figure, Imam Mahdi. He dispersed his first group of 18 disciples (the “Letters of the Living”) to spread the news of his claim, but these were rejected by the senior Shi’a religious leaders, albeit many of his followers were junior members of the religious establishment. Following a pilgrimage to Mecca, he was placed under house arrest in Shiraz.

In 1846, he went to Isfahan, where he was protected by the governor Manuchihr Khan. When the latter died, however, Prime Minister Haji Mirza Aqasi sent the Bab as prisoner successively to two remote fortresses in northwest Iran. In 1848, at a court in Tabriz, presided over by the heir apparent, the Bab announced that he was in fact the expected Imam Mahdi. At the same time, he issued a book containing laws that he said abrogated the Islamic laws and ended the Islamic dispensation. He was executed in Tabriz in 1850. His body was recovered and later transported to and

buried in a mausoleum on Mt. Carmel, then in the Ottoman province of Syria and now in the state of Israel. This mausoleum is now a site of pilgrimage for Baha’is.

The context of the teachings of the Bab is the world of Shi’a Islam and Iran, but he looked beyond this also. He called on all the peoples of the world to accept his claim, he looked favorably on Europeans, and he aimed to move Iran toward acceptance of the inventions and concepts of the modern world (this at a time when almost all Iranian clerics were vehemently anti-European and antimodernity). In many ways, moreover, he laid the foundations for the globalization seen in later Baha’i teachings. For example, the Bab sacralized the whole earth by teaching that everything is a manifestation of the Divine names and attributes and that the Divine grace flows to all regardless of whether they are grateful for it or not, so human beings should also show grace and bounty to all regardless of whether it is reciprocated or not—thus paving the way for the Baha’i teaching that human beings should not see one another as strangers but that they are all one family without division between the saved and not saved or between the pure and the impure.

Moojan Momen

See also Babi; Baha’i

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BABI

The Babi movement arose in Iran in the 19th century out of Shi'a Islam. It caused a major upheaval in the country and was eventually suppressed. Out of it arose the Baha'i Faith. In 1844, the Bab put forward a religious claim. This claim was received enthusiastically, especially by members of the Shaykhi school of Shi'a Islam, whose founders had prepared their followers for just such an announcement. The Babi movement spread rapidly soon, attracting possibly as many as 100,000 people across Iran and Iraq. The Bab's teaching encountered great opposition, however, from Islamic religious leaders, who perceived it to be heretical and considered the Bab's anticlerical stance a challenge to their authority and wealth. During a turbulent period from 1848 to 1850, there were three major upheavals in which the Babis were greatly outnumbered and crushed by government troops. After a failed attempt on the life of the shah by a small number of Babis in 1852, orders were sent for a general massacre of Babis. The heroism of the Babis made a great impression among 19th-century European intellectuals such as Ernest Renan and Matthew Arnold and later E. G. Browne of Cambridge University and Leo Tolstoy, while the female disciple of the Bab, Tahirih Qurrat al-'Ayn (killed in 1852) continues to be a feminist icon in Iran.

In the Bab's writings, he had frequently mentioned a messianic figure that was to follow him, "He whom God shall make manifest" (mentioned more than 80 times in the Bab's major work, the Persian Bayan; for examples in English translation, see *Selections From the Writings of the Báb*, pp. 80, 83, 85, 86, 93, 95, 97, 98). In 1863 privately and in 1868 publically, Baha'u'llah (q.v.) claimed to be this figure, and the vast majority (probably 95%) of the Babis accepted this claim and became Baha'is. Among those who rejected this claim, most followed Mirza Yahya Azal and are called Azali Babis. While the Baha'is moved in the direction of obedience to the government and creating an alternative society within their community, some of the Azalis

played an important role in the Iranian reform movement and the Constitutional Revolution of 1906 to 1909. There are still a few thousand Azalis, almost exclusively in Iran (where they conceal their faith) and among ex-patriot Iranians.

The Babi movement was a native Iranian movement that some say could have brought Iran into the modern world by providing a non-European model of modernization. The pattern of suppression established in respect of the Babis was later applied to the Baha'i religion also, thus setting up more than a century of persecution, which had its own negative effects on Iranian society.

Moojan Momen

See also Bab, Sayyid 'Ali Muhammad; Baha'i; Baha'u'llah; Shi'a Islam

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BAHA'I

The Baha'i Faith is a religion that originated in the Middle East in the mid-19th century but can now be said to be global in its spread and to have the concept and goal of globalization at the heart of its teachings.

History

The Baha'i Faith arose out of the Babi religion. Baha'u'llah (1817–1892, q.v.), the founder of the religion, was exiled from his native Iran successively to Baghdad, Istanbul, Edirne, and finally to Akka (Acco) in what was then the Ottoman province of Syria and now is in the state of Israel. The spiritual center of the Baha'i Faith is the shrine of Baha'u'llah

near Akka, while the world administrative center is on Mt. Carmel in Haifa. Under the successive leaders of the Baha'i Faith, 'Abdu'l-Baha (1844–1921), who led the religion from 1892 to 1921, and Shoghi Effendi (1897–1957), who led it from 1921 to 1957, the religion moved away from its Islamic origins and spread throughout the world.

The religion is now established, according to its own 2006 statistics, in 191 countries, with some 5 million adherents among 2,112 indigenous tribes, races, and ethnic groups. Independent sources broadly agree with these figures and reckon it to be the second most widespread religion after Christianity. A framework of local and national elected councils (called Local and National Spiritual Assemblies) has been established in 179 countries, and these form the basis for the election of the Universal House of Justice, the present head of the religion. There is essentially a single united Baha'i community; sectarian groups and dissident factions are insignificant in numbers and influence.

Global Teachings

The vision of a single united world can be said to be at the heart of Baha'u'llah's teachings. In the late 19th century, when the process of globalization was underway in the world but was swamped by a much stronger nationalist movement, Baha'u'llah stated that love of one's country should be superseded by a vision of the whole earth as one united and peaceful country under democratic rule.

Baha'u'llah's successor, 'Abdu'l-Baha, went on to detail those factors that were obstacles to a united world. He spoke during his public addresses in North America and Europe of the need, for example, to eliminate extremes of poverty and wealth, to achieve universal education, to advance the social role of women, to bring science and religion into harmony, and to educate humanity away from all types of prejudice (e.g., racial, religious, class, gender). Thus, for example, the lack of gender equality perpetrates an injustice and promotes in men harmful attitudes and habits that are carried from the family to the workplace, to political life, and ultimately to international relations.

Global Structures

In the writings of the central figures of the Baha'i Faith, there are a number of specific suggestions

oriented toward global unity. For example, in the 1870s, Baha'u'llah called for an international conference of the world's kings and rulers to resolve all outstanding issues between nations and to agree on collective security based on binding treaties, following which nations should agree to reduce their armaments to a level that would preserve internal order and to use the savings from this for social development. Expanding on these ideas, his successors wrote of the need for measures such as an international parliament, a world executive, a world tribunal with powers to enforce its judgments, a constitution for a global system of governance, a world currency, an international language to be learned by all in addition to their mother tongue, and an international system of weights and measures. They outlined how a united world should operate at the communal and global levels. For example, at the global level, the culture of conflict that has characterized most international relations is to be replaced with a more cooperative system of governance, evolving away from the model of relations between states that is driven by hegemony, excessive national sovereignty, and power and toward a system of collective security, collaborative problem solving, and formulation of and adherence to a single code of international law. Thus, the same changes are envisaged as occurring in this process of world unification as happened when, for example, the different states came together to form the United States of America.

Similarly, within societies, structures and processes that have largely been based on competitiveness, conflict, power, and social control are to be replaced by ones based on cooperation and a striving for excellence. The new model is designed to reverse the extreme competitiveness of business that results in environmental damage and to eliminate the personal damage done to individuals as they strive to compete within such flawed systems. To protect the individual, there is also a call for human rights to be legally established and the right of appeal by the individual to the highest international level.

Indeed, the Baha'i leaders structured the Baha'i community to be a model for the radical social changes that the Baha'i Faith is trying to bring into being. Therefore, among the features of Baha'i community structure are the following: that authority is not given to individuals but to elected institutions, the removal of the competitive and campaigning

nature of the election process, consultative decision making, processes designed to ensure that minority groups and oppressed segments of society are able to have an input into these consultative processes, and subsidiarity and the decentralization of power. The Universal House of Justice is currently engaged in a program designed to empower individual Baha'is to take a more active part in community life and social affairs, to create mechanisms that will allow local learning to be generated from cycles of action-reflection-learning-planning, which will act as a basis on which Baha'i communities can become involved in solving local social problems and thus enable them to take a more active and informed role in human discourse.

Spiritual Basis of Globalization

The above descriptions may give the impression that the Baha'i Faith is a social or political movement, and so it is important to be clear that at the base of these social teachings and community structures are spiritual principles and beliefs. Underlying the belief in the oneness of humanity, for example, is a belief in the nobility of each human being as the repository of all the names and attributes of God. This spiritual reality is more important than a human being's physical body, and the goal of an individual should be perfecting these spiritual attributes.

Another Baha'i concept that is important for the move toward a united world is the underlying unity of religion: that religious truth is not absolute but relative, that the revelation of religious truth by the founders of the world religions is a continuous and progressive process, that all the great religions of the world are divine in origin, that their basic spiritual principles are in harmony, that their aims and purposes are one and the same, that their functions are complementary, that they differ only in the nonessential aspects of their doctrines, and that their missions represent successive stages in the spiritual evolution of human society. In view of these teachings, the Universal House of Justice has called on the world's religious leaders to put aside their differences and work together in harmony for the general good while upholding the individual's freedom of religion and belief.

It is a basic Baha'i premise that the desired social and global goals described above cannot be

achieved unless there is a concomitant spiritual change in individual human beings; a change to be brought about by prayer, fasting, the study of scripture, meditation, and a commitment to service. Humanity needs to become less materialistic and more spiritually oriented. This does not mean that people should be content with poverty but that the excessive advertising-driven consumerism of the present is not the right framework for happiness and contentment in human life. Humanity needs to develop communities where all individuals are given the chance to develop their potential, where work is done in the spirit of service and not merely to obtain money, where all are enabled to earn their living by their calling, where those engaged in the arts, sciences, crafts, technology, and the professions are all appreciated for their contribution to society.

Globalization is seen in the Baha'i writings as an inevitable process, the next step in humanity's progress. All the above-described elements—the changes to the international order, the social changes needed, and the spiritualization of the individual—are important and interdependent. According to Baha'i teachings, it is fruitless to try to pursue one at the expense of the others; a successful globalization of the world can only be achieved in this holistic manner.

Moojan Momen

See also Bab, Sayyid 'Ali Muhammad; Babi; Baha'u'llah

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BAHAMAS

The nation of the Bahamas consists of more than 700 low-lying islands, keys, and rocks extending

500 miles (1 mile = 1.61 kilometers) southeast off the coast of Florida. The Bahamas was the site of Columbus's 1492 landfall in the New World. It was a British colony from 1783 to 1973. Now independent, it remains a member of the British Commonwealth.

The 37 inhabited islands have a population of about 300,000. About two thirds of the population reside on New Providence Island (the location of town of Nassau). More than 85% of the population have descended from African slaves—the majority of whom were of Yoruba ancestry. The slaves were imported directly from Africa or brought by slave-owning British loyalists following the American Revolution. In addition, there are mixed Black/Amerindians (the Black Seminoles of Andros Island). The U.S. State Department's *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* estimates are that there are between 20,000 and 40,000 illegal Haitians who are residing in the Bahamas. Fifteen percent of the population are of European origin. A majority are descendants of early British settlers and North Americans from New York, the Carolinas, and Virginia. Also included in this 15% is a community of Greek Orthodox—whose descendants worked as sponge fishermen—and a long-standing Jewish community.

The prominence of religion on the islands can be traced to the Puritans of Eleuthera, who escaped to the Bahamas to flee what they saw as religious oppression in England. Christianity was and is the dominant religion in the Bahamas. Christian rites such as baptisms and confirmations constitute the major rites of passage in Bahamian society. Festivals and quasi-religious celebrations also play an important part in the culture with the Fox Hill Festival and Junkanoo. Junkanoo—much like the Carnival elsewhere in the Caribbean—is characterized by parades, costumes, dance, and food. The tradition grew out of a break granted to slaves each year during the Christmas season. While Jamaicans claim to have the greatest number of churches per square kilometer, Bahamians say that they have the largest number of churches per capita in the world.

Religious affiliations vary from island to island. The overwhelming majority of Bahamians (more than 76%) are conservative Protestants (fundamentalists and/or evangelicals). Baptists constitute the single largest denomination and account for more than 35% of the population. Roman

Catholics and Anglicans represent 13% and 15% of the population, respectively. Eight percent of Bahamians are Pentecostal; 4% are Methodists; and 5% are Church of God. The 2006 *CIA Factbook* reports 13,844 Seventh-Day Adventists; 1,607 Jehovah's Witnesses, and 200 Jews.

Bahamians are religious pluralists and attend their own churches and services at other churches as well. Denominations represented on the islands are Anglican, Assembly of God, Ba'hai Faith, Baptist, Brethren, Christian and Missionary Alliance, Christian Science, Church of God of Prophecy, Greek Orthodox, Jehovah's Witnesses, Jewish, Latter-Day Saints (Mormon), Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic, and Seventh-Day Adventist. Adventists are the fourth largest religious denomination in the Bahamas, consisting of 40 churches scattered throughout the islands. Less than 2% of Bahamians self-report as "nonreligious." Pentecostal groups are the fastest growing. Social scientist Dean Collinwood—himself a Mormon—has charted a growing Mormon community. On most islands, Obeah practices have been noted.

Obeah is a complex of African-based spiritual beliefs addressing the spirit world, the interpretation of dreams, and dealing with problems of good and evil. Its origins are mainly Yoruban. Obeah practitioners use a complex of bush medicines (aloe vera, crab bush, fig leaf, sailors' flowers, and white sage) and magical objects; for example, pieces of glass or other objects hung from trees protect against evil spirits. When encountering a spirit, if one says "Ten, Ten the Bible Ten," it is believed that one will be protected. The Black Seminoles of Andros preserve select aspects of the traditional Seminole religion, such as the Green Corn Dance.

Stephen D. Glazier

See also Africa; Candomblé; Haiti; Jamaica; Santería; Vodou

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BAHA'U'LLAH (1817–1892)

Mirza Husayn 'Ali Nuri, known as Baha'u'llah, was the founder of the Baha'i Faith. He placed the concept of globalization and the need to progress to a united, peaceful world at the heart of his social teachings.

Baha'u'llah was born in Tehran, Iran, the son of a minister in the court of the Shah. In 1844, he espoused the cause of the Bab (q.v.) and as a result lost all of his wealth and privileges, being thrown into an underground prison in 1852. While in prison, he experienced a vision that he considered to confer on him a Divine mission. He delayed announcing this mission until 1863, however. After release from prison, he was exiled to Baghdad (1853–1863), which was then part of the Ottoman Empire. During this period, Baha'u'llah universalized much that was specifically Shi'a in the Babi writings. Subsequently, the Ottoman government, at the request of the Iranian government, exiled him further to Istanbul (1863), Edirne (1863–1968), and finally Akka (1868–1892). In the Akka period, Baha'u'llah wrote a book of laws, *Kitab Aqdas*, and expounded his social teachings. Throughout his ministry, he was subjected to harassment, imprisonment, and constraint, and his followers in Iran were persecuted and killed at the instigation of the Islamic religious leaders. He died in a mansion outside Akka and is buried in a shrine there, which has become the spiritual focus of the Baha'i Faith and a place of pilgrimage for Baha'is. To continue his work, he appointed as leader of the Baha'i community his son, 'Abbas Effendi, who took the title 'Abdu'l-Baha (1844–1921).

Baha'u'llah claimed to be the messianic figure promised in each of the religions of the world, sent to bring to the world God's message for the present time. Baha'u'llah's message was centered on a call to humanity to move toward world peace and to develop a global vision. E. G. Browne of Cambridge University, who visited him in 1890, reported Baha'u'llah as saying that he desired only the good of the world and prophesying that strife and warfare would pass away and the "Most Great Peace" would come. In his writings, Baha'u'llah calls for the transcending of parochial loyalties in favor of a global vision and a love of all humanity. His vision was that of the earth as one country and humankind as its citizens. He also directed his call for unity to the individual, saying that all human beings are like the members of one family; in other words, each individual should deal with others with friendliness and love and not regard them as strangers or enemies. In this manner, Baha'u'llah broke through the taboos and laws of impurity and heresy that had caused so much conflict in human history.

Moojan Momen

See also Bab, Sayyid 'Ali Muhammad; Babi; Baha'i

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BAHRAIN

One of the wealthiest of the Arab Gulf states, Bahrain harbors a majority Muslim population, half of whom were not born in country. Its name stemming from the Arabic word for sea, *Bahr*, Bahrain is an archipelago made of 30 small islands in addition to the largest eponymous island. While

estimates vary, approximately 75% of the populace is Shi'a Muslim, making Bahrain one of the few Shi'a-majority countries, while another 15% are reported as practicing Sunnī Islam. The remaining 15%, composed mostly of non-natives, are a mix of Christian, Jewish, Hindu, Buddhist, and Sikh followers. Religious affiliation is one of the primary markers of identity for Bahrainians, and tensions between the majority Shi'ite and minority Sunnī population persist. Bahrain's government is a traditional monarchy with hereditary transmission of power, and the king is responsible for appointing the prime minister, who is in charge of the government, as well as the *shura*, the governing council.

Originally inhabited by the Sumerians, Bahrain was for many years an important trading post, located between Sumeri and the Indus Valley. Muslims took control of Bahrain during the Umayyad dynasty in the 7th century and retained authority until the Portuguese colonized the country in the 16th century. Their rule lasted less than a century, and in 1602, Iran gained control of the archipelago, instituting Shi'ite Islam as the official religion. The Bahrainian ruler Ahmad Ibn al-Khalifah took power from the Iranians in the late 18th century, and Bahrainian rule continued through the beginning of the 21st century. Great Britain began imposing on Bahrain in the 1830s, when it offered protection to Bahrain from the Turks, who were threatening Bahrain for gaining access to the Persian Gulf; Great Britain later used its position to influence the governing of the country in the years to come. Oil was discovered and began to be extracted in the 1930s, and following World War II, anti-British sentiment was on the rise, culminating in riots against British rule as well as the Jewish population, who had gained standing in the burgeoning oil industry. The British were ousted from Bahrain in 1971, at which point Bahrain joined the United Nations (UN) and assisted the UN in monitoring Iraq in the late 20th century—a country with which Bahrain had unstable relations. Owing a great deal to the oil reserves in Bahrain and the opportunities provided thereby, Bahrain's foreign population rose exponentially in the last part of the 20th century into the 21st century.

While Shi'a Islam is the official religion of Bahrain, the tensions with the minority Sunnī

population are based on the perceived favored status of the latter. There are reports that naturalization and citizenship proceedings favor Sunnī applicants; Shi'i are more represented in the lower economic classes. The legal system was formed from a blend of the Ja'afari and Mālikī systems, which come from the Shi'a and Sunnī Muslim heritage, respectively. The monarchy does not allow for political parties, and the majority of political opposition stems from Shi'a and Islamic fundamentalist groups; in 1996, 44 Islamists were arrested on suspicion of plotting a coup to overthrow the Bahrainian government and establish an Islamic democracy. They were released in 2001, along with all other prisoners of a political nature, under the more liberal regime of Sheikh Hamad Isa al-Khalifa. His liberal attitude was tested by a massive uprising that began on February 14, 2011, as a part of the wave of democratic movements in the Middle East known as the "Arab Spring." Although the government at times was conciliatory and promised a dialogue with the protest leaders, it ultimately crushed the protests with military support from Saudi Arabia and the UAE, and leaders of the uprising were sentenced to life imprisonment.

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See also Islam; Islamism (Political Islam); Liberal Islam; Politics and Religion; Religion and State; Saudi Arabia; Shi'a Islam; Sunnī Islam

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BALI

See Southeast Asia

BALTIC COUNTRIES

Northern Europe's three Baltic countries—Estonia (1.34 million), Latvia (2.2 million), and Lithuania (3.33 million)—have historically exhibited a high degree of religious diversity, playing host to substantial Catholic, Lutheran, Orthodox, and Jewish populations as well as smaller communities of Muslims, Moravians, Old Believers, and others. For half of the 20th century, the tiny Baltic countries were captive to the Soviet Union, an officially atheistic superpower whose rulers viewed any manifestations of religiosity with suspicion. Independent since 1991, the Baltics, like many formerly communist nations in eastern Europe, have witnessed a modest revival of the region's traditional churches while at the same time exhibiting considerable tolerance for nontraditional religions. Yet as has been the case in western Europe for the past century or more, there is also evidence of widespread indifference to spiritual affairs in Estonia and Latvia, which, while traditionally Lutheran, are countries where relatively few people are active church members. Lithuania is exceptional among the Baltic countries in that Catholicism, a faith that has been closely tied up with Lithuanian national identity since the 19th century, is the religious confession of the majority and the Church continues to exert substantial influence on Lithuanian society. This entry discusses religions in the settings of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania and current religious issues and challenges as found here.

Religions in the Baltic Countries

Estonia

Although Orthodox missionaries had appeared in eastern Estonia as early as the 11th century, their influence was negligible. It was the Northern Crusade of the 13th century, with the twin goals of territorial conquest and the conversion of Europe's

last pagans, that brought Roman Catholicism to the Estonian lands. While German knights conquered the northeastern tribes (Ests, Livs, Letts, Cours, Prussians, etc.), German priests baptized them and administered the faith during the later Middle Ages. In the 16th century, however, the region's rulers broke with the Church and embraced Lutheranism, which became the principal religious confession of both the German minority and the Estonian majority. While the Germans who dominated the region left Estonia (and Latvia) during World War II, Russians, who began arriving in large numbers in the 19th century, supplanted them as Estonia's principal minority and brought the Orthodox faith with them.

Today, nearly 70% of the country's population consists of ethnic Estonians, whose main confession is the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church (EELC). Although this is not a state church and the Estonian constitution provides for full freedom of religion, the EELC instantly became the most numerous and influential religious association in Estonia after the country obtained its independence from the former USSR. Today, the EELC claims an estimated 180,000 members—less than 13% of the total population of Estonia, where only about 30% of the population confesses to any religious faith at all. Many of the country's ethnic Russians, constituting about a quarter of the population, are members of the Estonian Orthodox Church (which is subordinate to the Moscow Patriarchate); some, however, identify with the Estonian Apostolic Orthodox Church (which is independent of the Moscow Patriarchate). In addition to the dominant confessions, there is a small Jewish community of about 2,500 people, residing mostly in Tallinn, as well as communities of Old Believers (an Orthodox splinter whose adherents fled to Estonia to escape tsarist persecution), Catholics, Baptists, Methodists, and other religious associations. American evangelical religious influence is felt in Estonia in the form of its small communities of Pentecostals and Jehovah's Witnesses.

Latvia

The forces that brought Catholicism and Lutheranism to Latvia are much the same as those in neighboring Estonia. However, the Polish influence played a much greater role in Latvia's religious

history; as a result, much of eastern Latvia (Latgale) today is Roman Catholic. Indeed, with an estimated 22% of the population belonging to the Catholic Church, the status of the once dominant Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia (ELCL) has dramatically diminished over the past century: Its percentage of the population today is about 20, down from the 55% who professed Lutheranism in the 1930s. The next largest religious confession in Latvia is Orthodoxy, the principal faith of the country's nearly 800,000 Russian speakers. Since most Russian speakers are concentrated in the cities, this makes Orthodoxy the main religion of Latvia's urban population, while Catholicism is the principal faith of the rural populations of the east. Jews once constituted the fourth major religious group in Latvia (there were 93,479 Jews residing in Latvia according to the 1935 census); however, most were killed in the Holocaust of the 1940s, and only a few hundred Jews remain in the country today. More dynamic are the small populations of Baptists and Seventh-Day Adventists; indeed, the growing Mormon population soon threatens to surpass the Jewish population.

Despite the surge of interest in religion in the early 1990s, in both Latvia and Estonia, church attendance quickly plummeted, signaling an overall decline in interest in organized religion. In neither country has the Lutheran Church been an essential component of national identity; thus, the Church's political influence has been minimal. While leading politicians exhibit a positive personal attitude toward the Lutheran Church and occasionally pay homage to Christian values, overt demonstrations of religiosity are not necessary for political success in these highly secular countries.

Lithuania

Catholicism has been the faith of ethnic Lithuanians since the Grand Prince Jogaila, who established a nominal union between Lithuania and Poland in 1386, accepted Christianity as the price for obtaining the Polish crown. Unlike the case in Latvia and Estonia, where Germans played a leading role in Christianizing the natives, in Lithuania it was the Polish clergy who baptized the peasantry and administered the faith. That Lithuanian national identity has become so closely tied to Catholicism has much to do with the leading role

played by nationally conscious Lithuanian clerics in resisting Russian imperial rule in the late 19th century. Moreover, during the era of Soviet rule, the Catholic Church identified with and articulated Lithuania's national interests more zealously than did the more compliant Lutheran churches in Latvia and Estonia. It is partly for this reason that Catholicism weathered the antireligious policies of communism better than the Protestant churches of Latvia and Estonia and emerged from Soviet rule with its prestige largely intact. Today, around 80% of the population of Lithuania are formally members of the Catholic Church—even if as few as 15% of Lithuanians are active, churchgoing Catholics.

Today, Lithuania, the northernmost predominantly Roman Catholic country in the world, is the most ethnically and religiously homogeneous of the Baltic states, but this was not always the case. Before World War II, Lithuania had a substantial Russian (and Orthodox) minority as well as a vibrant Jewish community of 153,332 (1923), a figure that does not take into account Vilnius, a largely Jewish city at the time that was under Polish administration. With Lithuania's Jews, called *Litvaks*, massacred during the war, only 4,000 or so Jews remained in Lithuania in 2005. This community—once Lithuania's third largest—is now dwarfed by the country's larger minorities of Orthodox (the country's second largest religious group, constituting about 4% of the population), Old Believers, and Lutherans (strong in the Klaipėda area). These, along with Greek Rite Catholics (Uniates) and Muslims, whose small community dates to the Middle Ages, are considered the traditional religious communities of Lithuania. An even smaller population of Karaites—Jews who reject the Rabbinic decrees of the Talmud and believe that all religious authority resides in the Old Testament—are concentrated entirely in Vilnius and nearby Trakai. While the Lithuanian state guarantees the religious freedom of all believers, including the fewer than 5% of the population who belong to “nontraditional” religious communities (including Pentecostals, Jehovah's Witnesses, Baptists, Seventh-Day Adventists, and Mormons), under Lithuanian law, some confessions enjoy benefits not available to others—such as government funding, the right to teach religion in public schools, and the right to register marriages.

Among the three Baltic states, it is only in Lithuania that religion has had any substantive influence in politics in recent decades. The Lithuanian Christian Democratic Party, closely linked with the Catholic Church from its inception and the country's dominant party in the 1920s, has carried on Lithuania's tradition of religion-based politics and formed a coalition with the Homeland Union in 1996; the two merged in 2008 and became Lithuania's leading party.

Current Issues and Challenges

For half a century, religious life in the Baltic states was suppressed by the Soviet regime, whose arrival in 1940 to 1941 resulted in the arrest, exile, or outright murder of thousands of people, including hundreds of priests and pastors, whom the new authorities regarded with suspicion and hostility. Such brutality continued during the nearly 4 years of Nazi occupation that followed. With Soviet forces returning to the area in 1944, many priests left the Baltic states to continue their religious mission abroad; in Latvia alone, more than half the pastors fled the country at the end of the war. Stalin's terror, which ended with the dictator's death in 1953, obliterated the priesthood (although many surviving clerics returned from eastern exile in the mid-1950s); yet his successor Nikita Khrushchev continued the dictator's antireligious policies by closing down churches and suppressing external manifestations of religiosity. Even during the more relaxed—but by no means liberal—1970s, religious practice was confined within the walls of the remaining churches. Partly as a result of the Soviet regime's harsh policies, church membership declined in all three Baltic states. While Catholic Lithuania was able to train young men for the priesthood and perpetuate the country's religious traditions, it was difficult for clerics in any of the Soviet republics to avoid collaboration with the KGB (*Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti* or "Committee for State Security"). With the Soviet regime aiming to turn churches into loyal servants, many Baltic priests and pastors were compromised.

Thus, when the Baltic states reclaimed their independence in 1991, their churches were understandably euphoric, but at the same time, they were in a state of flux and confusion. A surge in church attendance in the early 1990s was followed

by a decline in popular interest in organized religion. Moreover, in some cases, the churches themselves were split into factions. For example, in Estonia, the Orthodox Church is divided into two main factions. Leaders of the autocephalous Estonian Apostolic Orthodox Church (EAOC), which was canonically subordinate to the Patriarchate of Constantinople, fled Estonia in 1944 and settled in Sweden, while Orthodoxy in occupied Estonia came under the control of the Moscow Patriarchate. With the restoration of Estonian independence in 1991, a struggle between the EAOC and the Diocese of the Moscow Patriarchate immediately ensued, with each claiming to be the legal successor to the pre-war Estonian Orthodox Church (the government recognized it as such) and thus the legal inheritor of its property. It was only in 2002 that the Moscow-based church surrendered its claim to legal succession to the EAOC. Now registered as the Estonian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (EOCMP), it was awarded several buildings that had legally belonged to the EAOC. Still, there can be little doubt that the Russian-language Orthodox congregations (which are mostly members of the EOCMP) are stronger and more influential than the mainly Estonian congregations of the EAOC.

The Soviet occupation and its aftermath also split the Latvian Lutheran Church, which after World War II was established in various locations in exile. Leaders of its largest branch, the Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (LELCA), made it clear that at a time when the main Lutheran Church was restricted and compromised, it was the exiles who represented occupied Latvia's oppressed and persecuted Lutherans. With a number of outstanding theological differences of opinion between them, it is hard to imagine a unification of the ELCL and the Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church Abroad taking place in the near future. Meanwhile, the fragmentation of Latvia's Lutheran community continues with the emergence of a variety of separate congregations, including eight congregations of the Augsburg Confession, whose members criticize the ELCL for what they claim is the latter's equivocal attitude toward the Holy Scripture.

Regardless of the divisions and factions that have developed within some of the churches, each has in common the desire to reestablish its traditional

societal role. In this regard, the Lutheran, Catholic, and Orthodox churches of the Baltic states have achieved a lot since the establishment of independence—especially those that could rely on help from sister churches abroad. The leading churches of the Baltic states have set up new seminaries for training priests and pastors, renewed their educational activities (establishing Sunday schools and self-funded denominational schools at the primary and secondary levels), and reinvigorated their publishing activities—in some cases even establishing their own publishing houses. In all three Baltic states, the churches are engaged in charitable activities such as distributing food and clothing to the needy and establishing programs to aid vulnerable social groups such as the elderly, children, and single mothers. The social work undertaken by the churches was especially invaluable during the 1990s, when the Baltic societies were experiencing the often traumatic repercussions of rapid economic and social change.

The postcommunist situation proved to be complex for the churches in other ways as well, especially when it came to dealing with the individualization of society that had been taking place in the West at a time when the Baltic churches were repressed and isolated from the outside world and consequently had become, some might say, inward looking. With the end of communism, it became possible to resume communication between sister churches in the East and West; soon it became clear that believers had developed different views and mentalities during the preceding decades. Some Baltic pastors have been outspoken about their fears about religious influences coming from the West. Others are concerned with protecting their parishioners—and their societies—from Western values and social mores. Yet with communism gone and the churches aspiring to resume their traditional societal roles, controversial issues such as pornography and homosexuality, rarely discussed during Soviet times, could no longer be avoided. When it comes to homosexual relations, the Baltic churches—Lutheran, Catholic, and Orthodox—form a unified front: All believe, with varying degrees of intensity, that homosexual desires are sinful and that same-sex unions cannot be tolerated in their churches. Another controversial issue, at least for the Lutheran churches, is women's ordination. Although it was under the

Soviet regime (which made homosexuality a crime and thus may have influenced the homophobia that permeates church culture) that women were ordained into the priesthood, this became controversial in the Baltic states after independence. The Lutheran churches of Latvia and Lithuania have rejected female priesthood—a stance that places them at odds with the more liberal exile churches.

While the Lutheran churches have enjoyed relatively little success in shaping debates on public morality, the same cannot be said of the Catholic Church in Lithuania. Opposing both the death penalty and abortion, political activists in the Catholic Church have helped energize the public debate on the latter; as a result of these efforts, in 2008 the Lithuanian parliament reviewed a bill that would have Lithuania join Malta, Ireland, and Poland as the only countries in the European Union (EU) to outlaw abortion. The Catholic hierarchy's outspoken support in 2003 for Lithuania's admission to the EU was also remarkable and may have been the decisive factor behind the positive referendum result. Yet on this issue, the Catholic Church in Lithuania was very much in the mainstream of the main Baltic churches, each of which supported accession to the EU.

Despite efforts by the Baltic churches to resume the influential societal roles they had enjoyed before the Soviet era, the current climate, even if it promises religious freedom to all confessions, appears to be unpromising. The dominant trend in all three countries is toward secularization and diminishing church membership. The fact that the Baltic churches have taken conservative stances on leading social issues has also served to distance them from sister churches in the West.

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See also Estonia; European Union; Latvia; Lithuania; Russian Federation; Secularization

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BANARAS

Banaras, Varanasi, Kashi: These are names used in India to refer to the pilgrimage city that is arguably the heart of Hindu South Asia. Located in the middle Ganga Valley between the Varana and Asi rivers in India's eastern Uttar Pradesh, it is one of the world's oldest continually inhabited cities. Kashi ("luminous") is its oldest moniker, first associated with the kingdom of the same name 3,000 years ago. Varanasi is another designation, found in the Buddhist *Jataka* tales and in the Hindu epic *Mahabharata*, and indeed today, Varanasi is the city's revived, postindependence designation, which combines the names of the two rivers on either side of it. The city was identified in the Pali language as Baranasi, from which emerged the corrupt form of the name, "Banaras," by which the city is still widely known. According to the 2001 census, the human population of Banaras is 1.5 million.

Kashi is a *tirtha*, a Sanskrit word meaning "ford." In earlier times, this was a crossing where the great Northern Road met the Ganga River. More significantly for adherents, however, Varanasi is a crossing between the worlds of gods and humans. Kashi is not alone as such a *tirtha* on the Indian subcontinent, but it is arguably the most "supercharged." Activities performed in this place are weightier in their significance and more efficacious in their fruits.

As such, Varanasi has long been a destination for pilgrims where liberation or enlightenment is especially achieved. As the Sanskrit proverb famously proclaims, *Kashyam marnam mukti*—"Death in Kashi is liberation." Kashi is the god Shiva's chosen city. Other city monikers attest to Shiva's bond: Kashi is Avimukta ("never forsaken"), even at the time of the cosmic dissolution. One Hindi saying speaks of Shiva saturating the land: *Kashi ke kan-kara Shiva Shankara*—"Even the stones of Kashi are Shiva." Today, there are literally thousands of Kashi temples and lingams ("aniconic phallic stones") attesting to his patronage.

The area situated between the Varana River in the north and the Asi River in the south is Kashi's locus. There are some 84 ghats ("stone stairways") lining the western banks of the Ganga, aligned south to north like buttons on the placket of a dress shirt. This river is unique here in that it is the only place that flows south to north. The three-mile journey from the southernmost ghat (Assi) to the northernmost (Adi Keshava) takes about an hour to travel by boat. From the safe lookout of the boat, one can see bathers taking a "holy dip" in the river, making offering to the goddess Ganga, and greeting Surya, the sun god, in the cool morning with a bowl of marigolds, rose petals, candles, and prayers. One can also see the two burning ghats known as Harishchandra and Manikarnika, where thousands of Hindus come from around the world for cremation.

As a spiritual crossing, we may understand Banaras as a series of five concentric circles, spanning outward like ripples on a pond from the center at the *Jnanavapi*, the "well of wisdom," near the *Visvesvara* ("Lord of All") Temple on the Ganga, to a point known as Delhi Vinayaka 17.6 kilometers west. All pilgrims begin and end their various journeys here at the well, believed to be the site of the first primordial water on earth. Each of these five circles corresponds to the five gross elements, five parts of the human body, five divine attributes, and five chakras.

It would be highly misleading to represent Banaras as *merely* a Hindu pilgrimage city, for to do so would obscure its other historical and socio-cultural aspects that were in times past, and still are today, significant in constructing this city. Moreover, Banaras remains a charged environment not merely for Hindus but for adherents of

many different religious traditions: Buddhist, Jain, and Islamic. For many inhabitants dwelling farther away from the famed river, Varanasi is a city like any other. As in days of old, Banaras remains a *tirtha* on the horizontal plane of history.

That history becomes less gauzy in the ninth century BCE, when archaeological excavations begin to confirm scriptural references that point backward in time toward an earlier age. By the beginning of the first millennium BCE, Banaras had become a center for Sanskrit learning, banking, commercial trade, and asceticism. It is no coincidence that Siddhartha Gautama chose nearby Sarnath to give his first teaching as the Buddha in the fifth century BCE. During this period, the Kingdom of Kashi was one of 16 kingdoms to emerge from the ascendant Aryan tribes. Over the next millennium, the city would experience the challenge of being sandwiched between stronger kingdoms, often the prized pawn of larger regional powers. Where once local non-Aryan peoples had propitiated local tutelary deities at the foot of trees or in tiny shrines, in this later period, we see the ascendance of the translocal deities who now dominate the Hindu pantheon and the Banaras landscape, their abodes delineated by stone and plaster: Shiva, Vishnu, the Goddess, Hanuman, Ram, and Krishna. In this time, luminaries like Mahavira, the Buddha, Śaṅkarācārya, and Ramanuja resided on the banks of the Ganga, as would the devotional saints and devotees like Tulsi, Kabir, Ravidas, and, for a time, Mirabai in the second millennium of the Common Era.

Islam first came to Banaras in the 11th century with the central Asian invaders. Further growth occurred under the Mughals in the 17th and 18th centuries, a period of waning but mostly waxing religious intolerance, when most of the city's temples were destroyed. This was the period of Varanasi's "mughalization," when an enduring cultural imprint was made in architecture, in the establishment of *muhallas* or neighborhoods that exist to this day, in the presence of Sufi shrines dotting the landscape, and in the creation of a singular syncretic culture that thwarted the desires of even the most chauvinistic Mughal emperor. Perhaps, it was during this period that strong ties were forged between the Mughal powers and the city's low-caste *ansaris* (weavers), who would eventually convert to Islam. Today, Islam accounts

for more than one third of Varanasi city's population. There are as many Muslims here as there are Brahmans, the majority of whom are weavers. The relationship between the Muslims who weave Banaras's famous saris and the Hindus who sell them explains in part why historically there has been less communal tension here than in other cities throughout South Asia.

With the recession of Mughal power in the 18th century, new sociopolitical alignments emerged. Varanasi's power structure was marked by the interplay between the Raja of Banaras, the city's merchant bankers, and Gosains, ascetic-soldier mercenaries who linked the city through their pilgrimage networks for the purpose of trade. By the 1780s, this power structure had made Banaras the subcontinent's inland commercial center. With the subsequent rise of the British, Varanasi came to take its present shape. The city was further developed to the south and west, masonry bridges were built over the Varan and Asi rivers, streets were broadened, and the first census was taken in 1827 to 1828. Significantly, due to interaction and exchange between Indian and Western culture in the colonial period, new Hindu traditions emerged. Banaras played center stage in the development of what is often called "neo-Hinduism." In 1949, the district of Varanasi assumed its current form when the Raja of Banaras ceded his semi-independent Banaras State to the new Indian nation-state. Varanasi became the new district headquarters less than 2 years after India's independence from the British.

The long-standing representation of Varanasi as the preeminent *Hindu* city, the oft-purported "center of Hindu civilization," has made it a target not just for pilgrims and Western seekers but also for Islamist terrorists. On March 7, 2006, bombs were detonated at the Sankat Mochan Temple and the Varanasi Cantonment Railway Station, killing more than 20 and injuring more than 100 people. The well-selected locations suggest an attempt to kill both Hindus and foreign nationals. A group known as Lashkar-e Kahar/Qahab claimed responsibility for the attacks, but it is suspected that this is a front organization for the notorious Lashkar-e-Taiba ("Army of the Righteous/Pure"), currently based in Punjab, Pakistan, and responsible for attacks in Mumbai and elsewhere throughout South Asia. The expressed purpose of this illegal organization is to free the disputed land of Kashmir

from Indian control and to establish an Islamic state throughout South Asia.

Banaras is thus more than one thing. It is indeed a Hindu pilgrimage city, but it is also a Muslim city anchored by thousands of Islamic holy sites and institutions centuries in the making. And Varanasi is one of many modern Indian cities struggling at once with overpopulation, government corruption, and limited resources at a time of economic liberalization; Kashi is full of both abject want and garish surplus. Less than half a kilometer from Shivala Ghat rises a new consumer mall in concrete, rebar, and glass. The Ganga is likewise more than one thing. She is a river flowing from Shiva's matted hair, she is a goddess, and she is an environmental catastrophe flowing through Kashi and a consequent opportunity for activism. For those with the eyes of faith, she is a great liberator, while for others, she may be a source of waterborne diseases. For many inhabitants and pilgrims, she is both these things at once, for in the contemporary period credulity and doubt often dwell together.

Kerry P. C. San Chirico

See also Ganga; Hinduism; India; Islam; Pilgrimage; Sacred Places; Shaivism

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democracy located in South Asia. Originally called East Pakistan, it was created during the partition of India in 1947 as the eastern wing of the country of Pakistan. Its name was later changed to East Bengal and then to Bangladesh after its union with West Pakistan was broken following a bloody war of secession in 1971. It is bordered to the south by the Bay of Bengal and by India on all sides but the southeast, where it is bordered by Burma. It straddles the Ganges-Brahmaputra delta and is one of the most densely populated regions in the world, with a population of approximately 153.5 million people, 98% of whom are ethnic Bengalis and speak Bengali (also known as *Bangla*). Muslims constitute 83% of Bangladesh's population, making it one of the largest Muslim countries, and one of the few Muslim democracies, in the world. It is also home to Hindus, who constitute approximately 16% of the total population.

The region of what is now Bangladesh underwent processes of religious conversion to Islam (from the local Hindu tradition) beginning in the 13th century with the arrival of Sufis in rural farming areas following the Turkish invasion. The area was absorbed into the Mughal Empire in the 16th century and later by the British Empire. Today, the majority of Muslims in Bangladesh are Sunnī, though there are small numbers of Shi'a Muslims, mostly in urban areas. Sufi shrines are found throughout Bangladesh, and local *pirs* (Sufi mystics and saints) are important as figures of religious veneration as well as political leadership in contemporary politics.

Bangladesh's national politics has increasingly involved a struggle over the role of Islam in the state and society, as Islamist leaders and parties such as the Jamaat-e Islami Bangladesh, the former counterpart of Pakistan's Jamaat-e Islami, founded by Maulana Mawdudi, gain increasing support. In 1977, Bangladesh's founding principle of secularism was omitted from the constitution, and in 1988, Islam was declared the state religion of Bangladesh by a constitutional amendment. This saw an increase in the government's role in defining the form and place of Islam within the Bangladeshi state and society. In 2007, a military-backed regime declared a state of emergency, promising new democratic elections by the end of 2008.

BANGLADESH

Bangladesh (formally the People's Republic of Bangladesh) is a Muslim-majority parliamentary

In recent decades, Bangladesh has seen a significant rise in Islamic revivalism. Through increased international travel and labor migration, particularly to Gulf countries, many Bangladeshis gain exposure to global movements of Islamism while abroad, thus compelling increasing support for Islamist movements at home. The Tablighi Jama'at, a transnational Islamic reform movement originating in South Asia, is also active in Bangladesh. With the continual rise in Islamism in recent years, Bangladesh's Hindu minority has decreased in size as some have migrated to India, and the state's commitment to the protection of religious minorities has come into question as attacks on Hindus and Ahmaddiyas by Muslim extremists in the country have risen.

Megan Adamson Sijapati

See also Ahmaddiya; India; Islam; Islamism (Political Islam); Jamaat-e-Islami; Pakistan; South Asia; Sufism; Sunnī Islam; *Tabligh*

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BARBADOS

The nation of Barbados is the easternmost country of the Caribbean islands. It is the only Caribbean colony to have been governed only by one European nation, Great Britain. The island became independent in 1966, but it remains a member of the British Commonwealth. With a population of more than 281,968 occupying 443 square miles (1 square mile = 2.59 square kilometers), Barbados is one of the world's most densely populated nations with more than 1,570 inhabitants per square mile. Historically, there has been more out-migration *from* Barbados than from other countries *to* Barbados. This has had a profound impact on religious organizations.

More than 90% of the Barbadian population are descendants of slaves, representing a mix of African tribal groups predominantly Igbo, Akan, and Yoruba. European Whites constitute about 4% of the population. Whites are mainly from Britain, Scotland, Ireland, and North America. Other ethnic groups (about 6%) are from Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America. A number of Chinese (including some Buddhists) migrated from Hong Kong in the 1940s. Muslim Syrians and Lebanese Christians have become economically important, as have recent migrants from Venezuela, Colombia, Panama, and Brazil (many of whom are Roman Catholic). More than 2,000 East Indians migrated from Guyana in the 20th century. Some East Indians are Hindu, but the majority are Christian. Nevertheless, the 2007 *CIA World Factbook* reports that Hinduism is one of the fastest growing religions in Barbados. There are also a number of Rastafarians and a Jewish community of about 100, who worship in a synagogue built in the 17th century by Sephardic Jews from Brazil. Although small in number, the Jewish community has taken steps to preserve its heritage and maintain an active synagogue.

Religion is at the center of Barbados's life and culture. Even a seemingly secular activity such as "Cropover" traces its origin to religion. Cropover—the largest festival in Barbados—was once a religious rite celebrating the success of the sugarcane harvest. In addition to Cropover, Barbados Christians celebrate their heritage at an annual gathering known as "Gospelfest." A majority of Bajans classify themselves as "very religious." Families gather once a week for prayer, religious holidays and rites of passage are observed, and most businesses close on Sundays, which is a day set aside for rest and prayer.

The overwhelming majority (67%) of the Bajan population classify themselves as Protestants. When the first English settlers arrived in Barbados in 1627, they began building substantial churches. Every parish in Barbados has an Anglican church, and Anglicanism constitutes the single largest denomination on the island (representing more than 30% of the population). As noted by Robert Stewart in 1999, the Anglican Church in Barbados was not disestablished as on other British West Indian islands, and Barbados's Anglican churches are among the island's most elaborate religious buildings.

Barbados claims to have as many denominations as there are days of the year. It is home to hundreds of religious groups, including Anglicans, Apostolics, Baha'is, Baptists, Christian Scientists, Evangelicals, Hindus, Jehovah's Witnesses, Jews, Methodists, Moravians, Mormons, Muslims, Pentecostals, Quakers, Rastafarians, Roman Catholics, the Salvation Army, Seventh-Day Adventists, Spiritual Baptists, and many more.

After the Anglican Church, the next largest denomination in Barbados is the Seventh-Day Adventists. They number about 16,000. The first Adventist missionaries arrived in 1891, and the denomination has grown steadily since its incorporation in 1933. The Roman Catholic Church has had a strong presence on the island since 1839. There are about 11,000 Roman Catholics (representing about 4% of the population). In the early and mid-20th century, membership of the Catholic Church increased due to immigration from Guyana, Dominica, St. Lucia, and Trinidad. Pentecostal groups number about 7,000. Pentecostal membership is growing. Methodists number about 5,000. Methodist affiliation has declined slightly over the past 10 years. There are approximately 2,300 Jehovah's Witnesses. As noted, Baptists, Moravians, and members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Mormons) are also present. The percentage of non-Christians and nonbelievers (atheists) is very small. There are an estimated 2,700 Muslims. The first mosque in Barbados was constructed in 1950. Currently, Barbados has three mosques and an Islamic Center.

The Spiritual Baptist Church began in the eastern Caribbean. Spiritual Baptists in Barbados trace their roots to 1957, when Trinidad Archbishop Granville Williams returned to his native Barbados and founded the first congregation, Sons of God Apostolic Spiritual Baptist Church. In 2008, Barbados's Spiritual Baptist membership exceeded 10,000. Bajan Spiritual Baptists are also known as "tie-heads"—a reference to the brightly colored cloth they wear tied around their heads. New members are baptized three times (in the names of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit) by total immersion. The Spiritual Baptist Church's biggest breakthrough to becoming a respected religion was in 1981, when it became part of the official program at the opening of the Caribbean Festival of Arts (CARIFESTA). The

Spiritual Baptist Church has had strong African influences. Services entail much dancing, singing, and possession by the Holy Spirit. In the 17th century, African slaves brought their own religions with them to Barbados and continued to practice them—even though their masters attempted to convert them to Protestant Christianity. Jerome S. Handler and Kenneth Bilby note that African-derived beliefs and practices still play an important part in Bajan religious life, as seen in the continuing practice of Obeah.

While Bajans consider themselves religious pluralists, they are more "exclusivist" and do not participate in different religious groups simultaneously as often as do Jamaicans, Bahamians, and Trinidadians. This makes for intense competition between religious groups. Factionalism has also been a major factor in Barbados's religious organizations. Continued secessions from a common parent body have resulted in a large number of sectarian groups, such as Wesleyan Holiness, African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, Ebenezer Revival Center, Berean Bible Baptist Church, and Unity of Barbados. These sectarian groups are often very similar to one another in their rituals and doctrines. They differ from one another in name only.

Stephen D. Glazier

See also Anglicans; Guyana; Missions and Missionaries; Santería; Trinidad and Tobago; Vodou

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BARKER, EILEEN (B. 1938)

Eileen Barker, a longtime professor at London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), is perhaps the best known sociologist of religion in the area of new religious movements (NRMs). She has produced a prodigious amount of scholarship in the area, as well as establishing in 1988 the now well-recognized INFORM at LSE. INFORM, which stands for Information Network Focus on New Religious Movements, has been an important and reliable information source on new religions for the general public, scholars, governments, and the media worldwide for many years. This very influential entity has been described in some of Professor Barker's publications, and it has been a model for the development of other such entities around the world.

Professor Barker, after having completed a career in drama and raising a family, earned her degrees from LSE, including a First Class Honors in sociology in 1970 and a PhD in 1988, after which she was designated professor of sociology with a special reference to the study of religion at LSE. She served LSE in many capacities during her tenure there, including convener of the sociology department, dean of undergraduate studies, academic governor, and vice dean. She also educated generations of students in the sociology of religion during her 30-plus-year academic career. Professor Barker has given nearly 600 presentations in more than 70 countries in her career, including at more than 200 universities around the world. Her publications number more than 250, and they have been published in at least 27 different languages.

Eileen Barker has had a special interest in the formerly Soviet-dominated nations of central and eastern Europe and has made many visits to that part of the world. She was a founding member of ISORECEA (International Study of Religion in Eastern and Central Europe Association), a thriving new scholarly organization in that part of the world, and has been a major figure in nations in that region in promoting scholarship about religion and also developing public policy toward religion.

Eileen Barker's scholarship has been recognized by many awards. The book that grew out of her doctoral dissertation, *The Making of a Moonie: Choice or Brainwashing*, won the Society for the

Scientific Study of Religion Distinguished Book award in 1985. She was also awarded the Martin Marty Award for Service in the Public Understanding of Religion by the American Academy of Religion in 2000. She was the first non-American to be elected president of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, serving from 1991 to 1993, and she was also elected president of the Association for the Sociology of Religion in 2001. Her book *New Religious Movements: A Practical Introduction*, published first in 1989 by Her Majesty's Stationary Office, has been reissued five times and has been translated into at least a dozen languages. This book has become perhaps the most widely circulated publication ever in the area of NRMs and has served to help educate untold numbers of students, scholars, public officials, and journalists about NRMs. She was elected a fellow of the British Academy in 1998, and in 2000, the queen of England appointed her as an Officer of the British Empire, a rare honor indeed for a scholar and academic.

Professor Barker's reputation earned her not one but two *festschriften* (books honoring her) when she retired in 2003 from LSE. One involved mainly scholars from North America and western Europe, including a number of major figures in the sociology of religion. The other was developed by scholars in eastern and central Europe with whom she had worked so closely over the years.

James T. Richardson

See also New Age Movements; Unification Church

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BASE COMMUNITIES IN LATIN AMERICA

Base communities or base ecclesial communities, also known as CEB (abbreviation for *comunidades eclesiais de base* in Portuguese or *comunidades eclesiales de base* in Spanish), are groups of lay Catholics, mostly from low-income strata, who get together to celebrate Sunday liturgies, to reflect on the Bible, and to carry out social and political activities. They were named “community” because of their supposed sharing experience, “ecclesial” for being part of the Catholic Church, and “base” as they were formed by those who live at the bottom of the social pyramid: the poor and the oppressed.

CEBs appeared in Catholic discourse after the 1968 Episcopal Conference of Latin America (CELAM) in Medellín. Inspired by the Vatican II Council and also by liberation theology, Latin American bishops affirmed then their “option for the poor” and proposed the reorganization of the Catholic Church into small lay communities. CEBs grew mainly in dioceses whose bishops sympathize with liberation theology. During the following decades, these communities have become internationally known for teaching the Latin American poor about their social and political rights through the Christian faith. Considered by liberation theologians as bearers of the “prophetic mission” of transforming the Catholic Church and also society as a whole, the CEBs became linked to the popular resistance movements of the 1970s and 1980s dictatorships, especially in Brazil, Chile, and Central America. The Sandinista Revolution victory in Nicaragua contributed to overestimation of the CEBs’ degree of politicization and creation of the myth of revolutionary CEBs.

Despite not being revolutionary as some thought them to be, the political role of CEBs should not be underestimated. In Brazil, for example, in addition to being supporters of Worker’s Party, which elected the ex-factory worker President Lula, CEBs also created important political leaders such as the environmentalist Chico Mendes, the Minister of the Environment of the Lula government Marina Silva (2002–2006, 2007–), and also leaders of more radical movements such as the landless workers movement, the MST (*Movimento dos Sem Terra*), among others.

From the 1990s onward, CEBs became less visible and less politically active. Several historical events may explain this political demobilization: the fall of the Latin American military regimes, the crisis of the socialist utopia, and John Paul II’s criticism of liberation theology. However, the CEBs are still active in the Catholic Church. Many female CEB leaders perform important roles in everyday church activities. Inter-CEB meetings are held periodically in Brazil, with a growing number of participants. Continent-wide meetings of CEBs were held in 2001 in Argentina and in 2004 in Mexico.

Cecília Loreto Mariz

See also Latin America; Liberation Theology; Roman Catholicism; Vatican Council, Second

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BATAILLE, GEORGES (1897–1962)

The French philosopher Georges Bataille briefly converted to Catholicism as a teenager and later trained as a medievalist, but he went on to engage with the transgressive writings of Marx, the Surrealists, Freud, Nietzsche, the Marquis de Sade, and the anthropology of archaic and primitive societies. He was a member of the Surrealists but did not get along with André Breton. In the 1920s and 1930s, he contributed articles to the anti-Stalinist Marxist journal *La critique sociale* and cofounded two review journals: the Surrealist *Documents* and the Nietzschean-inspired antimainstream *Acéphale* (Headless), with inquiries into archaic sacrificial cultures, Gnosticism, mythology, Christian mystics, madmen, Dionysius, sexuality, and

death. He was a founding member of the influential *Collège de Sociologie* (1937–1939), an organization dedicated to retrieving “the sacred” for modern society. The biweekly lectures at the Collège were attended by ex-Surrealists, anthropologists, and sociologists, including Claude Lévi-Strauss, Walter Benjamin, Marcel Mauss, Michel Leiris, Jean-Paul Sartre, Alexandre Kojève, and Pierre Klossowski. Bataille’s own writings have inspired a later generation of French theorists: Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze, Felix Guattari, Jacques Derrida, and Jean Baudrillard.

Central to Bataille’s passionate critique of modernity was his notion of *ritual expenditure* as a key form of *nonproductive consumption*, which has all but disappeared in our utilitarian and future-oriented modern life. These expenditures include religious festivals, massive rituals and sacrifices, competitive spectacles, lavish court luxuries and ceremonies, large nonproductive monastic communities, and giant monuments such as the pyramids and medieval cathedrals, which moderns consider wasteful. The prototype for these expenditures was the potlatch of Native Americans of the northwest coast, community feasts where wealth and property were willfully destroyed or squandered in exaggerated generosity, as described by Marcel Mauss. These expenditures allowed people to maintain a deep connection with the sacred realm of the gods and ancestors. Just as orgasmic sexual states of pleasure cannot be reduced to the teleology of reproduction, so also ritual expenditures do not merely fulfill the instrumental functions of providing food and shelter but also satisfy a human desire for profligate loss and destruction. They have also prevented these societies from transforming people into instruments or things, as found more commonly in modern secular societies, whether capitalist or communist, where workers spend much of their lives fulfilling capitalist or state production targets. Bataille’s experience of the horrors of war as a soldier in the trenches of World War I informs his theory of the decline of ritual expenditures and the modern obsession with industrial productivity and military expenditures in his *The Accursed Share* (1989a). In closing off the *joie de vivre* of ritual profligacy, modernity condemns us to a single outlet for our destructive desires: the catastrophic destruction of modern warfare.

The Theory of Religion is a grand narrative of human religious history. Bataille begins with a fabulous account of the state of animality (the consciousness of a cow) or intimacy as one of immediacy, immanence, lack of identity or time, and nondifferentiation between the self and the world. What breaks up this originary monistic world is not language, as the Chinese Daoists would have it, but tool-use. Tool-use introduces an objectification process that differentiates the subject and object and the categories of the sacred (supreme beings) and the profane (tools and their products). Increasingly in human history, distinctions are drawn between humans and animals and between humans and supreme beings, whereas before there was a sense of continuity between humans and both animals and gods. With progressive tool-use, not only do animals become things for the use of humans, but humans themselves become objectified as things. The longing for a return to intimacy is then partially satisfied through effervescent religious rituals and festivals that refocus people on the present and indulge in an excess of material waste and loss. Whereas in archaic societies, production was subordinated to nonproductive destruction, the rise of institutionalized religions introduced the categories of morality and evil, where morality is rationally grounded in the real order of things and ostentatious destruction of wealth is condemned. However, it is the Protestant ethic that Bataille regards as the beginning of modernity’s complete reduction to the reign of things. In Protestantism is found a religious rationalization for the marshaling of productive forces.

In *The Accursed Share* (1993b), Bataille introduces his notion of sovereignty, which he regards as life beyond utility. Whereas Marx focused on material production and distribution by and for the proletariat, Bataille subverts Marx in conceiving of alienation as the process whereby one is made into a mere instrument for production. In Bataille’s notion of alienation, one loses one’s sovereignty or the basic freedom of attaining moments of transcendence from the chains of earthly profane life. Rituals and religious consumption allow ordinary people to attain sovereign moments that used to be reserved for monarchs and aristocracies leading lives of luxury. These sovereign moments, attained in trance, prayer, meditation, or spirit possession; in states of eroticism, sobbing, or

laughter; in poetry or artistic inspiration; or after drinking wine, are moments when we experience a fundamental state of freedom.

Mayfair Mei-hui Yang

See also Festivals; Lévi-Strauss, Claude; Marxism; Postmodernism

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BATTLE OF BADR

The Battle of Badr is a turning point in Islamic history. It is the first military operation led by the Prophet of Islam, Muhammad, in the month of Ramadan 2 AH (March 624 CE). The Holy Qur'an twice celebrates the victory at Badr and calls it *Yaum al-Furqān*, which means the day of distinction between evil forces and good forces. The value of this stunning victory to Prophet Muhammad is difficult to overestimate. It crystallized him and his followers as a recognized effective power.

The battle occurred after Prophet Muhammad learned that a very large business caravan of rich Meccans was on its way southward from the Levant (Bilād al-Shām) to Mecca (Makkah). It was

headed by Abu Sufyān, who rushed ahead of the caravan to see whether it was safe to proceed to Mecca by the nearest route, which is by Badr, situated some 10 miles (1 mile = 1.61 kilometers) south of Medina and 240 miles north of Mecca.

The Prophet summoned the Muslims of Medina and directed them to attack the caravan. Quraysh, the predominant Arab tribe, which had opposed Islam from the beginning, heard of the intended attack and mobilized their own forces to rescue the caravan, which had already altered its route. This led to the first major confrontation between the Muslims and their opponents at Mecca.

The Muslim forces led by the Prophet were composed of an aggregation of believers of different tribal origins united by faith. Some of them were migrants (*muhajjirūn*) from Mecca, who fought their own relatives in this battle. Thus, faith prevailed over ties of blood and tribe. It was a fight between two unequal forces, where the Muslim power was outnumbered by the Meccans. However, the Muslim fighters won the battle with minimum casualties in comparison with the Meccans. It is to be noted that some Meccans who were captured as prisoners acquired their freedom by teaching the Muslims reading and writing.

The primary cause for victory at Badr is that the Muslims were motivated by faith. They hoped for abundant reward from Allah (God), and many of them wished for martyrdom, knowing that a martyr is to be rewarded by admission into paradise. Therefore, they fought with courage and determination. Other key factors that made this victory possible were fighting under one command, consultation before making decisions, a well-thought-out plan and excellent sense of timing, and discipline and steadfastness of purpose.

It was also a victory for the basic human rights of the freedom of thought, conscience, and religion and the freedom to manifest one's religion or belief in teaching and practice. After much repression by the Quraysh tribe for more than a decade, the Muslims rightfully gained a boost of confidence that would enhance their position in Medina and among the tribes of the Arabian Peninsula and strengthen their sense of hope for a better future and for the message of Islam.

Majeda Omar

See also Islam; Mecca; Muhammad; Saudi Arabia

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BATUQUE DE PORTO ALEGRE

The Batuque is an Afro-Brazilian religion practiced in the state of Rio Grande do Sul and is similar to other Afro-Brazilian rituals such as Xangô in Recife (Pernambouc State) or Candomblé from Bahia. Originally, *terreiro* (the name of Batuque's temple) was found in the south 150 to 160 years ago by an emancipated woman slave who came from northeast Brazil, but precise data on Batuque's origins in Porto Alegre are not known. Batuque is characterized by its strong syncretism with the Catholic religion, with each *orixá* (gods in the Batuque; there are 12 main *orixás*) having at least one corresponding Catholic saint. Everyone in Batuque claims Catholic identity (through baptism), being Afro-Brazilian and Catholic at the same time. Although it was traditionally a Black religion, it is nowadays practiced by White people too and has expanded beyond Brazilian frontiers into the United States and Europe (Spain, Italy, Portugal, France) and Latin America (Venezuela, Paraguay), especially Argentina and Uruguay. Batuque is associated with Umbanda and Quimbanda, other Afro-Brazilian religions commonly practiced together in the same *terreiros* in Porto Alegre and abroad. Social scientists talk about a religious *continuum* to qualify this phenomenon.

Batuque is based on three main rituals: (1) possession by gods (*orixás*), (2) animal sacrifices, and (3) divination (by cowries). Wealth, love, and money, that is, intramundane interests, are the more frequent motivations to go to a *terreiro*. There are several degrees of commitment with Batuque practice. You can enter the *terreiro* as a simple customer by consulting individually the *terreiro* priest (problems are identified through divination, then they are solved doing a *trabalho*—an offering and/or a healing ritual), come to public

and collective ceremonies where “spectators” consult gods embodied in initiates, or become initiated. By starting an initiating process, you become a member of the god family. Priests are called *pai-de-santo* (“godfather”) or *mãe-de-santo* (“godmother”) and have their godchildren (*filhos e filhas-de-santo*), sisters and brothers, between them.

Batuque, an initiatic and particular religion, became transnational for several reasons. Without centralized organization, Batuque crosses frontiers by creating strong interpersonal links, giving birth to local communitarian identities. On the other hand, it is a fulfilling corporal practice where everyone is protected by a personal god (each initiate has his or her own *orixá*). Each *orixá* is represented by specific symbols (colors, objects) and determinate fields of power related to natural elements (fire, storm, wind, etc.), the human body (blood, hearing, speaking, motherhood, etc.), and human activities (justice, work, etc.). Closed to contemporary ecological spirituality, Batuque also allows (compared with Catholicism) a more direct and personal relationship with the divine, not mediated by religious authority.

Maira Muchnik

See also Brazil; Bricolage; Candomblé; Divination; New Religions in South America; Syncretism; Tambor de Mina

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BEIJING

Beijing, also known as Peking, is the capital and the political, cultural, and educational center of the People's Republic of China. Together with

Shanghai, Tianjin, and Chongqing, Beijing is one of the four municipalities under direct administration of the central government, which are equivalent to provinces in China's administrative structure. Many historic sites are among the UNESCO's (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) World Heritage List, such as the Temple of Heaven, Zhoukoudian Peking Man Ruins, the Great Wall, the Forbidden City, and the Summer Palace.

Beijing is China's third largest city after Chongqing and Shanghai, with an area of about 16,807 square kilometers (6,487 square miles), divided into 16 urban and suburban districts and two rural counties, and a population of about 17.5 million (in the year 2009). All the 56 ethnic groups of China can be found in Beijing, among which the Han Chinese are the majority and make up nearly 96% of the city's population. Other big ethnic minorities include the Manchu, Hui, and Mongol, with percentages of 1.84, 1.74, and 0.28, respectively, according to the census of 2000.

Brief History of Beijing

Beijing has one of the longest histories of any city in the world. It was one of the four great ancient capitals of China. As early as 700,000 to 230,000 years ago, Beijing had been the habitation of the so-called Peking Man (*Homo erectus pekinensis*), found in the caves of Dragon Bone Hill near the village of Zhoukoudian in Fangshan District in 1927. The Paleolithic *Homo sapiens* (Upper Cave Man, first found in 1930) also lived there about 34,000 to 27,000 years ago.

The first recorded name of Beijing in the documents is Ji, the capital of the state of Yan in the Spring-Autumn and Warring States Period (770–221 BCE). In the Liao Dynasty (907–1125), Beijing was established as a secondary capital, called Yanjing ("Capital of Yan"). The Jin Dynasty (1115–1234, found by Jurchen People, or Nǚ zhēnrén in Chinese *pinyin*) made Beijing its capital and called it Zhongdu, meaning the "Central Capital." In the Mongol Yuan Dynasty (1271–1368), Beijing again was the capital and was called Dadu, meaning the "Great Capital." In the following Ming (1368–1662) and Qing (1636–1911) dynasties, Beijing remained China's capital, called Jingshi or, generally, Beijing. So from the Jin to the

Qing dynasties, Beijing, for more than 700 years, had been the capital and the political center in China's history.

The Xinhai Revolution of 1911 put an end to the dynasty reign in China. The capital of the new Republic of China (1911–1949) remained at Beijing during the early period (1912–1927). When the People's Republic of China was established in 1949, Beijing once again became the capital.

Religions in Beijing

All the five religions officially recognized by the Chinese central government, Buddhism, Daoism, Islam, and Catholic and Protestant Christianity, have their believers in Beijing. According to the 1988 official statistics (there is no updated official statistics), the total believers of the five religions are about 50,000, of which 30,000 are Catholics and 12,000 are Muslims. But the present figure must be much bigger, as the so-called Protestant "underground churches" or "house churches" have been developing very fast these years, though the numbers of Catholics and Muslims may remain relatively definite (the number of Muslims is almost equivalent to the population of the Hui ethnic group).

According to recent statistics (2009), there are a total of 696 religious personnel in Beijing. Among them there are 340, 70, 141, 50, and 95 for Buddhism, Daoism, Islam, Catholic Christianity, and Protestant Christianity, respectively. The number of officially registered sites for religious activities is 134, of which 18 are for Buddhism, 8 for Daoism, 70 for Islam, 21 for Catholic, and 17 for Protestant (the Protestant house churches are not recognized by the government). Some of the religious sites are very famous and of historic importance:

Fayuan Temple, built during the Tang Dynasty, is not only the oldest Buddhist temple in Beijing but also the location for the China Buddhism Institution and China Buddhism Library and Relic Centre. Yonghegong ("The Lama Temple"), built during the early Qing Dynasty, is the biggest Lamasery in Beijing and the most well known outside Tibet.

Baiyun Guan (The White Cloud Temple), built during the Tang Dynasty with a history of more

than 1,200 years, known as “The First Temple Under Heaven,” is one of China’s oldest and largest Daoist temples and the biggest Daoist temple in Beijing. The Taoist Association of China is located there.

Niujie Mosque is the oldest and largest mosque in Beijing. It was first built during the Liao Dynasty (996 CE). Xuanwumen Catholic Church, also known as the South Church, is currently the diocesan cathedral. It is the oldest Catholic church in Beijing. Beijing Chongwenmen Christian Church, built in 1870, is the largest existing Protestant church in Beijing.

Apart from the five government-sanctioned religions, Beijing also played an important role in the practice of China’s traditional religion or Chinese Folk Religion in history. The most significant is the worship of Heaven. The Temple of Heaven, situated in southeastern urban Beijing, built in 1420 during the Ming Dynasty, was the sacred site to offer sacrifice to Heaven for the emperors of the Ming and Qing dynasties. The temple was last used for this purpose on December 23, 1914, by the president of the Republic of China, Yuan Shih-kai. Other prominent temples of folk religion include Temple of Sun in the east of urban Beijing, Temple of Earth in the north, and Temple of Moon in the west.

The Administration of Religions

As the political center of China, Beijing is also the center for the administration of religions in China. The highest administrative organization of religion, The State Administration for Religious Affairs, under the State Council, is in Beijing. Beijing also houses the five government-sanctioned religions’ national societies: the Buddhist Association of China, the Islamic Association of China, the Taoist Association of China, the Chinese Patriotic Catholic Association, and the National Committee of the Three-Self Patriotic movement of the Protestant Churches in China.

At the municipal level, the administration of religions in Beijing is the responsibility of the Beijing Municipal Bureau of Religious Affairs. The Department of Religious Affairs under the Bureau is divided into three sections. Section 1 is in charge of Catholic and Protestant affairs, Section 2 is for Buddhism and Daoism affairs, and Section 3 is for

the affairs of Islam. Each of the five religions also has its own association at the municipal level.

The Study of Religion in Beijing

Beijing is also the cultural and educational center of China. With regard to the study of religion, the Institute of World Religion under the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, established in 1964, is the most important institute for religious studies. The institute’s website, <http://iwr.cass.cn>, is a good resource for students of the field. Departments of Religious Studies and research centers are also found in some of the most famous universities of China, such as Peking University, Renmin University of China, Minzu University of China, Beijing Normal University, and so on. The website <http://www.pacilution.com>, established by a scholar in Beijing, is also an important reference resource for religious studies in China.

Guo Changgang

See also China; Chinese Popular Religion; Confucianism; Cultural Revolution (China); Daoism; Feng Shui (Geomancy); Mahayana Buddhism; Mongol Empire; Qigong; Shamanism; Silk Road; Taiping Rebellion; Tibet; Zedong, Mao; Zen Buddhism

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Websites established in Beijing for religions or religious affairs: <http://www.chinareligion.cn> and <http://www.mzb.com.cn>

BELARUS

The Republic of Belarus in northern Europe gained independence after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. Situated between Russia and Poland, Belarus has historically been a cultural borderland. Baptized into Orthodoxy in the 10th century (the Polatsk eparchy was established in 992), the country later became part of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and partly adopted Roman Catholicism, especially after the Union of Lublin (1569; with the Kingdom of Poland). After the Brest Church Union (1596), the Uniate Church (subordinated to the Pope but with Orthodox ceremonies) was established. Other religions were represented by Jewish (since the 14th century), Muslim (since the 14th century), Old Believers (since mid-17th century), and Protestant (Calvinist, Lutheran, and Anti-Trinitarian; in mid-16th century) communities. In 1795, Belarus was annexed to the Russian Empire, and the population was by force converted to Russian Orthodoxy (the Uniate Church was prohibited in 1840). In 1922, following the 1917 October Revolution, the church was separated from the state and the church lands withdrawn. During the Soviet period, Belarus was declared atheistic, and religious practices were severely prosecuted. In 1941 to 1945, much of the Jewish population perished. During the “Khrushchev thaw” of 1953 to 1964, religious activities

temporarily revived. Perestroika (1985) allowed the people to declare their beliefs freely.

The Declaration of Independence (1991) coincided with the massive religious revival: The Christian church was restored as an important social institution; many new communities arose, including Protestant ones; and new temples were built. As a result, in the 1990s, the proportion of believers in Belarus rose significantly and now constitutes about 50%, which is comparable with that of Russia or Ukraine.

During the post-Soviet period, the state-church relationship was reestablished. In 1992, the Belarusian parliament adopted a law “On the freedom of religion and religious organizations” and guaranteed freedom of consciousness. The new edition of this law (2002) affirmed that the Orthodox Church played a dominant role in the formation of the national state, cultural, and spiritual traditions. In 2003, a special agreement on cooperation between this church and the state was signed. Additionally, an important social role for the Roman Catholic Church was confirmed by the same law, as was the recognition of the statuses of Lutheran Church, Muslim, and Jewish religious organizations. Other religions can also be recognized after state registration.

Current religious tendencies include the rise of interest in religion among the population, widespread eclectic “Christian” beliefs, relatively low regular attendance of religious services, moderate rise of Baptism and Pentecostalism (Christians of evangelical faith), and homogenization of the religious field.

As of January 1, 2009, 25 religious confessions (3,062 religious organizations) were registered, the most popular among them being the following:

- Orthodox Church (1,473 parishes, 1,274 churches)
- Roman Catholic Church (467 communities, 451 churches)
- Protestant churches (14 denominations and 992 communities, among them 557 Pentecostals, 269 Baptist, 27 Lutherans)
- Uniate Church (14 communities)
- Church of Old Believers (32 communities)
- Islam (27 communities)
- Judaism (46 communities)

Among almost a hundred new religious movements, the Krishnaites, Baha'is, Mormons, New Apostolic Church, Jehovah's Witnesses, and Johannites are registered. Many other smaller groups are registered as public and other organizations as well

Larissa Titarenko

See also Eastern Orthodox Christianity; Poland; Russian Federation

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BELGIUM

Traditionally, Belgium, a northern European country located between France and The Netherlands, has been a Catholic country. It also includes other Christian denominations—the Anglican Church, the Orthodox Church, and the Protestant Church—and Judaism has also been recognized by the state, along with Buddhism since 2008 and Islam since 1974. Muslims in Belgium are the result of immigration. In a period of booming economy, in the first half of the 1960s, the Belgian government made an appeal to Moroccan and Turkish workers. This was the start of massive immigration from these Islamic countries and to a lesser extent from other Islamic countries such as Algeria and Tunisia. The immigration still goes on, and in the course of time, many have acquired Belgian nationality. Although we may not equate ethnicity and religion, we can safely say that at present there are about 500,000–600,000 Muslims living in Belgium, including a small number of autochthones who converted to Islam. Half of them are concentrated in the Brussels region and about one quarter in the more industrial regions of Flanders and Wallonia. Consequently, Islam

has become the second largest religion in Belgium, and due to the concentration of Muslims in specific localities, it has a very visible presence. According an international index of global communication, in 2008, Belgium was the most globalized of the 120 countries studied. Consequently, Belgians are well informed about global issues, including Islamic terrorism and new religious movements (NRMs); both Islam and NRMs have had political consequences in Belgium.

A Flemish political party that has a large following has been condemned for anti-Islamic racism and had to change its original name from *Vlaams Blok* to *Vlaams Belang*. It is strongly opposed to multiculturalism. It emerged in Antwerp, where there is a large concentration of Muslims, and some of its slogans are “Adapt or leave” and “Own people first.” Recently, a new song was heard: “Oh dear, oh dear, another mosque again.”

As far as NRMs are concerned, in 1996, parliament established a parliamentary commission to prepare a policy to identify the illegal practices of sects and the dangers they represent for society and for individuals, particularly minors. The conclusions of the commission were reported to the Chamber of Representatives on April 28, 1997. One of the most important outcomes of the report was the creation by law (June 22, 1998) of the Information and Advisory Centre on Harmful Sectarian Organizations. Its task, defined by law (Article 5, Section 1), include the study of the phenomenon in Belgium and the international ties of such organizations, establishment of a documentation center, giving information to the public and individual persons about their obligations and rights and how they can assert their rights, and advising on policy measures to combat such organizations.

Karel Dobbelaere

See also Immigration; Islam; Multiculturalism; New Age Movements; New Religions; Pluralism; Religious Minority-Majority Relations; Roman Catholicism

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BELGRADE

Belgrade is one of the oldest continually settled cities in Europe. It is also the capital of the Republic of Serbia and its largest city. In ancient times, Belgrade was known as Singidunum, and it was an important political, economic, and religious center of the northeastern part of the Roman Empire. A religious relic that remains from the Roman period is Mithra's holy shrine.

Around 630, the Serbian (Slavic) settlers came to this area. After this, there are no records about this town for more than two and a half centuries. The town was mentioned again only in the ninth century, under the Slavic name Beograd ("White Town"—probably because of the walls made of white limestone).

In 1403, Belgrade obtained the status of capital. This event is marked by Ascension Day—*Spasovdan*—as its Saint's Day (*slava*), in honor of the restoration and progress of the city. This ancient *slava* symbolizes the rising up, or ascension, of the city from the ashes and its irrepressible hope and faith in the future. Ascension Day is a movable feast and always falls on a Thursday, 40 days after Easter and 10 days before Whitsun. This event is the biggest religious and political holy day in Belgrade.

Belgrade was a significant hub of anti-Ottoman opposition in early-modern times. After its conquest by the Turks in 1521, it became the center of one of the provinces (*sanjak*) of the Ottoman Empire. During this period, the city underwent substantial development, and it became the second biggest city (after Istanbul) in the European part of the Ottoman Empire. The growth/expansion of the city brought also demographic changes, and Belgrade became a multicultural and multireligious city. There were more than 250 mosques and *masjids*, dozens of Christian churches (Orthodox

as well as Catholic), and also Askenazic and Sephardic synagogues in Belgrade during that period. There was an important Jewish *yeshiva* in the city as well.

The 19th century saw the liberation of Belgrade from Turkish rule and its establishment as the capital of the Kingdom of Serbia (1878). A number of important institutions of Orthodox Christianity were set up during that time, and Belgrade became a center of the Serbian Orthodox Church and the seat of its Patriarch. In this period were built the biggest churches in the city, for example, the Cathedral Church (1840).

In the present day, the majority of Belgrade citizens are of Orthodox faith (91%). Other important religious groups are Muslims (1.3%), Catholics (1%), and Protestants (0.2%). A formerly sizable Jewish community was destroyed during World War II, and the contemporary Jewish community has only 400 members. There is a very small group of nonbelievers in Belgrade (about 3%) compared with other capitals of the former Communist Bloc. All of Serbia, including Belgrade, was integrated into the globalized world after the fall of the Slobodan Milosevic regime in 1999. This influenced the growth of religious pluralism, resulting in Belgrade becoming the center of nontraditional religious groups (e.g., Buddhism) and many new religious movements.

David Vaclavik

See also Christianity; Eastern Orthodox Christianity; Europe; Islam; New Age Movements; New Religions

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BELIZE

Belize, south of Mexico, has been shaped by the currents of global religion in the 20th century. In 1958, the Mennonite movement brought missionaries to this small Central American country, which was, at the time, still a British colony. It was not until 1964 that this country, British

Honduras, received the right to internal self-government. In 1973, the name of the country was formally changed to Belize, and finally on September 21, 1981, this former British colony became independent. At present, with an area of 22,965 square kilometers and around 300,000 inhabitants, Belize is one of the smallest and least populated countries in Central America. The country has a multiethnic population consisting of Mestizos, Creoles, Garinagu, Maya's, Taiwanese, Chinese, and East Indians, among others. A relatively large portion of the population—approximately 4% of Belize's inhabitants (12,000 people)—belong to the Mennonite movement.

The Belizean Mennonites have their common descent from western Europe, especially from The Netherlands and Germany. Their religious identity, however, is based on the religious teachings about peace and use Christian belief to fulfill their lives. This implies that native Belizeans can also be part of the Mennonite church.

Despite the fact that most Mennonites live more or less in the margins of society, building on their Christian beliefs, agricultural skills, and a strong working ethos, they have been able to establish a strong and stable economic position within Belize. Ever since their arrival in 1958, all 11 Mennonite settlements in Belize are found in an isolated position with regard to the wider society, including school systems, health care, language (they speak a language called "low German" among themselves), and cultural systems. Nevertheless, more than 45 years after their arrival in Belize, most Mennonite settlements are economically rather successful. They are well known for their agricultural entrepreneurship.

The name *Mennonite* derives from Menno Simon (1496–1561). In 1536, this Catholic priest from the village of Witmarsum in the western part of Friesland in The Netherlands converted to the Anabaptist movement, as the Mennonites were originally called. Through his writings, Menno Simons became one of the most important leaders of the Anabaptist movement. The Anabaptist movement originated in Switzerland during a time of important social and religious conflicts in Europe. The name *Anabaptist* derives from a schism within the Reformation movement in Europe during the 16th century. Apart from the Mennonites, other Anabaptist movements involve the Amish, the

Brethren, and the Hutterites. After their break-away from the Reformation movement, the Anabaptists, including the Mennonites, spread rapidly across Europe (Germany, France, Austria, and The Netherlands). Today, there are more than 1 million Mennonites scattered throughout the world.

Most Mennonites are not organized in churches but in congregations or communities. Among them the concept of community (*Gemeinde*) has been and still is very important. The Mennonite community provides the context for individuals and their families to interact together in a way that their values and norms can be fulfilled. Besides these basic religious principles, the community also shapes the environment for its members' economic and social activities.

Carel Roessingh

See also Honduras; Indigenous Religions; Mexico; Missions and Missionaries; Protestant Christianity

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BELLAH, ROBERT (B. 1927)

In seeking to make sense of modernity in the classical tradition of sociology as a field, the body of the American sociologist Robert Bellah's work

spans the social sciences and comparative cultural fields. It embraces the global diversity and coherence of religion as the key to culture across civilizations and epochs within the framework of human evolution. Formally trained as a student of tribal cultures, East Asian civilization, and Islam, Bellah engages the West, and America in particular, as problematic cases that can only be understood in the broadest comparative perspective on human cultural development. This global perspective informs Bellah's conceptions of religious evolution in general and civil religion in particular. This entry first examines Bellah's understanding of the role of religion in human evolution and then discusses his concepts of civil religion and public theology from a global perspective. Born in Oklahoma and raised in Los Angeles, California, Bellah received his PhD from Harvard, where he studied with Talcott Parsons, and he later taught at Harvard and, for most of his career, at the University of California, Berkeley.

Religion in Human Evolution

Bellah's account of "Religious Evolution" draws on biblical sacred history, mediated by Hegelian historicism threaded through Durkheim, Weber, and Marx. It shows how religion is enacted in cultural, social, personal, and bodily forms that unfold in history and cannot be grasped outside it. Cultural symbols and beliefs, social practices and institutions, personal habits and attitudes, and embodied disciplines and expression all interpenetrate in constituting religion. Each exercises a degree of autonomy in their interaction that makes it irreducible to any one of the others. They mutually constitute each other through history, and religion is historically constituted through all the dimensions of human action.

Religious rejection of the world emerges in the first millennium BCE in Israel, Greece, India, and China at the core of every historic salvation religion, defining the Weberian axis of religious evolution in Bellah's original formulation. Renouncing the world represented within the framework of cosmological dualism crystallizes an otherworldly true self, or Buddhist nonself, deeper than the flux of everyday experience, facing a reality over and against itself. It holds up an overarching ethical aim and stance, unified into a whole way of life, to

answer the question of what we must do to be saved. Conversely, the collapse of cosmological dualism and world rejection marks modern modes of religious symbolization, action, and organization within complex societies shaped by institutional differentiation and cultural pluralism. Modern world acceptance features a multiplex monist worldview centered on a multidimensional self. Each person is responsible for critically self-conscious and conscientious participation in the process of religious symbolization itself, shared among a modern priesthood of all believers no longer bound by the obligations of doctrinal orthodoxy imposed by the tutelary authority of the state-established religion.

But since religion is centrally the narrative self-interpretation and ritual enactment of all human cultures, Bellah argues, the whole of the history of religion is our own. We remain deeply embedded in it, from tribal peoples to the present. This holds true even when—and especially when—we think of religion in peculiarly modern Western terms as primarily private beliefs held by individuals and voluntary associations made up of like-minded believers or spiritual seekers. Religion reflects the whole of life in premodern societies, shifting in shape as social and cultural complexity evolve together. World-rejecting religious symbols, rites, and congregational communities break through the cosmological and moral unity of archaic and tribal societies in tandem with their political and economic structures. But we need to understand tribal and then archaic religions and societies in their own terms to grasp how such salvific breakthroughs carry the whole of human cultural and religious history into modern world acceptance. This includes the early modern Protestant patterning of American modernity, grounded in convictions of individual free conscience, conversion, providence, and covenant permuted into ideals of individual free choice, revolution, progress, and constitution.

The central insight that stages of religious evolution coexist and interact with one another is crucial in interpreting the global demographic facts that the world has never numbered more non-so-modern members of the historic salvation religions than it does today, including the fact that one third of the world's population is now Christian and one third of those Christians live in former

colonies. The insight that the earlier stages of religious evolution continue to coexist with and within the later ones also reveals the peculiarly modern antimodern nature of many contemporary “traditional” or “fundamentalist” movements, including the early-modern rationalist faith in Newtonian laws and Baconian experiments that biblical literalists marshal to defend “absolute values” against the “relativism” of late-modern historicism and culturalism.

“Nothing is ever lost” in the whole of religious evolution, as Bellah has deepened its conception over the course of his work, culminating in *Religion in Human Evolution*. It incorporates developmental and evolutionary psychology to chart the evolution of human consciousness through the mimetic, mythic, and theoretic stages of its development, beginning with our biological history as a species that gives rise to culture and then coevolves with it. For most of a million years before members of the genus *Homo* began speaking in sentences, they communicated and expressed themselves through their bodies. Through mimetic movement, gesture, and example, they learned to make meaning as well as tools. Through sharing the rhythmic action of “keeping together in time” at the root of ritual, they composed the harmonies of moral community as well as the survival strategies of social solidarity, as Durkheim observed. Endless interaction rituals continue to orchestrate everyday life today, from greetings to goodbyes, and formal rites of passage continue to mark the movement of generations from birth to death.

For most of the tens of thousands of years since humans became fully linguistic, religiously inspired and morally charged narrative in the form of myth ruled human consciousness without conceptual challenge, as Bellah stresses, and the most encompassing forms of cultural self-understanding today continue to unfold as mythic narrative. They tell the story of uniquely individual selves in culturally common genres. We get to know ourselves and each other by sharing our stories. We grasp the multiple meanings of modern social membership by learning the stories that define our families, communities, and nations. Literacy turns practical theoretic consciousness toward a more critical questioning of myth in both logical and lexical terms of second-order “thinking about thinking” at the heart of the axial breakthroughs. But theories do

not replace stories as the source and substance of the spheres of ethics, politics, or religion, and none of these spheres has been reborn within the bounds of reason alone. Narrative is the way we understand our lives, criticized and clarified by rational argument, to be sure, but also revealing in its own rational way that “reason” itself has a long history with multiple meanings and practical differences.

Thus, *Religion in Human Evolution* combines biological, social, and cultural evolution into the deep history of religion at the center of the human story, which runs all the way back and all the way through to the present. It shows religion shaping the social order and being reshaped as society becomes more complex. Relatively egalitarian forager tribes give way to more hierarchical chiefdoms and archaic kingships, which call for new forms of symbolization and moral enactment to make sense of their growing division of labor, wealth, and power. Theoretic culture emerges to question mythic narratives, at once rejecting and reorganizing them to create new rites and myths and challenging their particular authority in the name of spiritual and ethical universalism.

Religion in Human Evolution ends with the axial age, but it situates modernity within the history of the human species. It reframes the story of how theoretic culture becomes partially disembedded from mimetic and mythic meaning to give rise to the achievements and predicaments of modernity. By asking what our deep past can tell us about the kind of life human beings have imagined was worth living, Bellah illuminates the often implicit worldviews we hold and contest in the modern world. He points toward the critical reappropriation of their underlying mimetic and mythic dimensions in an ongoing dialectic with our theoretical understanding to find common ground on questions of our common good, including the future of the environment, the justice of the economy, and the possibilities for peace in the world we share.

Civil Religion and Public Theology in Global Perspective

The dialectical coherence of civil religion in the moral argument of public life in modern societies runs through the development of its formulation by Robert Bellah over the course of his work. This begins with “Civil Religion in America,” defined

in Durkheimian terms as a collection of beliefs, symbols, and ritual with respect to sacred things and institutionalized in a collectivity. In "Religion and the Legitimation of the American Republic," Bellah elaborates the critical interplay of civil religion and public theology in the free exercise of religion in America, institutionalized in ways that mediate but never resolve the tension between civic republicanism and constitutional liberalism in its ambiguous political identity.

Seen as a cultural dimension of depth, civil religion frames modes of moral discourse and imagination to enable coherent cultural conflict in successive times of trial, which give rise to contrasting public theologies that contest the meaning of civil religion and reshape it in turn. This dialectical logic extends to the model of cultural conversation and argument across multiple moral traditions seen as continuities of conflict in *Habits of the Heart* and Bellah's later work, in contrast to construing civil religion as a unitary moral foundation once fundamentally fixed and then fragmented by culture wars.

An increasingly international kind of social life, gradually developing through the global expansion of the division of labor in the world's economy and its political-legal regulation, would universalize forms of religious belief, judged Émile Durkheim a century ago. If a genuinely transnational sovereignty emerged with the attainment of some kind of coherent world order, Robert Bellah likewise concluded a generation ago, it would precipitate new symbolic forms of civil religion, whether they were to grow from the flickering flame of the United Nations or from the latter-day light spread by thousands of multiplying nongovernmental organizations, such as those in the human rights and environmentalist movements.

Bellah's account with Phillip Hammond of the *Varieties of Civil Religion* in comparative context probes the unique character of American civil religion and the special conditions that bring it about, in contrast to Italy and Japan, for example. But in the early-modern and modern stages of religious evolution, Bellah holds, there emerges in every society the possibility that a distinct set of religious symbols and practices may arise that address issues of political legitimacy and political ethics but that are not fused with either church or state. Nation-states remain the most important centers of power in the late 20th century, Bellah acknowledges, but none of them alone can resolve the

military, economic, and environmental problems that demand new forms of global concord for the very survival of humankind. There is at last for many purposes a world *civitas*, Bellah judges, but its lack of civility and justice point toward the need for moral dimensions of a world civil religion that can nurture greater openness, tolerance, and ethical commitment in global civil society. The diverse forms of popular nationalism with religious roots evident among multiple modernities emerging around the world today tie into the dialectical interplay of civil religion and public theologies, as Bellah has conceived it over the course of his work on faith in public. It develops a central conception of ongoing moral argument, civic debate, and social reform in representative polities ordered in common by diverse constituencies thinking and acting within cultures conceived of as dramatic conversations. These moral dramas are made up of many voices contesting the construal of multiple traditions and remaking them together by the inspiring force of enacting good examples as well as the persuasive force of giving good reasons. This contrasts with state-centered views of civil religion celebrating an ostensibly universal moral consensus in support of the state's compulsory legal authority.

"Can We Imagine a Global Civil Religion?" asks Bellah in a paper published in 2010 that defines the direction of his ongoing inquiry into the modern project in light of human evolution. He answers the question of its title by distinguishing between the impossibility of a global civil religion and the necessity of strengthening global civil society to create a world order coherent enough to engage the grave problems of global warming, military-political strife, and economic inequality that interdependent nations now face. Any actual civil society will have a religious dimension, Bellah observes, not only a legal and ethical framework but some notion that it fits the nature of ultimate reality. In fact, the religion-like values carried by an emerging global market culture may worsen international problems and place greater weight on the actual beginnings of world governance evident in world law and economic regulation today. The nation-state itself and the principled independence of the market from the state have arisen as cultural forms and institutional arrangements transmitted around the world over the past few centuries. So have popular sovereignty and the

public sphere of civil society, even where ideals of universal human rights, democratic elections, and the formation of public opinion freed from the state and the market are honored in principle but not in practice. Nationalism itself has always been an international phenomenon inspired by the right of every people to self-government and by the responsibility they share for their common fate.

Today, global market ideologies and practices threaten the capacity of nations to carry out the responsibilities inherent in their ideals of common membership, Bellah argues by reference to Jürgen Habermas, including responsibility for their least advantaged citizens through sustaining fair wages and taxes as well as public provision. What are the moral and religious resources we need to think about for membership in a global civil society that are profound enough to balance the autonomy of nation-states and check the power of global markets? The religious roots of the global ethics of human rights lead Bellah to ask if the world's religions can mobilize their deepest commitments to universal neighbor love and mutual recognition to give genuine institutional force to human rights regimes. Can they help turn the ideals of world citizenship into a practical willingness to share responsibility for the world of which we are citizens instead of trying to transform the world into the naturalized image of our own nation? Religious motivation is needed to turn the beginnings of world law and the growth of global ethics into effective forms of global solidarity and governance. Religious insight is needed for us to recognize the primacy of the world instead of trying to force the world to recognize our primacy as a nation.

The nationalist aspirations and religious convictions of other peoples who want to govern themselves and worship as they please, and as they must, require our respect. They also require our recognition of the social and cultural diversity of these peoples. For such recognition is essential to justify our respect by grounding it in our common vision of the dignity and equality of all human beings and their right to self-government. Such recognition is no less essential to guide our aim to realize these rights in a just and peaceful world of independent, equal, and self-governing states. That world still struggling to be born embodies ideals at the center of distinctive yet overlapping forms of civil religion emerging around the globe, and it marks the contested core of an ongoing argument

among diverse public theologies and philosophies seeking to shape the world to come.

Steven M. Tipton

See also Civil Religion; Global Capitalism and Religion; Modernization; Politics and Religion; Religion and State; Religious Nationalism; Secularization; United States of America

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BENEDICT XVI (B. 1927)

Benedict XVI is the 265th Pontiff of the Roman Catholic Church; he was elected on April 19, 2005, and celebrated his Papal Inauguration Mass

on April 24. Born Joseph Alois Ratzinger, he succeeded the 27-year reign of Pope John Paul II, a longtime friend since the two met as young bishops during the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965). Under John Paul II, Ratzinger worked as the prefect for the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith (CDF), which also made him the president of the International Theological Commission and the Pontifical Biblical Commission. Before his appointment to the CDF in 1981, Ratzinger divided his time between clerical and academic responsibilities in Germany, particularly distinguishing himself as an internationally renowned scholar. Even secular institutions have recognized his intellectual contributions—for example, the prestigious Académie Française, to which he was appointed an associate member in the section for moral and political sciences in 1992. As a result of his distinguished academic career, Benedict has been recognized as one of the intellectual popes of the Church.

Born on April 16, 1927, in the village of Marktl am Inn, Bavaria, Germany, Joseph Ratzinger was the youngest child of Joseph Ratzinger Sr. and Maria (Peintner) Ratzinger, a pious Roman Catholic family. He had an older brother, Georg, and a sister, Maria. Interested in becoming a priest since the age of 5, Ratzinger entered a seminary in Traunstein in 1939. Two years later, at 14 years of age, he was coerced to join the Hitler Youth (by German law), but he refused to attend the meetings. The Ratzinger family expressed anti-Nazi sentiments, which resulted in frequent demotions and transfers for Joseph Sr., who served in the Bavarian State Police and the German national Regular Police.

Ratzinger reentered the seminary at Freising and continued his studies at the Herzogliches Georgianum of the Ludwig-Maximilian University in Munich. After his ordination in 1951, he pursued a doctorate in theology. Intellectually and spiritually, Ratzinger was highly influenced by his favorite Church Father, St. Augustine, on whom he wrote his doctoral thesis. Throughout his career as a professor, he has held positions at numerous German institutions, including Freising College, University of Bonn, University of Munster, University of Tübingen, and University of Regensburg in Bavaria, where he was also appointed dean and eventually vice president. He served at Vatican II as the chief theological advisor to Cardinal Josef

Frings of Cologne, being present at all four sessions of the council. In 1977, Ratzinger was elected Archbishop of Munich and Freising. Four years later, he moved to Rome for his appointment at the CDF. In 2002, Ratzinger was appointed as the dean of the College of Cardinals by John Paul II, who Ratzinger would succeed as pope in 3 more years. After his election to the papacy in 2005, Ratzinger chose the name Benedict in honor of two role models: Pope Benedict XV, who reigned as pontiff during World War I, attempting to pursue peace among the warring nations, and the medieval saint Benedict of Nursia, the founder of Western monasticism.

Benedict has expressed a complex diversity of theological and sociopolitical views, which transcend standard liberal-conservative dichotomies. On Catholic doctrines of faith and on social issues such as abortion, euthanasia, bioethics, marriage, sexual ethics, and homosexuality, Benedict has upheld the Church's traditionalist views while enunciating a more liberal approach to economic, environmental, and military issues, being a proponent of fair labor, workers rights, ecological reform, and nuclear disarmament for the cause of international peace. Most of Benedict's views fit into the category of a consistent pro-life ethic based on a natural law philosophy. His teachings on social justice have been published in his 2009 encyclical, *Caritas in Veritate* (Charity in Truth).

Daniel P. Klimek

See also Christianity; John Paul II; Roman Catholicism; Vatican City State and the Holy See; Vatican Council, Second

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BENIN

Benin, the Francophone former West African colony of Dahomey, achieved independence in 1960,

when it ceded from France; 13 other French African colonies became independent nations that same year. The Republic of Benin is neighbored by Togo to the west, Nigeria to the east, and Niger and Burkina Faso to the north. The political system in Benin is a multiparty republic. Thomas Yayi Boni was elected president in 2006 and has worked to combat problems with the national cotton industry and the electrical grid structure as well as using more than \$300 million in funds from the 2006 Millennium Challenge Account. With a quickly expanding population of more than 9 million people residing on a landmass slightly smaller than Pennsylvania, Benin is a nation striving to improve agricultural technologies and tourist development, as well as health, longevity, and access to clean resources.

Benin is recognized internationally for its music; production of arts, including textiles, beads, and sculpture; and its rich bronze royal artwork dating back to the days when it was the Kingdom of Dahomey. The region has historically experienced migratory and war relationships between several ancient African kingdoms and empires (Oyo, Ouidah, and Dahomey); trading partnerships with the Portuguese beginning in the late 15th century; and ships transporting slaves en masse from West and Central Africa, and later palm oil, for three tumultuous centuries. At the height of the slave trade until 1840, the area of Dahomey was referred to by Europeans as the Slave Coast. Today, French is the official national language, though West African dialects are often spoken in homes and in trade, with citizens from a variety of ethnolinguistic backgrounds, including Ewe, Fon, Adja, Yoruba, Ottamari, Peulh, and Bariba.

Benin's population is divided by religion into three categories, with the 2002 census records showing 42.8% of adherents as Christian (27% Catholic), 24.4% Muslim, and 32.8% Vodou or other, though many place the total number of Vodou practitioners as high as 70%. With an annual Benin Vodou festival publicly commemorating powerful local divinities and historical practices, Benin is recognized across West Africa as having a large community openly practicing African traditions and indigenous beliefs. While many African converts to Christianity and Islam often eschew or denounce former religious practices and

ceremonies, many Beninese proudly honor the spirit world and its inhabitants through ritual, invocation, sacrifice, and service. Religious leaders include priests, priestesses, diviners, healers, mediums, and herbalists. West African Vodou is often considered to have originated in Ile-Ife in Nigeria and has spread west through migration to Benin, Togo, Ghana, and Burkina Faso as well as to New World nations such as Haiti, Cuba, Brazil, the Dominican Republic, and the United States, which were populated by enslaved West Africans via the transatlantic slave trade.

Christi M. Dietrich

See also Africa; Nigeria; Postcolonialism; Togo; Vodou

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BERGER, PETER (B. 1929)

Peter L. Berger is an American sociologist best known for his work in the fields of sociology of knowledge and sociology of religion. He is one of the most prolific and widely read contemporary sociologists, whose publications include *Invitation to Sociology* (1963), *The Social Construction of Reality* (with Thomas Luckmann, 1966), and *The Sacred Canopy* (1967), his main work on the sociology of religion. Born in Vienna, Austria, Berger moved to the United States in 1946 and after completing his PhD in sociology at the New School of Social Research in 1952 has held positions at several American universities. Since 1981, Berger has been University Professor of Sociology and Theology at Boston University and since 1985, the director of the Institute for Culture, Religion, and World Affairs (formerly Institute for the Study of Economic Culture) at Boston University.

Berger is perhaps best known for his introductory sociology books and the theory introduced in

The Social Construction of Reality, but his main substantive work has been in the sociology of religion. *The Sacred Canopy* combines Berger's theoretical work on the sociology of knowledge with ideas from phenomenology of religion (e.g., Rudolph Otto), creating a characteristically "Bergerian" theory of religion that has provided the sociology of religion with important concepts such as (his reformulation of) "theodicy" and "plausibility structure."

Berger's most influential contribution to the field, however, has been his theory of secularization. While mostly following Max Weber's ideas on the impact of capitalism and bureaucracy on religion, Berger's original thesis is that pluralization begets secularization by undermining certainty in consciousness. Using the Protestant Reformation as an example, Berger shows how the challenge to religious monopolies not only changes the institutional status of religions in society but also erodes individual belief.

While Berger's secularization thesis has been very influential, especially in interpreting religious change in Europe, it has also been criticized on the basis of the apparently opposite development in the United States, where plurality of religious choices seems to have created a thriving religious culture. Although considered by some the main proponent of the "old paradigm"—those supporting the secularization thesis—in the sociology of religion, Berger has more recently become a vocal critic of his own views and is now best known for abandoning his earlier theses and advocating the idea of the desecularization of the world.

In addition to sociology, Berger has written explicitly theological texts. He has, however, always been keen to point out that as a sociologist he cannot say anything about the reality of the transcendent.

Titus Hjelm

See also Desecularization; Otto, Rudolf; Secularization; Weber, Max

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BERMUDA

Bermuda consists of 140 islands and islets located in the North Atlantic Ocean east of North Carolina and north of Puerto Rico. These islands, named after Juan de Bermúdez, the Spanish navigator who discovered them in 1505, remained uninhabited for most of the 1500s and early 1600s. All this changed in 1612, when the English officially claimed the islands. As the first residents, the English were to have a significant impact on shaping all aspects of life within these islands. The religious life of the islands was primarily Protestant Christianity—consisting initially of the Church of England, then the Church of Scotland, and much later the Puritans who were fleeing persecution in England.

Two additional features that also played a significant role in shaping life in the islands were land and emigration. Due to the limited land area, the islands were constantly grappling with the issue of overpopulation. This resulted in the need for a continuous stream of emigrants to maintain a manageable population. How did this play out in terms of religion? It produced a context in which conformity to the views of the majority superseded the toleration of a diversity of opinions. Thus, following the Bermudian civil war in 1649, when the majority of the colonists had a strong devotion to the English crown, those among them who would not swear such allegiance, specifically the Puritans, were forcibly exiled to the Bahamas.

In the years that followed, the religious life of the islands was oriented around the practices and beliefs of both the Church of England and the Church of Scotland. However, in many ways, the faith practiced by the colonists was lax—that is, not garnering any significant amount of attention in their daily lives. With the implementation of slavery, a debate ensued regarding the religious instruction of the slaves. For some planters, such

information would produce restlessness among the slaves; for others, it was necessary. These lessons did not begin until 1800 with the work of the Methodist missionary George Stephenson, who was imprisoned for 6 months for engaging in such activity. It was only after this that the Church of England began to engage in teaching the slaves about religion.

During the rest of the 19th century, the religious landscape of the islands began to diversify due to the introduction of Roman Catholicism and the African Methodist Episcopal denomination. The growth of Roman Catholicism received further support through the importation of indentured Portuguese laborers beginning in 1839 and continuing until the 1920s.

In the second half of the 20th century, as some Bermudians began to challenge many of the ways in which the African Caribbean population was discriminated against within society, there was also the call to address the manner in which religion had fostered, and continued to foster, such practices. In seeking an answer, many Black Bermudians turned to Rastafarianism, a religion they saw as providing them with a symbol for revolutionary political engagement and cultural solidarity. This process of social, political, and religious change continues with the infusion of West Indians from Jamaica and other islands.

Janice McLean

See also Jamaica; Missions and Missionaries; Postcolonialism; Protestant Christianity

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BHAKTI

The word *bhakti* means passionate devotion for God and implies a sense of intimate relationship

with other people. Etymologically, it is derived from a Sanskrit root *bhaj*, meaning to “share,” and it refers to emotional “participation” with one’s deity and human beings as a core value. Indeed, bhakti is a mode of religious faith, and its expression is characterized by affective service of, participation in, or bonding with the transcendent (or God), understood as personal and as personally related to oneself. In Indian literature, we encounter a bipolar character of bhakti: On the one hand, it refers to an “emotionally restrained elite bhakti,” expressed in Sanskrit literature such as the Bhagavad Gita and the *Svetasvatara Upanishad*, and on the other, it points to an “emotionally expressive bhakti,” as articulated in vernacular literature. At the popular level, however, a fervent outpouring of bhakti arose as an outcome of a set of religious ideas and structures first seen in South India in the 7th century and slowly sweeping up to North India by the 15th century. The protagonists of this movement employed vernaculars as literary languages, in contrast to the classical Sanskrit of the ancient Hindu tradition. They opened the doors of spiritual liberation to all persons, including women and members of most nonprivileged classes (*varanas*), such as Shudras and outcastes. Thus, they offered a challenge to the earlier classical Hindu tradition based on the Vedas and *Dharmashastras* that had become the exclusive province of a small Brahman elite who had “unilaterally barred the rest of the population from any direct eligibility for salvation, or even from hearing Vedic texts on which the Brahman’s religious authority depended” (Lorenzen, 1995, p. 15).

To some extent, it is misleading to speak of a single organic or monolithic bhakti movement throughout India. Different groups employed the various regional languages in their poetry; directed their devotion to different deities such as Rama, Krishna, Shiva, or the goddess Kali; and assumed distinct theological positions in their discourses. In particular, some devotees (*bhaktas*) were inward-looking solitary spiritual seekers, while others adopted a more outward, socially critical orientation to the world around them. Metaphorically, bhakti has been personified in literature as a beautiful woman, born in South India, who grew to maturity in the Deccan. In the Tamil Nadu region, for instance, we encounter the popular devotional

movements of (a) Vaishnava Alvar saint-poets (Nammalvar, Andal) and the more elite Sri Vaishnava tradition of Ramanuja, (b) Shaiva Nayannar saint-poets (Manikavachakar, Lady of Karaikal), and (c) the more elite Shaiva Sadhanta tradition (Meykanta, Arulnanti) and Tantric Siddhas. The saint-poets of Vishnu and Shiva began traveling from temple to temple, singing the praises of their chosen deity in their own mother tongue. In particular, these Tamil devotees considered the Alvars' poems the equivalent of the Sanskrit Vedas and recited them daily, in temples and at home. In 12th-century Karnataka, a group of devotees called Vira Shaivas coalesced around the Kalachari minister Basavanna, showing their adoration to a stylized manifestation of Shiva in the shape of a small *linga* ("phallus"), which was carried by every devotee. From the late 13th through the 17th century, the Maharashtrian pilgrimage center Pandharpur became the focus of Marathi devotionism toward the god Vithoba, a form of Krishna, motivating the Vaishnava Warkari saint-poets (Jnanadev, Namdev, Chokhamela, Eknath, Tukaram, and Ramdas). According to the same literary metaphor, the woman finally reached her finest flourishing in the north, stimulating bhakti movements in the Hindi region (Rajasthan, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, etc.) from the 14th century onward. Interestingly, these movements encountered the Islamic presence in the north, where a Muslim sultanate was already established since the early 1200s. A synergistic relationship between Hindus and Muslims in North India led to the construction of new themes and emphases in vernacular poetry, reflecting the Sufi influence on bhakti traditions.

Since the classical period of North Indian bhakti in the 15th and 16th centuries, two major streams of thought have emerged in the form of *nirguna* ("without attributes") and *saguna* ("with attributes") discourses, primarily on the basis of a theological difference in the way of conceptualizing the nature of the divine being that is the object of devotion. The persons who follow the *nirguna* school of thought prefer to worship a divine being who remains mostly nonanthropomorphic. These devotees are commonly referred to as *nirguna bhaktas/bhagats* or simply *sants*. They were a group of mystical poets who preferred to worship God without attributes or "without form" (*nirankar*). They

had a tendency to be critical of anyone who approached God through icon and legend, as most Hindus did then or do even today. They believed in the basic equality of human beings and, thus, rejected all social distinctions based on the caste system. They shunned the outward symbols of religious life, including images, formal religious exercises, pilgrimages, and ritual bathing associated with the ideas of pollution and purity. They challenged the authority of the scriptures, the priests, and sacred languages and expressed their ideas not in the traditional Sanskrit but in the vernacular, which allowed the common people access to and equal participation in religious discourse. By rejecting the doctrine of *avatar* ("incarnation of a deity," usually Vishnu) they diverged radically from the Vaishnava bhakti. Their emphasis was on a strictly inward meditation on the divine name as the sole means of deliverance from the cycle of transmigration. Kabir (ca. 1398–1448), Ravidas (ca. 1450–1520), and Guru Nanak (1469–1539) belonged to this *nirguna* religiosity, a school of thought that is now known in academic circles as the *Sant* tradition of North India.

The devotees who follow God with attributes (*saguna*) affirm that God has indeed entered history and taken form—even the form of an image in a temple. They worship anthropomorphic manifestations of the divine being. They are also called Vaishnavas because they tend to be worshippers of one of the two major expressions of the high god Vishnu: his *avatars* Krishna and Rama. Since these followers constitute the majority, their movement has generally been equated with the "main bhakti tradition." In the Hindi region, Surdas (ca. 1478–1585), Mirabai (b. 1504), and Tulsidas (b. 1543) were the celebrated protagonists of *saguna* persuasion. In Bengal, Vaishnava poets such as Jayadeva, Vidyapati, Chandi Das, and the ecstatic devotee Krishna-Chaitanya (regarded as an *avatar* of both Krishna and Radha) flourished between the 12th and 16th centuries. According to the 16th-century devotional theologian Rupa Goswami, it is possible to enjoy various relationships with God based on analogies with the following human relationships: One may relate to God as an insignificant human relates to the supreme deity, as a respectful servant relates to his lord and master (*das bhakti*), as a mother relates to her child (*vatsalya bhakti*), as a friend relates to a friend (*sakha bhakti*), as a

lover relates to her beloved (*prema bhakti*), like cowherd girls (*gopis*) experiencing “honeyed emotions” (*madhurya bhakti*), like devotees experiencing tortured feelings of separation and longing (*viraha bhakti*) for their divine Beloved, and so on. Notably, the erotic is regarded as the highest form of association in the bhakti poetry, exploring the passionate love between the cowherd women of Vraja, who represent all human souls, and the enchanting young Krishna.

Most instructively, the discourse of *saguna bhakti* has been dominant in the Hindu tradition for more than 1,000 years. Not surprisingly, except in the Punjab, *nirguna bhakti* has remained a subordinate, minority tradition subject to the “hegemony” of the *saguna* tradition. In this context, David Lorenzen (1995) observes, “Indeed, it is precisely the distinction between hegemonic and subordinate or subaltern ideological discourse that underlies the distinction between the *nirguni* and *saguni* devotional movements” (p. 3). He further notes, “Theological differences are not simply the product of historical accident; they are symptomatic and expressive of differences in social identities” (p. 2). In other words, theological differences in beliefs and practices provide the foundation for different identities and ideologies of different groups. For Gaudiya Vaishnavas (named after the geographical region of Gauda, which is central to modern Bengal in northeastern India), for instance, chanting of Krishna’s name as a mantra makes Krishna himself actually present. These followers of Krishna-Chaitanya (1486–1533) institutionalized chanting combined with ecstatic dancing as a collective practice, similar to the musical sessions (*sama*) of the Sufis. At times, these public displays of congregational revelry could provoke suspicion and suppression by civil authorities. Under such circumstances, the resistant powers of inner bhakti against outward social pressure could become the source of political action.

In conclusion, the bhakti songs in Hindi, Punjabi, Bengali, Marathi, Tamil, and other vernacular languages exhibit not only their religious intensity but also their transforming power in the central devotional practice of *kirtan* (“devotional singing”), unifying the consciousness of performers and listeners alike. These poetic utterances remain very much alive in contemporary India, including the South Asian diaspora, where they are

replicated in their original melodies in musical performances in rituals, liturgy, and temple worship. Through them, the voices of Kabir, Ravidas, Surdas, Mirabai, and other poet-devotees come alive to reveal a spiritual path of merging with an indescribable divine Beloved. Thus, the loyalty to the memory of bhakti poets remains fiercely ardent, and respect for their teachings continues undiminished.

Pashaura Singh

See also Guru Nanak; Hinduism; India; Kabir; Sikhism; Sufism

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BHARATA NATYAM

Bharata Natyam is a classical dance form of India and is said to be based on the dance (*natya*) treatise composed by the sage Bharata (100–200 CE). Considered to be one of the fastest growing dance forms in the world, it is also the most visible form of Indian culture outside the subcontinent.

Although there has been an evolution of several dance forms in the subcontinent, the most popular in South India had been one called *dasiattam* (dance of the servants [of God]). Performed in salons and courts, at domestic and public rituals, and in temples by women, some of whom were courtesans, it was transformed into a “national” art in the 1930s by several artists, including Rukmini Devi Arundale (1904–1986). T. Balasaraswati (1918–1984), the legendary dancer, was one of the first to perform this dance form on a secular stage. Bharata Natyam includes sensual and spiritual love in many forms, including romantic and devotional. Some lineages have emphasized the devotional

aspects; yet others argued that the refined erotic elements should not be expunged in the name of “purifying” the dance.

Bharata Natyam involves coordination of eye, head, neck, arm, hand, body, leg, and foot movements, and although not restricted by gender or religion, most dancers today are women and Hindu. Dances involve facial and bodily expressions (*abhinaya*), pure dance movements with rhythmic foot work (*nrtta*), and a combination of both (*nrtya*). The musicians for the dance are proficient in classical Carnatic music, and the ensemble includes a *nattuvanar* (a person who conducts the dance performance, holding the cymbals and periodically calling out the rhythmic syllables for the dance steps) and a vocal singer. Instruments such as a violin and the mridanga (a percussion instrument) are also very important. The costume for Bharata Natyam dancers is frequently a rich silk sari with gold borders and design, stitched to allow freedom of movement. The dancer also wears flowers in the hair; heavy, gold jewelry; stage makeup; and painted designs on the palms and feet. Dancers go through years of training, culminating in a major ritual of “reverence for the anklets” and a dance debut (*arangetram*) that is said to mark one’s competence and proficiency in the art.

From temple sculptures in Southeast Asia, it seems probable that Hindu narratives and traditions were disseminated through classical dances. In the contemporary world, among diaspora communities, dance classes become popular venues of socialization for young girls, where they meet other children of Indian origin and connect directly with Hindu religious culture. Through Bharata Natyam, students learn stories about Hindu gods and goddesses, both Pan-Hindu deities such as Rama or Krishna and more local ones, who are known only in particular places in South India. They learn stories of the deities one’s ancestors worshiped, the Hinduism that they grew up with in India, Trinidad, or South Africa. Students also learn the body language and the affective ethos encountered in the subcontinent and the emotions that are intricately tied into the depiction of the human-divine relationship. Through the lessons, one learns the received traditions of power structures and social relations in the Hindu culture; the relationships between kings and ministers, teachers

and students; or how to depict love, especially romantic love.

While Bharata Natyam classes are held in private homes and studios in India, in other parts of the world, dancers teach in Hindu temples as well as in studios. The dances are featured in almost all ritual celebrations, sacred and secular, from temple consecrations to Indian student groups celebrating festivals in college campuses.

Vasudha Narayanan

See also Hinduism; Sacred Places

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BHARATIYA JANATA PARTY

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP; Indian People’s Party) is a political party that promotes Hindu nationalism. BJP members increased their political influence and gained international attention in the 1990s, when they worked with their partner organizations the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) in implementing mass-scale rituals and politicized processions over the building of a Ram temple in Ayodhya. These activities fostered popular support for the BJP in various regions of India. The processions also provoked violence between Hindus and Muslims. Currently, the party strives to promote a more moderate image by stressing economic reform and national security.

The BJP was established in 1980 as the successor of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS). The BJP promulgates two political ideologies: integral humanism and Hindutva. Considered the guiding philosophy of the BJP, integral humanism advocates the formation of a harmonious society through an “integrated” vision of life guided by the ancient culture of India. Hindutva is a nationalist

ideology that promotes governing based on Hindu culture and values. The BJP is critical of the secular policies of the Congress Party.

In 1991, the BJP became the largest opposition party by doubling its seats in Parliament. These gains were attributed to religious agitations over the construction of a Ram temple in Ayodhya. Party leaders promulgated the belief that the Babri Masjid (“mosque”) was built over the birthplace of Ram, a Hindu deity. In conglomeration with the VHP and RSS, the BJP conducted a series of *rath yatras*, which were well-orchestrated religious processions. The BJP leader L. K. Advani posed as Ram while riding in a vehicle modeled after the god’s chariot. The processions marched through various politically strategic locations and often provoked riots between Hindus and Muslims. BJP members were also involved in a rally that culminated in the destruction of the Babri Masjid in 1992.

Striving to expand its base, the BJP began to distance itself from the VHP and RSS and even shunned the militant propaganda that propelled the party to power in 1991. The BJP won the most seats in Parliament in 1996 (161 of 545) but fell short of the majority and failed to form a coalition government. Gaining additional seats in 1998 and 1999, the party successfully formed a government with Atal Bihari Vajpayee as prime minister. The BJP advanced policies of economic reform, promoted globalization and foreign investment, and sought to stabilize relations with neighboring Pakistan. In 2002, BJP members were accused of complicity in the communal violence that erupted in Gujarat. The BJP lost the 2004 elections to the Congress Party.

Rohit Singh

See also Hindu Nationalism; Hinduism; India; Religious Nationalism

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BHUTAN

Bhutan (formally the Kingdom of Bhutan) is a small, landlocked Buddhist constitutional monarchy in the eastern Himalayas, located between China’s Tibetan autonomous region and India. Its terrain is largely mountainous, and its economy is based on agriculture and forestry. Bhutan’s official national language is Dzongkha, and its multiethnic population, reported in the 2005 government census to be approximately 691,000, is 75% Buddhist and 25% Hindu.

Tantric Buddhism took root in Bhutan in the eighth century, superseding the indigenous Bon religion, which nevertheless subsists today in local practices. Ngawang Namgyel, a leader of the *Drukpa Kagyupa* (“Thunder Dragon”) sect of Tibetan Buddhism, unified the territory of Bhutan in the 17th century, establishing Bhutan as a sovereign state and endowing it with its Drukpa character. In the early 20th century, Bhutan became a hereditary monarchy, and in 2008, it transitioned to a constitutional monarchy when its fifth king, Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, ratified the country’s first constitution.

Bhutan’s participation in globalization has been largely through its own rapid internal modernization. Bhutan has walked a fine line between preserving its cultural and religious heritage while embracing elements of globalization that yield the greatest perceived benefits to its population. In this process, religion has played a profound role in shaping Bhutan’s responses to the challenges and opportunities that modernization has presented. A prime example of this can be seen in Bhutan’s official program, established in 2008, of promoting and measuring the quality of life of its citizens through a “Gross National Happiness” index, which it quantifies in census reports and includes as part of the country’s GDP (gross domestic product). The concept is based on Buddhist principles of a well-balanced life.

In the last decades of the 20th century, Bhutan made dramatic strides in modernization through effective development programs in the areas of agriculture, education, health, and overall infrastructure. Emerging from centuries of isolation, in the 1960s, the government pursued policies that would balance the gains of modernization with cultural

and religious preservation of the country's majority Drukpa Buddhist heritage. Through royal patronage, select cultural traditions such as the Tshechu dance festival have been preserved and afforded new vitality. The country's strictly controlled tourism industry also benefits from the vitality of these cultural traditions, and sometimes tourists further support them in return.

The Bhutanese government has pursued policies and programs that have preserved the country's natural environment from the degradation witnessed in other Himalayan countries resulting from industry, development, and tourism. These policies, which are informed by a Buddhist orientation to the phenomenal world wherein the land is the abode of various local forms of the sacred, have ensured the preservation of vast natural resources.

In the 1980s, governmental concerns with Drukpa cultural preservation took the form of ethnonationalist policies that sought to exclude Hindu Lhotshampas (Bhutanese of Nepali descent) from definitions of Bhutanese identity. This led to the eventual expulsion of more than 100,000 Lhotshampas, most of whom are housed in UNHRC (United Nations Human Rights Commission) camps over the Nepal border. Such concerns also led to the implementation of an array of policies—including new Druk sartorial codes—intended to strengthen Bhutan's Drukpa identity.

Megan Adamson Sijapati

See also Hinduism; India; Tibet; Vajrayana, Tibetan

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BIBLE

The word *Bible* (derived from the Greek *ta biblia*, “the books”) describes a series of writings used in

different forms and revered as sacred texts by Christians and Jews. These writings are usually collected and bound in a single volume titled “The Bible” or “Holy Bible” and as such are usually considered authoritative in some sense and used in religious ritual and practices in Christianity and Judaism. The word *Bible* is most commonly used to characterize a collection of 66 books, the first 39 of which (in the Christian numbering) are also the full extent of the Jewish scriptural canon, that is, the Hebrew Bible (HB) or Old Testament (OT), and the latter 27 of which constitute uniquely Christian writings, that is, the New Testament (NT). Thus, the term *Bible* has a decidedly Christian undertone, though some Jews refer to their own canon simply as “The Bible” as well. Although Christian and Jewish traditions overlap in *content* between their shared books, the *order* of the books is arranged differently between the Christian and Jewish Bibles, with the most prominent difference being the inclusion of (at least) 27 additional books (the NT) in the Christian canon. Furthermore, some Christian traditions, for example, Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox, and Russian Orthodox, consider several additional books as canonical, further complicating any exact definition in terms of content for the term *Bible*.

The process by which the Bible came to be written and collected together as a single book and considered as a complete “canon” (Greek *kanon*, “measuring reed, rule”; by extension, an authoritative collection of books) is complex and historically obscure. There is currently no consensus about the circumstances under which the HB came to be canonized, but it seems that by at least the mid-second century BCE certain portions of the HB were understood as authoritative (see, e.g., the reference to Jeremiah in Daniel 9:2 and the Prologue to Ecclesiasticus, where the threefold mention of “the Law and the Prophet and the others” seems to refer to some established set of books with traditional labels). Since Jewish communities (with the exception of the Karaites) traditionally see their Bible not in isolation as freestanding scripture but rather as part of a larger body of literature that includes, minimally, the Mishnah, Talmud, various rabbinic commentators, and oral tradition, Jews placed less emphasis on formal declarations of canonicity for any given book vis-à-vis

Christian communities, though the Mishnah (Yadayim 3:5) and Talmud (Menahot 45a, Baba Bathra 14b–15a) do record debate surrounding the inclusion of several books. The HB/OT is written primarily in ancient Hebrew, although several short portions are in Aramaic. The earliest manuscripts of the HB are found among the so-called Dead Sea Scrolls, dating as early as ca. 250 BCE and as late as the first century CE. No original manuscript of either the OT or the NT has ever been discovered, and there is currently no consensus regarding the issue of when the earliest texts of the Bible were written; many have assumed that some parts of the Hebrew Bible date back to the 12th to the 10th century BCE, while it seems more certain that the entire corpus of the NT was written in the first and second centuries CE.

In the Jewish Bible, the order of the books is as follows. Torah (Law): Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy; Nevi'im (Prophets): Joshua, Judges, First Samuel, Second Samuel, First Kings, Second Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi; Kethuvim (writings): Psalms, Proverbs, Job, The Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, First Chronicles, Second Chronicles.

The Christian Bible contains the same 39 books in the OT, but after the first five books, the order is often different: Joshua, Judges, Ruth, First Samuel, Second Samuel, First Kings, Second Kings, First Chronicles, Second Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi. At certain points, the differences between the arrangement of these books in the Jewish and Christian canons reflects serious religious differences between the two groups. For example, the Christian placement of Daniel after Ezekiel (and thus among the other named “prophetic” books) reflects the heavy Christian reliance on Daniel in eschatological matters (e.g., as indicated in the NT Book of Revelation), whereas Jewish interpreters have traditionally rejected readings of Daniel that privilege its apocalyptic dimensions. The Jewish canon ends in Chronicles, with the decree of Cyrus for Jews to return to

Jerusalem after exile and rebuild the Temple, thus emphasizing the important nature of the Temple in ongoing Jewish religion (at least pre-70 CE), whereas the Christian arrangement ending in Malachi concludes with a promise of the coming Elijah figure, providing a bridge to the preaching of John the Baptist in the NT and the coming of Jesus.

Roman Catholic and Orthodox Bibles include as canonical several books that are sometimes labeled as *Apocrypha* (“hidden”), though others prefer the term *Deuterocanonical*. These books include Tobit, Judith, Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus (Sirach/Sirah), Baruch, Letter of Jeremiah, First Maccabees, Second Maccabees. Certain books, such as Esther and Daniel, also contain additional chapters or sections (in Greek) that are accepted by those who accept the Apocryphal literature as canonical. Additionally, several texts appear in Greek and Slavonic Bibles that are not in the Roman Catholic canon, including First and Second Esdras, Prayer of Manasseh, Psalm 151, and Third Maccabees. Protestant Christians since the Reformation have followed Luther in rejecting the canonical status of the Deuterocanonical literature, though these books were not fully removed from Protestant Bibles until well after the 16th century CE.

The Christian NT contains 27 books: The four Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, John—Acts; several “epistles,” that is, letters addressed to specific communities—Romans, First Corinthians, Second Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, First Thessalonians, Second Thessalonians, First Timothy, Second Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, First Peter, Second Peter, First John, Second John, Third John, Jude—and one apocalyptic work—Revelation. The oldest manuscripts of the NT (all written in Greek) began to appear in the second century CE, and quotations of various NT books by the early Church Fathers by this time period and onward seem to indicate that a corpus of writings—including, but not limited to, many of the books that later would become canonical as the NT—was considered authoritative in some sense by at least the end of the fourth century CE. The oldest manuscript of the (Christian) Bible is known as Codex Sinaiticus and was written in Greek on parchment in the fourth century CE; the document is fragmentary but contains about half of the HB,

all of the NT, and two other early Christian writings not included in modern Bibles. Other early (but still incomplete) codices include Codex Vaticanus (fourth century) and Codex Alexandrinus (fifth century). The oldest (though not entirely complete) form of the full Hebrew Bible collected in a single document is the 10th century CE Aleppo Codex, while the first full manuscripts of the Christian Bible begin to appear by at least the 11th century (Johann Gutenberg produced the earliest complete printed Christian Bible in the 1450s).

One of the most prominent storylines in Western religious history involves the various attempts to translate the Bible into any one of a number of vernacular languages. The history of Bible translation dates back to at least the third to the second century BCE, when the books of the HB were translated into Greek; these translations, commonly referred to generically as the Septuagint, were widely circulated in Israel/Palestine by the first century CE, and various lines of evidence suggest that the authors of the Greek NT used the Septuagint translations as their authoritative text when quoting the HB (in Greek). Other translations of the Hebrew of the HB circulated during the first century CE in the form of Targums, that is, Aramaic translations of parts of the HB.

By 405 CE, the Christian scholar Jerome had produced the Vulgate, a Latin translation of both the OT and the NT; the Vulgate served as the official translation of the Bible for the Catholic Church through the medieval period and was affirmed as the authoritative version at the Council of Trent in 1546. As early as 1382, John Wycliffe made an English translation of the Bible, and William Tyndale printed the first complete English edition of the Bible in 1537; concurrently with Tyndale, Martin Luther produced a German translation, and the Catholic Church responded with its own English text in 1582 (the Douay Version). The production of the King James translation under the auspices of the Church of England in 1611 was a culmination of sorts in this period of the translation and dissemination of the Bible to wider audiences. Modern chapter and verse markings did not appear in the earliest manuscripts of the Bible; Stephen Langton added chapters in ca. 1227 and Robert Stephanus first inserted verses in 1551. Currently, the Bible has been translated into

more than 2,200 languages, and, as is often noted, the Bible has been the number one selling book in many countries for as long as sales records have been kept, making it the world's most widely known and disseminated book.

Brian R. Doak

See also Christianity; Judaism; Scripture

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BIN LADEN, OSAMA

See al Qaeda

BLACK MUSLIMS

Black Muslims are members of an American religious movement called the Nation of Islam. From 1930 until 1975, the Nation of Islam accepted only Blacks as members. They also considered Whites as “devils” and supported the separation of Black and White races. The Nation was a “proto-Islamic” movement, using some of the trappings of Islam mixed with an ideology of Black nationalism. Although the name “Black Muslims,” coined by C. Eric Lincoln, is often used for members of this movement, the members themselves reject this name.

The Nation of Islam was founded in Paradise Valley, Detroit, on July 4, 1930, by Master Wallace

D. Fard (or Wali Farad), a mysterious peddler of silks from the East, who taught his followers about their “true religion,” not Christianity but the “religion of the Black Man” of Asia and Africa. Fard stressed that “knowledge of self” was a prerequisite for attaining Black liberation. Temple of Islam No. 1 was established in Detroit.

When Fard mysteriously disappeared in 1934, his chief lieutenant, Elijah Muhammad (formerly Poole), took over and established the headquarters of the movement at Temple No. 2 on the South Side of Chicago in 1936. Muhammad was responsible for Master Fard’s deification as “Allah in person” (a Black man as God), and he claimed to be Allah’s messenger or prophet. Using the honorific title “the Honorable,” Elijah Muhammad perpetuated Fard’s teachings, which stressed three factors: (1) the need to establish a separate Black nation, (2) the need to recover an acceptable Black identity, and (3) the need for economic independence.

Muhammad found his most important evangelist in the charismatic figure of Minister Malcolm X. Converted to the Nation while he was in prison in Massachusetts in 1948, Malcolm Little followed the practice of the Nation by replacing his “slave” surname with an X, which signified “ex-Christian, ex-Negro, ex-slave”; X also meant identity undetermined. The years from 1952 until 1965, which covered Malcolm’s release from prison until his assassination, marked the period of the greatest growth and influence of the Nation of Islam. However, due to an internal dispute, Malcolm left the Nation in 1964 and converted to Sunnī Islam. He was assassinated on February 21, 1965, at the Audubon Ballroom in Harlem.

On his father’s death in February 1975, Wallace Delaney Muhammad, Elijah Muhammad’s fifth son, was chosen as the next supreme leader. He changed his name to Warith Deen Mohammed and rid the movement of its Black nationalist characteristics, leading his followers to orthodox Sunnī Islam. Since 1976, the movement has undergone several name changes, from the Nation of Islam to a decentralized structure of independent *masjids* (“places of prayer”) as part of his Mosque Cares Ministry. Their newspaper is called the *Muslim Journal*.

In 1977, Minister Louis Farrakhan led a schismatic group of discontented followers in resurrecting

the Nation of Islam. They have continued the separatist and Black nationalist teachings of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad, supplemented by new interpretations from Minister Farrakhan. His movement’s newspaper is *The Final Call*. Farrakhan’s Nation of Islam was able to mobilize more than 1 million Black people twice to attend major rallies in Washington, D.C.—the Million Man March in 1995 and the Millions More movement in 2005. In 2006, due to health complications, Farrakhan stepped aside and handed over the leadership of the Nation of Islam to an executive council.

Lawrence H. Mamiya

See also Black Muslims; Islam; New Religions; Racism; United States of America

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BLAVATSKY, HELENA P. (1831–1891)

Helena Petrovna Blavatsky was a traveler, cofounder of the Theosophical Society, and a major writer of occult philosophy. Her worldwide journeys and writings drawing from several spiritual traditions lay behind the global influence of modern Theosophy.

Blavatsky was born in aristocratic circumstances in Russia as Helena de Hahn. Of rebellious temperament, she married Nikifor Blavatsky in 1849 but quickly left him to wander the world, by her own account in search of esoteric teachings and their practitioners. Much of the next 24 years of her life is undocumented. But in 1873, she arrived in New York, drawn to the homeland of Spiritualism.

There she soon met Henry Steel Olcott, lawyer, journalist, and likewise student of Spiritualism. He, Blavatsky, and others founded the Theosophical Society in 1875, initially dedicated to the study of esotericism both Eastern and Western. In 1877, Blavatsky's first book, *Isis Unveiled*, appeared, based on her occult study and experience. As with all her major work, its underlying object was to uncover an ancient wisdom at the source of all traditional religions and philosophies but now too often obscured by dogmatic religion and narrow-minded science.

In 1878, Blavatsky and Olcott left for India, where they believed the ancient wisdom to be still alive. She remained in India until 1885; during this time, the Theosophical Society grew rapidly, drawing particularly native Indian followers. Many were the reports of remarkable psychic phenomena associated with Blavatsky. However, in 1885, a critical evaluation of her, published by the Society for Psychical Research, stirred up much controversy. Returning to Europe that same year, she settled in London in 1887.

Despite declining health, Blavatsky published several more books. *The Secret Doctrine* (1888) is

a comprehensive expression of her worldview as it traces the spiritual evolution of the universe, the solar system, life, and humanity as an immense undertaking of the interaction of spirit and matter; the book surveys the path of the "Pilgrim" or individual "monad" through space and time as it proceeds back to its eternal source. *The Key to Theosophy* and the *Voice of the Silence*, both published in 1889, present, respectively, a question-and-answer summary of her teaching and a devotional guide for "the few" called to altruistic mysticism.

Blavatsky's achievement was to create a synthesis of science and religion responding in the language of both Eastern and Western esotericism to the modern spiritual crises engendered by Darwinian evolution, religious doubt, and no less the incipient globalization of religious awareness. By all accounts, a colorful and unforgettable personality, Helena Blavatsky left her mark on the West's discovery of the spiritual East and the East's encounter with the West.

Robert Ellwood

See also Hinduism; India; Mahayana Buddhism; Olcott, Henry Steel; Theosophy

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BODH GAYA

Located in the eastern Indian state of Bihar about 96 kilometers from Patna, the town of Bodh Gaya is known as the place where Gautama Buddha,

Prince Siddhartha, attained enlightenment. The second-century poet Aśvaghōṣa in his *Buddhacarita* names this site the “Navel of the Earth” (Sanskrit *pṛthivīnābhi*), as it is the center of the Buddhist universe. Scriptures of various Buddhist traditions agree that all Buddhas—past, present, and future—attain enlightenment on this spot. It is believed that when the universe is finally destroyed, this will be the last place to disappear and the first place to emerge when the universe begins to form again.

The history of Bodh Gaya as the locus of Buddhist pilgrimage has been documented by epigraphic and literary sources from India, Sri Lanka, China, Tibet, and Burma for more than 2,200 years. The Mahābodhi Temple in Bodh Gaya (Figure 1), which enshrines Buddha’s Seat of Enlightenment (*Vajrāsana*), was named by UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) as a World Heritage Site in 2002.



Figure 1 The Mahābodhi Temple in Bodh Gaya.

Buddha’s Enlightenment

Prince Siddhartha grew up in luxury, but at the age of 30, he became deeply moved by the sickness, old age, and death he witnessed in his kingdom. Inspired by his first sight of a renunciate, he left behind the prince’s life and set off on a quest to find the solution to suffering as a wandering mendicant. For 6 years, he practiced restraining his body and mind near the village of Uruvilvā (or Uruvelā) on the banks of the Nairāñjanā River but realized that asceticism alone cannot put an end to suffering. He accepted rice milk offered to him by a village girl, Sujātā, regained his strength, and sat under the *Bodhi* tree (*Ficus religiosa*) in meditation, resolved not to rise until he attained enlightenment. The last obstacle to his goal appeared in the form of Māra, the Evil-doer, who attempted to expose Siddhartha’s lust and fear and deny him the right to meditate on that spot. The bodhisattva called on the earth to give witness to his innumerable lifetimes of virtue, finally leading him to sit and meditate under the *Bodhi* tree. He touched the ground with his right hand, and the earth shook in response. He thus defeated Māra, gained decisive insight into the nature of reality called “truly complete enlightenment” (*samuyaksambodhi*), and became transformed into an awakened being or Buddha.

Following his enlightenment, Buddha remained in the vicinity of the *Bodhi* tree, meditating and enjoying his experience. Although traditional Buddhist sources, such as *Mahāvagga* (in Pāli) and *Lalitavistara* and *Mahāvastu* (in Sanskrit), slightly differ about the order and duration of the later episodes, they mostly concur about the actual events. In each of the succeeding weeks, Buddha was absorbed in one specific action: He meditated under the *Bodhi* tree, out of gratitude stood and observed the tree, engaged in walking meditation, reflected on dependent origination (*pratītyasamutpāda*) and the cessation of suffering, meditated under the *Ajapāla* (“banyan”) tree, meditated during a great tempest protected by the snake king Mucilinda, accepted rice cake and honey offered by two itinerant merchants Trapuṣa and Bhallika, and was urged by Brahma to teach and share his experience. Each of these events was commemorated by later generations of pilgrims, and shrines were built at their locations, which are still venerated today. At the end of this period, Buddha set out for Sārnāth,

resolved to teach his former companions in austerity, whom he deemed the most ready to understand the Dharma.

Following Buddha's enlightenment, this area began to take on a number of new names, including *Sambodhi* ("Complete Enlightenment"), *Mahābodhi* ("Great Enlightenment"), *Vajrāsana* ("Indestructible Seat"), and *Bodhimaṇḍa* ("Circle of Enlightenment"). It seems that the name Bodh Gaya or Buddha Gaya began to be used only in the more recent centuries.

Mahābodhi Temple and Monastery

The first written record of pilgrimage to Bodh Gaya is found on the Eighth Rock Edict issued around 260 BCE by Asoka, the emperor of India. There is compelling archaeological and textual evidence that Asoka also built a two-storied shrine around the *Bodhi* tree and gifted the King of Sri Lanka with a branch from the tree, which was planted at the Mahāvihāra monastery near the town Anurādhapura. Around the second or first century BCE, several local queens erected an intricately carved stone railing around the temple and the *Bodhi* tree and left inscriptional records.

According to the archaeological evidence examined by Sir Alexander Cunningham during excavations in 1871, the present Mahābodhi Temple was built in the first half of the second century CE. The temple was built over the remains of Asoka's previous structure and was repaired and renovated many times in the succeeding centuries. Hsüan-tsang, a renowned Chinese monk visited Bodh Gaya around 637 CE and left a detailed description of stupas, shrines, and monasteries, including the Mahābodhi Temple, which closely corresponds to the building as seen today.

In the fourth century CE, the Sri Lankan king Meghavana built Mahābodhi vihāra, a magnificent monastery to the north of the temple as a shelter for pilgrims and a seat of academic studies. Its 9-foot-thick walls housed more than 1,000 monks at the time, and it continued to be used at least until 1234, when the Tibetan monk Dharmasvāmin documented his stay there. A trail of inscriptions on the monuments and temples of Bodh Gaya, together with classical textual sources in India, Sri Lanka, China, Tibet, and Burma, shows that the flow of monastic and lay pilgrims, Buddhist scholars and

yogis, and male and female devotees, was unabated for centuries.

In the second half of the 12th century, Turkish invaders repeatedly raided the area, burnt and plundered the great Buddhist monasteries, and slaughtered the Buddhist monastic population. Although many of the remaining monks fled to Nepal and Tibet, inscriptions witnessing the presence of Sri Lankan monks, Tibetan pilgrims, Indian royal donors, and Burmese royal delegations carrying out repairs continued up to the end of the 13th century. After that period, Bodh Gaya was gradually abandoned, and its monasteries, shrines, and temples fell into disrepair. The remnants of Bodh Gaya became less and less accessible to the pilgrims and were mostly forgotten by the rest of the Buddhist world.

Toward the end of the 16th century, the followers of Shiva with their leader Mahant (hereditary title) settled in Bodh Gaya and began to arrogate Buddhist monuments, using the images, stones, and bricks as building materials. In the first half of the 19th century, the Buddha statue in the central shrine was removed and replaced with a Shivalinga.

Modern Period

In 1880, the temple and monastery were excavated and restored, based on an ancient discovered model and the existing remains, by the British archaeologists Alexander Cunningham and Joseph Daviditch Beglar. The previously removed Buddha statue, in the "earth-touching posture" (*bhūmisparśa mudrā*) made of gilded black stone, was restored to its place in the temple by Cunningham and Beglar. When the old *Bodhi* tree fell during a storm in 1867, Cunningham replanted it from a sapling of the Sri Lankan *Bodhi* tree, itself an offspring of the original tree. In 1956, the Indian government, as part of Buddha's 2,500th anniversary celebration, made some repairs to the temple, enlarged the area around it, and constructed circumambulation paths.

Restoration of the Mahābodhi Temple was not, however, followed by the restitution of Buddhists' rights to freely manage and practice in it. The successive *mahants* actively promoted the Hindu identity of the temple, claimed it as their property, and opposed the presence of Buddhist monks and images in the shrine. In the 1890s, Anagarika

Dharmapāla, a devoted Sri Lankan Buddhist, commenced a legal, political, and religious battle for Buddhist rights to control the Mahābodhi Temple as the place of central importance for their tradition. After 60 years of Buddhist struggle for recognition, the Legislative Assembly of Bihar passed the Bodh Gaya Temple Act in 1949. It entrusted the management of the temple to an appointed committee with a designated minority of Buddhist representatives. Since 1956, more than 3 million members of the scheduled castes (former untouchables) following their leader Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar have converted to Buddhism, adding their voice to the continual campaign for Buddhist control over the Mahābodhi Temple.

Contemporary Bodh Gaya is again the hub of the Buddhist world. Many new temples and monasteries have been built in the area. Teachings and courses given by renowned Buddhist teachers, most notably by His Highness the XIV Dalai Lama attract large international assemblies. Today, as it has been done for many centuries, pilgrims and tourists circumambulate the Mahābodhi Temple, meditate or perform prostrations, and make offerings of incense, flowers, butter lamps, and prayers. International gatherings and festivals occur several times each year when prayers and aspirations for world peace, environmental well-being, and enlightenment of all sentient beings are chanted in a variety of different languages and styles.

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See also Gautama, Siddhartha; India; Mahayana Buddhism; Sārnāth

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stems from deep historical engagement with concerns beyond its boundaries grounded in local devotions. Its landscape, regarded as sacred by many of the inhabitants, contains some of the highest peaks of the Andes, a broad and densely populated high plateau, valleys, and the broad lowlands.

Well before the Spanish conquest, Bolivia's territory held Guarani and other lowland indigenous societies as well as the great Tiwanaku civilization, followed by the Kolla Confederations and the Inca Empire. Its shrines, such as the very holy Copacabana Peninsula with its offshore islands, known as Island of the Sun and of the Moon, figured strongly in Inca myths of origin and legitimation and continue to be important into the present, not just in Bolivia but also in Latin America, the United States, and Europe. Transformed by human effort, the peninsula became perhaps the largest man-made monument in the ancient world.

With the Spanish conquest, Bolivia became Catholic and has since participated in the changes of that institution. Today, a majority of Bolivians claim to be Catholic; estimates vary from 52% to 78%. Bolivian Catholicism ranges from devotions to figures grounded in the local landscape, such as the famous Virgin of Copacabana, the Virgin of Urkupiña, or the Virgin of Cotoca, with their confraternities, shrines, and pilgrimages that still mobilize the ritual calendar and much of social life, to various contemporary forms of Catholic devotion, such as the Opus Dei, catequists, and other lay movements. All of the above involve a combination of local social and religious concerns with transnational religious organization.

Some 20%–30% of Bolivians belong to religious groups that have more recently arrived in the country. This includes denominational Protestantism, nondenominational Evangelicals and Pentecostals, Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, and Seventh-Day Adventists, as well as Bahai's, Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, Jews, and various Metaphysical and Mystery movements. Other Bolivians claim no religion.

Bolivia's religious field is also being redefined as forms of native religion develop in the interaction of multilateral agencies' emphasis on indigenous peoples' rights with Bolivian social movements. In Bolivia, this new indigenous religion generally emphasizes devotion to the Earth Mother, called

BOLIVIA

Bolivia is a country in the heart of the northern part of South America whose religious diversity

Pachamama. Other aspects of indigenous practice, once belonging to ritual, such as the music, dance, and feasts connected with the Saints Calendar, are redefined as secular culture and folklore. Their popularity is growing strongly. The Bolivian state instituted a new constitution in 2009, which breaks the official connection between the state and Catholicism and declares the state as a lay entity. Nevertheless, indigenous symbols and rituals, including devotions to Pachamama, are increasingly important to legitimate and anchor Bolivia's social-political order, whether they are defined as religious or cultural. Bolivia's indigenous culture, whether considered religious or not, is developing followers in other countries and is influencing other indigenous people's movements.

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See also Indigenous Religions; Latin America; New Religions of South America; Religion and State

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BORDERLANDS

The story of contemporary religion for Latina/os across the United States/Latin American borders, the *borderlands*, begins with Spanish colonialism. In 1421, the Mexica or Aztec Mesoamerican imperial capital, Tenochtitlán, fell to an army headed by invading Iberian Christians; in 1533, the Inca Empire of South America lost its imperial capital, Cuzco, to the same fate. These victories heralded a new colonial order throughout what is now Latin America, from the Tijuana border, to the southern tip of Argentina, to the former Spanish colonial islands of Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Dominican

Republic. In the 19th century, Latin American colonies liberated themselves from Spanish rule and became hybrid republics, torn between their indigenous, European, and African underpinnings. For the most part, Latin American statecraft came to manage the resulting inevitable process of cultural blending and synthesis by recognizing and celebrating its creative potential and effects.

In one sense, "the borderlands" names the place and result of this history—a hybrid social and geographical space, the result of imperial Christian impulses and Indian resistances, emergent in a repertoire of performances that continue to morph. This evolutionary phenomenon is in no way unique to Latina/os; indeed, it happens in many human societies. Yet the historical and geographical contexts and the places and facts of cultural contact are in fact dissimilar and contribute to a particular regional matrix of variations, local culture, and borderlands culture. And indeed, traditions develop that possess the aura of always having existed so that multitudes invest great meaning in them—they become important enough to ground personal and national master identities.

Still *Nepantla*

For the ancient Mexican Nahuatl speakers, the place of tradition was known as *nepantla*: the space in-between worlds. Colonial Christians were bewildered by the wonders they encountered in 15th-century Mesoamerica. When one Indian wise man was asked why he continued practicing his religious traditions after having formally received Christian confirmation, his answer was prophetic. He asserted that they were still *nepantla*, the place of in-between, occupying the porous borders at once connecting and separating Maya from Aztec, Taino from African, indigenous from Spanish, Christian from Pagan, and, ultimately, Latin America from the United States.

Even after colonization, the colonized peoples across the American borderlands never entirely surrendered control of their bodies, memories, and sacred places; it is believed that their control remained partially in the realm of the spiritual. Religions are shaped and reshaped in the struggle for political power. The classical social theorist Émile Durkheim once correctly noted that human nature does not explain religious phenomena;

instead, one must look to their social contexts for explanations.

Borderland Religions

Embedded in the trajectory of Chicano history, the borderlands thesis suggests that for many Mexican Americans cultural production occurs betwixt and between Mexico and the United States and is thus characterized by liminality, or the processual state of in-between-ness, of becoming. The organizing principle of the borderlands thesis focuses on how the international boundary between Mexico and the United States, as well as adjacent regions, creates a distinctive cultural space that paradoxically links yet divides people on either side of the border. The borderlands is not only a physical place but also a poetic device for describing perennially emergent and multiplex individual, social, and cultural formations.

The grand symbol of the border looms large in the Mexican imaginary, and the reality of its daily transgression by people who may be otherwise religious and law-abiding is a cause for deep reflection. Mexicans who come to the United States put their faith in the “cross,” the act itself that becomes a symbol. Metaphorically, a border-crossing consciousness means living daily with the impulse to surpass institutional, religious, legal, spatial, and symbolic barriers that keep the colonized, those on the margins, away from centers of power. Borders of all kinds are central and formative places in the production of religion, but they also serve as peripheries that must be surpassed to arrive at a place with greater promise—a meaningful and better orientation for cultural and religious migrants.

The incessant illegal crossing of Mexicans into the United States should give us pause. Each year, millions of Mexicans are arrested for crossing the border. Others attempting to cross the border suffer a worse fate: Each year, hundreds of bodies are found in the desert between Mexico and the United States. The ocean separating the Caribbean Islands from Florida functions as a watery burial ground for thousands of people each year who attempt to cross over from Cuba, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic. Various forms of religion can provide hope and strength for these often destitute border crossers, pilgrims in a sense, on their faith journeys to the promised land.

Religious Expression

Contemporary religious expression among people of Latin American origin, Latinas and Latinos on both sides of the United States/Latin America border, is a product of many historical collisions and social collusions. The myths and realities of Spanish colonialism interfaced and merged tensely with the indigenous Americas. In the Caribbean and on the eastern coast of South America, this religious matrix combined with the myths and realities of indigenous African traditions that were brought to Latin American shores by slavery to produce the radically innovative hybrid religions existing today. Borderland religion owes its origins to at least three main sources of religious tradition and innovation: (1) the indigenous Americans (chiefly Maya, Inca, and Aztec), (2) a primitive form of Spanish Catholicism that ironically resembled the beliefs and expressions it sought to eradicate, and (3) West African Yoruba rites and practices.

Still, however, indigenous traditions survived in processes of subterfuge, dissimulation, and outright defiance. The phrase “idols behind altars” has been used to capture the ways in which the indigenous peoples of Latin America rejected the singularity of Christianity even well after formal indoctrination was imposed. In Cuba and throughout the Caribbean, African slaves were imported en masse to fill the labor void left by the largely decimated indigenous Taino populations; many Indian survivors fled to the mountainous island interiors, which soon attracted escaping African slaves and thus became productive venues of religious experimentation—producing fresh indigenous/Catholic African hybrids, Santería being the chief among them.

In the African diaspora, religious formations such as the “crossroads” mark the meeting place of the living and the dead, wherein spirits cross the border between life and death. Crossings symbolize action, movement, transformation: The “cross” is a verb. Pilgrims carry and enact the cross from South to North America, from the Third World to the First, from certain poverty to uncertain poverty, from the old to the new, refiguring multiple covenants of grace and hope. The cross bears several meanings but becomes most significant in Latina/o religious practice as both noun and verb. Migrants intersecting the northern border reenact a drama of religious transformation that is centuries old, at

least: a life translation. Conversion, a new life, transformation, and a renewal of spirit are realized in the intersections created by the cross.

Latina/o immigrants typically follow the seasonal patterns of crops and other labor rhythms (e.g., the demand for construction workers is greater during the nonrainy months). And inasmuch as migrants touch and inform the lives of permanent residents in the spaces they inhabit, entire communities are affected by cycles of return: Various communities and social collectives experience ebb and swell as a function of migration. For a community delimited by border crossing, fluidity, and movement, religion is experienced as flux and flow; the greatest religious movements occur at times of crisis.

When people come to the United States, they bring their religious traditions with them; when they come as temporary workers, they return to Mexico with the commodities and cultural influences they accumulated while in exile—both are disseminated in their homelands. Thus, the cultural rhythms of the United States pulsate in Mexican religious systems, and vice versa, in various means of transnational exchanges. Both nations are influenced by the transnational movement of peoples—bodies and souls—a cycle that takes place again and again.

The borderlands is a crossroads, functioning at once as symbol and reality for millions of Latinas/os who cross boundaries of many kinds when forging plausible and effective realities for themselves and their posterity. The cross as metaphor can be effectively used to connote Latina/o religious practice insofar as borders isolating traditions from one another are diminished while practitioners draw from many spiritual resources in their struggle to survive the oppressive legacy of colonialism.

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See also Hybridization; Mexico; Postcolonialism; United States of America

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BOROBUDUR

See Southeast Asia

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Bosnia and Herzegovina was one of the Balkan regions that was part of the Yugoslavian confederation

during the Soviet era. As a nation holding a distinct ethnic, linguistic, and cultural identity, the population of Bosnia has embraced three main religious traditions through the centuries: Orthodoxy, Catholicism, and Islam. They are the pre-Slavic indigenous Balkan people, and Paleo-Illyrian, later (in the seventh and sixth centuries BCE) mixed with Slavonic tribes. Bosnia is a region in which religion has historically played a discreet role, restricted largely to the private domain. The fact that the neighboring countries have promoted religion as the key factor of their national identities is perhaps crucial to their earlier respective national awakenings. For several centuries Bosnia was known as *refugium hereticorum* (“the refuge for heretics”).

The expansion of the Ottoman Empire and the arrival of Islam did not result in any major changes among those who embraced it, especially when taking into account that Islam did not influence the ethnic identity. Rather than contributing to the national homogenization of people, the conversion to Islam delayed it, which explains why the issue of nationality was marginal for the Muslim population of Bosnia. Instead, the role of Islam has been reduced to regulating their secular duties toward the state. Being a Bosnian simply had no social significance, nor was it developed into a political program, thus remaining without sacral, spiritual, ecclesiastical, or secular grounds.

This specific, if not unique, feature of the religious history of Bosnia owes much to the presence of Bogomils. Also known as Krstjani by Ragusan (Dubrovnik) sources and Patareni, or simply “heretics,” by Venetian sources, the Bogomils called themselves “Dobri Bošnjani.” Their active adherents were most numerous in the period between the 11th century and the early 14th century. A long list of *Bans* (the feudal head of the Bosnian state) and kings of Bosnia publicly acknowledged their acceptance of the Bogomil teaching. By 1340, the Franciscan Mission was founded in Bosnia—in the very heart of the Bogomil region (Fojnica and Kraljeva Sutjeska). The last ruler of Bosnia who was publicly a Bogomil was King Ostoja. In a more clandestine manner, important figures in Bosnian history such as Hrvoje Vukčić, Sandalj Hranić, Pavle Klesić, and Stefan Vukčić (all of whom were Bosnian rulers with different ranks,

ruling as late as 1450) adhered to the Bogomil teachings. Isolated cases of Bogomil villages and settlements were registered by the Ottoman census until the mid-16th century. Strong pressure on and systematic persecution of the Bogomils have marked the history of Bosnia prior to the Ottoman arrival. Catholic Venice and Hungary as well as Orthodox Byzantium and Serbia played a great part in this.

The *stećaks* are unique remains from the time of the Bogomils. They are gravestones with drawings and texts that attract the attention of historians, anthropologists, poets, and the like worldwide. The total number of counted *stećaks* in Bosnia is more than 60,000. The *stećaks* have not been found in any other part of the region, including even Bulgaria, from which supposedly this creed originated. Likewise, they were not found in Serbia, Macedonia, or Montenegro, known as locations where the Bogomils also used to settle and live for certain periods of time. Known for their religious tolerance, the Ottomans gave full rights to Orthodox Christian believers as well as to Catholics. The world seat of the Orthodox Church remained in Istanbul (formerly Constantinople) throughout the existence of the Ottoman Empire. It remains there until the present time. All religions and their temples in Bosnia were under the direct protection of the Sultan.

According to some sources, in 2002 Islam was the religion of 58% of the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Bosniaks, who make up almost the total Muslim population of present-day Bosnia, are represented by Sunnī Muslims. Throughout history, the Sufi (dervish) orders have also been a significant part of the Islamic cultural influence in Bosnia. Serbs, almost exclusively adhering to Orthodox Christianity, represent about 30% of the population of Bosnia, while Croats, predominantly Roman Catholic, make up the remaining 10% to 12% of the population of the country (United Nations Development Program: *Human Development Report*, 2002).

In addition, the Jewish community in Bosnia was founded after their expulsion from Spain in 1492. They remained an important part of the social and cultural milieu until the German Nazi Holocaust action in 1943. Today, this community numbers approximately 1,200. The state constitution provides for freedom of religion. Religious

education is decentralized, and the school system is based on secular principles.

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See also Croatia; Islam; Pluralism; Religious Nationalism; Slovakia

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BOTSWANA

Botswana is located in central-southern Africa, adjacent to South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Angola. With a landlocked population of just more than 2 million (July 2010 estimate) and a landmass slightly smaller than Texas, the country, formerly known as the Bechuanaland Protectorate under the British, became an independent nation in 1966. Botswana's mineral resources have helped the country hold influence

in global exchange, as it is rich in diamonds, copper, and nickel and has fostered export and trading partnerships as well as tourist relations to increase the nation's wealth and global standing. Cattle raising and subsistence farming are practiced by many residents, though with the Kalahari Desert covering much of Botswana's topography, less than 1% of the land is arable.

English is the official national language, though according to the 2001 census, only 2.1% of Batswana identify English as their primary language. Instead, 78.2% speak Setswana, 7.9% speak Kalanga, and 11.8% speak other languages. Botswana's ethnic groups include the majority Tswana as well as the Shona (Kalanga), Basarwa, Kgalagadi, European Africans, and Indians. Zimbabweans have also increasingly migrated to Botswana for protection or financial gain, as increasing wealth through luxury exports has made Botswana's annual GDP (gross domestic product) one of the highest in Africa. Nomadic hunter-gatherers have had trouble being recognized in Botswana; many Basarwa have lost indigenous rights to the use of public land.

Religiously, nearly two thirds of Batswana are members of Protestant denominations, including Anglican, Methodist, Pentecostal, Baptist, Seventh-Day Adventist, Lutheran, and the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa. While missionary societies and explorers like David Livingstone exposed southern Africans to Christianity from 1845 onward, many Batswana today have adopted the independently run African Initiated Churches (AICs) as their primary preference for worship. Though the percentages of actual practitioners are most likely much higher, 6% of Batswana in the 2001 census self-identified as Badimo adherents. Badimo honors the ancestral living-dead as a part of daily life and includes cultural practices encompassing rituals, celebrations, and symbols that are nationally recognized. About 5% of Batswana identify as Catholic, and there are also small pockets of Hindu and Muslim immigrants.

Botswana in recent years has struggled with a high prevalence of HIV/AIDS and has been working hard to treat the illness while combating the further spread of outbreaks through preventive education and medicine disbursement. Several communities have faced the death of nearly one fourth of all adult citizens due to AIDS-related illness,

which has affected levels of productivity and unemployment. Nevertheless, Botswana has had relative success for more than four decades with a parliamentary republic multiparty system. The current president, Seretse Khama Ian Khama, was elected in 2008 for a 5-year term.

Botswana is a member of the African Union and African Development Bank, the Commonwealth, the Southern African Development Community, the World Trade Organization, and the International Criminal Court, established in 2002.

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See also Africa; Missions and Missionaries; New Religions in Africa; South Africa; Zimbabwe

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BRAHMANICAL HINDUISM

Brahmanical Hinduism represents the elite, lettered, and Pan-Indian religious culture of the Sanskrit language that bases its religious authority on the Vedas (“knowledge”)—a body of revealed Sanskrit scripture—as well as the authority of those who preserve such scripture—the Brahman priesthood. Nevertheless, the term *Brahmanical Hinduism* is a scholarly construct and is/was not the label of a self-described group of religious practitioners either now or in India’s ancient past. Rather, the term is a convenient scholarly label for a collection of religious ideas, extrapolated by scholars, from a body of Indian religious and socio-normative texts.

Vedas

One can begin by understanding the Vedas, the foundational element of Brahmanical Hinduism, as consisting of four main traditions, the Rig, Sama, Yajur, and Atharva Vedas, which are then

each divided into four genres—the Samhitas, Brahmanas, Aranyakas, and Upanishads. The Samhitas constitute the first and essentially earliest layer of Vedic literature; indeed, the Rigveda Samhita is the oldest piece of literature in the entire Indo-European tradition, its earliest compositions dating from around 1200 BCE.

Though there are major religious shifts that take place within the expansive Vedic corpus, the entire religion of the Veda revolves, in one way or another, around the fire sacrifice. Early on in the tradition, such a sacrifice entailed various gods being invited to partake of gifts offered into the fire and listen to hymns of praise in exchange for granting certain desires of the sacrificer (usually this-worldly: health, wealth, progeny, etc.).

Later Vedic literature includes the Brahmanas, Aranyakas, and Upanishads, which proceed roughly chronologically from the Samhitas but still overlap over a period from about 800 to 200 BCE. The Brahmanas elaborate on such rituals, including their performance and meaning, until performance of the sacrifice is accorded a cosmic, regulative function. However, in the Upanishads, a shift takes place whereby experiential knowledge (dhyana) of the subtle meaning of the sacrifice, leading to eternal liberation from the worldly life (samsara), becomes more important than the external ritual action (karma) of its actual physical performance as described in the Samhitas and Brahmanas.

The religious authority of Vedic scripture rests on the fact that it is believed to be the auditory dimension of the fundamental nature of reality. Ancient “seers” (*rishis*) are believed to have directly “heard” (*sruti*) or cognized these scriptures and passed them on through meticulous oral transmission down to the present day. These texts are therefore authorless and eternal “records” of ultimate reality, the keys to the deepest secrets of the universe.

Shruti and Smriti

The above representation of the Veda, consisting of four major textual genres (Samhitas, Brahmanas, Aranyakas, and Upanishads) is, however, just one of several ways in which the term *Veda* can be understood. For instance, one often hears of the four Vedas as referring only to the four Samhitas of the Rig, Sama, Yajur, and Atharva Vedas. Even

later material, such as the epic *Mahabharata*, is sometimes referred to as the “fifth Veda” despite the fact that tradition refers to a specific author producing it. This elasticity of the category “Veda” is one of the key features of Brahmanical Hinduism. “Veda” can act as an open category, whereby other textual or oral traditions are able to weave themselves into its preeminent authority.

This elastic character of the Veda can best be understood through the categories of *shruti* and *smriti*. *Shruti* is literally “that which is heard” by the ancient *rishis* as part of their direct cognition of the fundamental nature of the universe and compiled in the literature of the Veda as described above—consisting of the four traditions and the related genres. The term *smriti*, literally meaning “that which is remembered,” connotes a different understanding of scripture, one that is not necessarily a direct auditory reflection of reality but that involves the “remembered” wisdom of sages. Nevertheless, such remembered wisdom can legitimately be interpreted as stemming from a Vedic source, presumably lost to memory. *Smriti* literature is therefore often seen as an attempt to “recover” or “remember” lost or obscured *shruti* material.

This type of thinking is also at least partially linked to Indian cosmological notions of a gradual decline over a series of four ages or *yugas*. During the first cosmic era, a “golden age,” Vedic revelation is pure, faithfully followed, and therefore transmitted in its entirety. As the eras progress, however, such knowledge of the Vedas becomes more obscure, and alternative linkages between Vedic knowledge and humanity are necessarily pursued. As a related matter, there is also a need to make the Vedas more understandable to a human race no longer able to comprehend its abstruse teachings. The fact that the *Mahabharata* is often called the “fifth Veda” signals such a move toward rendering Vedic knowledge in more approachable terms through human drama and divine intervention.

The transition from *shruti* to *smriti* is also associated with the expansion of the circumscribed ritual context centered on a closed ritual sphere of order into the larger social sphere of order (dharma). Some of the most important literature of the *smriti* genre, such as the *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* epics and prescriptive socionormative texts called *Dharmashastras*, deal explicitly with

this move to dharma and its concern for understanding and regulating the duties associated with a huge variety of human situations. This broad concern for dharma, regulated by Brahmins, is one of the primary concerns of *smriti* literature and Brahmanical Hinduism more generally.

Brahmanical Synthesis

Such an understanding of scripture, involving two alternative yet still intertwined views on authority, has allowed Brahmanical Hinduism to be incredibly dynamic and creative in how it deals with challenges—both within and outside itself. As mentioned above, the early religious ethos of the Samhitas and Brahmanas clashed with that of the Upanishads. The earlier tradition emphasized a life centered on this-worldly concerns such as wealth, propagating one’s line, and the general cosmic and social good generated through sacrifices. Upanishadic thought, however, embraced a world-denying, ascetic ethos, renouncing socio-religious obligations and ties to retreat to the forest and seek individual salvation. Such a clash was a cause for anxiety within Vedic traditions, and there was a felt need to mitigate this friction. A creative response ensued whereby the ascetic lifestyle and its claims of liberating knowledge in this lifetime was woven into a theoretical social framework that allowed one to pursue liberation through a series of life stages (*ashramas*) while still meeting the social duties (dharma) of one’s social class (*varna*). This system, known as *varnashramadharm*a, emphasized conformity to one’s prescribed social role while at the same time allowing progression through life stages in the pursuit of liberation. It was open to three of the four *varnas* (Vaishya, the economic class; Kshatriya, the ruling class; and Brahman, the priestly class; the lowest *varna*, the Shudras, was excluded) and included four stages, that of (1) the student (*brahmacharin*), who studies the Vedas; (2) the married householder (*grihastha*), who practices Vedic sacrifices; (3) the forest hermit or retired householder (*vanaprastha*), who retreats to the forest but still remains connected to Vedic practices; and (4) the renouncer (*sanyasin*), who gives up all social ties and responsibilities to pursue liberation. This system therefore allowed one to pursue the ascetic lifestyle while still remaining deeply connected to sociocultural and religious

norms, regulated by Brahmans, for the vast majority of one's life.

The *varnashramadharma* system is, however, merely one of many such instances of accommodation and change. Brahmanical Hinduism has demonstrated a profoundly dynamic character in how it deals with competing religious systems throughout its history. Its ability to weave together diverse ideas and carry them up into itself through the Pan-Indian language of Sanskrit has allowed ideas that originate, for example, in the deep south of India to profoundly affect the socio-religious destiny of millions in the far north. Such was the case with the devotionalism (bhakti) embodied in the *Bhagavat Purana*, a piece of post-Vedic (*smriti*) literature detailing the exploits of the young child-god Krishna. In this case, a regional feature of the Tamil-speaking areas of South India was picked up by Brahmanical Hinduism, reworked, and rendered into Sanskrit, and thus entering the elite, lettered tradition, it was able to traverse nearly the entire subcontinent as a profoundly important source of religious meaning for people all across India. Similar examples abound throughout Indian history. Indeed, this ability to pick up and transport religious ideas across a great distance and through language barriers is perhaps what gives Brahmanical Hinduism its global character.

David Fowler

See also Aryans; Bhakti; Dharma, Karma, and Samsara; Hinduism; India; Jainism; Karma; Ramanuja; Reform Hinduism; Sanskrit; Shankara; South Asia; Southeast Asia; Veda

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BRANCH DAVIDIANS

The Branch Davidians, a religious sect in the United States based on Christianity, were led by a charismatic prophet known by his assumed name, David Koresh. In the wake of the 1978 mass murder-suicide in Jonestown, the general public of the United States and beyond remained skeptical of the structure and tactics of new religious movements. Such skepticism was given warrant just over a decade later, in 1993, when most of the Branch Davidian sect of Waco, Texas, were killed in a raging inferno after a standoff with U.S. law enforcement agencies. The 1990s were, in fact, marked by a number of violent confrontations and dramatic dénouements, including the 1995 Aum Shinrikyô sarin-gas attack on the Tokyo subway, the 1997 Heaven's Gate mass suicide, and the Order of the Solar Temple multiple murder-suicides of 1994, 1995, and 1997. As incidents such as these became more pronounced within a global context, the deadly confrontation in Waco reaffirmed the growing presence of religious violence around the world.

The Branch Davidians began as a splinter sect of the Davidian Seventh-Day Adventists in 1955. The term *Branch* refers to the "new name" of Jesus Christ and *Davidian* refers to the Davidic kingdom. The founder of this sect, Benjamin L. Roden, settled just outside Waco, Texas. In 1984, 7 years after Roden's death, a young Vernon Wayne Howell split the movement once again, forming the Davidian Branch Davidian Seventh-Day Adventists, commonly known simply as the Branch Davidians.

After a brief period of excommunication, Howell returned to the Waco site in 1990 and changed his name to David Koresh—a name that was believed to evoke references to the kings David and Cyrus of the Bible. In addition to his focus on the Book of Revelation, Koresh began to preach about the "Seven Seals" and his role as the "Lamb" that would open them. Garnering a considerable following, Koresh began to barricade his group within a compound known as Mt. Carmel to await the Apocalypse, which would begin with what Koresh believed to be a confrontation with the U.S. government.

In what would seem to be a fulfilled prophecy by Koresh, the Branch Davidians underwent a violent

encounter in 1993 with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (BATF) and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). On February 28, 1993, BATF raided the Mt. Carmel compound, which led to a 5-week standoff between the Branch Davidians and the combined forces of the BATF and the FBI. The standoff ended in a blazing inferno on April 19, 1993, which was allegedly initiated by federal agents firing a tear gas projectile into the compound—a controversial theory that is disputed by the U.S. government. In the end, a total of 82 members of the Branch Davidians and four BATF agents were killed in the fighting.

Salvador Jiménez Murguía

See also Apocalypticism; New Religions; New Religions in the United States; Religion and State; United States of America

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BRAZIL

Brazil, the largest country in South America and the only one in which Portuguese is the main language, is host to a variety of religions. To understand this religious diversity, it is necessary to take into account the meeting of many different cultures since colonial times. First there was the encounter of Catholicism, the dominant religion brought by the Portuguese, with the religions of the Amerindians. Then came the African element, and contacts with the African religions later produced the Afro-Brazilian religions. Some Jews and Protestants were also part of this initial scenario. Since the end of the 19th century, Kardecist Spiritism is part of this broad spectrum of religions. More recently,

Protestantism had a considerable impact. The numbers of people who declare not to have any religion is also impressive, but the presence of followers of Eastern religions and religions linked to local Amerindian traditions shows that all options are available to Brazilians. Social tolerance toward syncretism is a notable aspect of religion in Brazil, and multiple affiliations of a person to more than one religion is thus not uncommon.

Catholicism

Missionaries from religious orders such as Franciscans and Jesuits came with the Portuguese colonizers in the 16th century and made Catholicism an integral part of the colonizing process. From that time on, this religion has established itself as no other on Brazilian soil. Until the 19th century, Catholicism faced no major challenges. The arrival of Protestantism in the 19th century and the impetus of secularization, among other forces, resulted in a gradual pattern of decrease in the number of Catholics since 1872, when the first data were recorded. In the 1990s, the decrease accelerated, and the number of Catholics reduced from 83.3% to 73%, and then increased to 89% in 2000, for reasons having to do with the economic crisis and the appeal of neo-Pentecostalism. Following the redemocratization of Brazil, there was a decrease in liberation theology practices in the 1990s. Since then, Charismatic Renewal efforts and the “singing priests” have been attracting media exposure and exercising more force within the Catholic field. Data from 2003 show a pattern of stabilization for the first time since 1872.

Protestantism

The arrival of the King of Portugal and his court in 1808, fleeing the troops of Napoleon and following commercial treaties with England, which also opened the door to Anglicanism and other denominations after 1811, heralded the presence of Protestantism in Brazil. European immigrants brought Lutheranism in 1824, and those from North America brought the Baptist and Methodist churches. Later in the century came the Adventists, the Presbyterians, and the Congregational Church. In 1910, Pentecostalism arrived in Brazil with the

Christian Congregation of Brazil and the Assemblies of God. From 1950 onward, there is a consistent growth in the numbers of followers of Pentecostal churches, mainly due to the churches of the Foursquare Gospel, Brazil for Christ, and God Is Love. The 1970s saw the booming of Neo-Pentecostalism, mostly imported from the United States. This movement can more properly be called Post-Pentecostalism, since it misses the emphasis on traditional elements from Pentecostalism such as the central focus on Christ and on the Bible. These elements are bypassed in favor of an emphasis on prosperity theology. Post-Pentecostal churches operate with internal structures of organization similar to those of a business, with ministers being assigned targets for money collection. They also abandon the Pentecostal adherence to external signs of sanctity and simplicity, incorporating images more linked to the consumerist practices of postindustrial societies at the end of the 20th century. As a strategy for gaining followers, they tend to demonize Afro-Brazilian religions and Spiritism. The most important are the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God, Reborn in Christ, the International Church of God's Grace, and The Heal Our Land Community. Jehovah's Witnesses and Latter-Day Saints also entered as Protestants in the 2000 census. As an umbrella term, Protestantism ranks second in numbers of followers in Brazil.

Spiritism

Brazil has huge numbers of people drawn to Spiritism, which has beliefs in reincarnation and mediums—approximately 3 million followers out of a total of 10 million in the world. Spiritism started in France with Allan Kardec in the 19th century, and it found in Brazil a fertile soil for its roots to feed on nutrients from the Catholic Church and from Afro-Brazilian religions. In 1853, there was already in Rio de Janeiro a group of Spiritists. The adhesion of Dr. Adolfo Bezerra de Menezes Cavalcante in 1888 gave a new impetus to the movement, which flourished and divided into various groups, which were reunited at a conference in Rio (in 1949). Spiritism in Brazil developed the characteristics of a religion, in contrast to the characteristics of a philosophical

system as found in European Spiritism. This is evident in the life and works of Chico Xavier, who died in 2002 after having written extensively about the ideology of the movement.

Afro-Brazilian Religions

These religions were created by African slaves and their descendants, and depending on the region of the country, Afro-Brazilian religions may appear in various forms such as Umbanda, Candomblé, Macumba, Tambor de Mina, Tambor de Nagô, Pajelança, Terêco, or Batuque. They all have different characteristics, and transit between them is not to be taken for granted. Because the Portuguese colonizers prohibited the slaves from practicing their own religions, it was necessary for slaves to resort to syncretism as a strategy for the survival of their beliefs. The result in many cases was a blending of Catholicism and African religions. Umbanda, born in the 1920s, was later persecuted during President Vargas's time. Umbandists then tried to de-Africanize the religion and to present themselves as linked to Kardecist Spiritism. Candomblé, brought from Africa and re-created in Bahia, spread during the 1960s, and its practitioners, many from the White middle classes, tend to re-Africanize it. Even today, many Afro-Brazilians who practice these religions do not come out openly and say so.

Judaism

Some of the early settlers who came from Portugal in the 1500s were Jews converted to Christianity. In 1624, the Dutch forces established dominion over part of northeastern Brazil for three decades, and in 1636, a synagogue was opened in Recife, to be closed by the Portuguese in 1655. In 1773, discrimination against Jews was brought to an end by the King of Portugal, and they started to return. After independence from Portugal in 1822, a few communities of Sephardic Jews from Africa were established in the north of Brazil. At the end of the 19th century, Jews from Europe started to come, mainly to the São Paulo area. According to 2000 data, they constituted 0.06% of the population. Anti-Semitism may be found only in isolated incidents in Brazil.

Islam

Islam found its way to Brazil at the end of the 18th century, with slaves from Africa called Malês. Their revolt in 1835 is said to have helped the cause for the abolishing of the slave trade (in 1851). Later, Syrian Lebanese immigrants founded the first communities at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries. They resorted to the creation of Benefit Societies to aggregate the Muslim immigrants. Leaving aside its ethnic identity, Islam is now another option for the Brazilian who is looking for a religion, as the presence of Brazilian converts to Islam can attest. According to 2000 data, they constitute 0.016% of the population.

Other Religious Groups

Buddhists account for 0.15% of the population; Seicho-No-Iê, Perfect Liberty, Sinto, Baha'i Faith, and Messiânica for 0.11%; esoterics for 0.04%; Hindus for 0.001%; and União Vegetal, Santo Daime, and Barquinha for 0.01% (2000 data). There was a decrease in the number of those who declared having no religious affiliation (7.4% in 2000 and 5.1% in 2003).

Religious Groups in Electronic Media and Legislative Bodies

Mainly among Catholics and Post-Pentecostal churches, there is intense competition for capturing TV and radio audiences. A TV network acquired in 1989 by the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God already ranks second in numbers of viewers. Exposure to electronic media is important in elections, and an impressive number of Protestant and Post-Pentecostal candidates have been elected, although their internal factionalism does not allow them to operate as a united front.

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See also Candomblé; Hybridization; Islam; Judaism; Latin America; Pentecostal Movements; Pluralism; Protestant Christianity; Roman Catholicism

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BRICOLAGE

As religious beliefs and practices intermingle within a global context, a variety of unanticipated phenomena emerge—phenomena not necessarily representative of their original form or intended use. The term *bricolage* is used within a variety of social sciences as a descriptive term to characterize the process of improvisation in production. Derived from the French verb *bricoler*, *bricolage* refers to the process of creating something by one's own means through the use of available materials.

The French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss used the term *bricolage* to describe improvised patterns of mythological thinking. In his seminal study based on ideas of structuralism titled *The Savage Mind*, Lévi-Strauss found imagination, and by extension experience, to be a source of mythological thought—attributing the production of this thinking to bricolage.

Examples of bricolage were observed among the Cargo Cults of the Oceania regions during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. These Cargo Cults were made up of local natives who were, for the first time, interacting with material culture, or cargo, from the Western world. During World War II, the Japanese military transported cargo through this region, which made for some of the first encounters with modern technologies. Members of these cults were thought to have believed that the cargo was created by their deities or ancestors and needed to be repossessed from these foreigners. In what appeared to be an attempt to reclaim these goods, members of the Cargo Cults reportedly crafted material goods that resembled the foreigners' possessions and to some extent imitated their

behaviors. An instance of this activity was demonstrated by the building of makeshift landing strips for airplanes and headsets carved from local materials to reproduce what the cults had witnessed in the presence of these foreign peoples. The Cargo Cults could be said to have engaged in bricolage by creating a mythology of sorts from the available goods and experiences they encountered.

Particularly germane to theoretical perspectives such as the Sacred Canopy and Spiritual Marketplace, bricolage may also be used metaphorically to describe the type of religious shopping that takes place in the global sphere of available religious beliefs and practices. New religious movements such as the International Raëlian movement—which borrows from a host of ideas found within Judaism, Christianity, and the UFO (unidentified flying object) cults—and the Church of Scientology—which appropriates fragments of proto-scientific gadgets and self-help reasoning—are both examples of global religions that have used bricolage as a form of mythological thinking.

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See also Cargo Cults; Consumer Culture; Lévi-Strauss, Claude; New Age Movements; New Religions

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BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

Brunei Darussalam is a Southeast Asian nation whose name means “Brunei, Abode of Peace.” It is located on the north coast of the island of Borneo in the South China Sea and comprises two noncontiguous regions separated from one another by a portion of Malaysia’s Sarawak state. Brunei encompasses a total land area of only about 5,300 square kilometers (slightly smaller than the state of Delaware). The capital is Bandar Seri Begawan.

Brunei is a constitutional Islamic monarchy (commonly referred to as a sultanate). It is a Muslim-majority nation and one of the few Islamic sultanates in the world that has survived into the 21st century. Brunei has a population of 382,000, and its GDP (gross domestic product) per capita is one of the highest in Asia. Petroleum and natural gas exports account for more than half of its GDP.

During the seventh and eighth centuries CE, the mouth of the Brunei River was controlled by a kingdom that Chinese records called Po-ni. Archaeological evidence suggests that it had been influenced by Javanese Hinduism and engaged extensively in trade. It was briefly incorporated into the Majapahit Empire and was a part of the territory called Nusantara.

The present ruling Muslim dynasty was founded in the 15th century. Like the nearby Muslim kingdom of Malacca, Brunei’s power and growth were largely dependent on trade. During that time, the Sultanate of Brunei encompassed all of Borneo and parts of the Philippines. Brunei attained a high degree of prosperity and stability during the 15th through 17th centuries, most notably during the reign of Bolkiah, the fifth sultan, and Hassan, the ninth sultan. During this period, there was a great deal of interaction and conflict with European colonial powers: Portugal eventually conquered Malacca, and repeated naval conflict with Spain weakened Brunei’s control over its territories in the Philippines.

In 1841, an English trader named James Brooke and his ship’s crew assisted the Sultan of Brunei in quelling a rebellion. In appreciation, the Sultan subsequently appointed Brooke as the Rajah of Sarawak. Brooke’s government grew, consolidating power over the region. Brooke even considered seizing control of Brunei but was dissuaded from doing so by Britain’s official disapproval. Brooke and his successors were collectively known as the White Rajahs, and by expanding the Sarawak territory under their administration, they effectively reduced Brunei to its current geopolitical borders.

In 1888, Brunei became a British protectorate, and British involvement in Brunei persisted until World War II, when Japan invaded and occupied Brunei. In 1959, Brunei adopted a constitution defining itself as an independent state under the protection of the British, and it became fully independent in 1984 under the rule of the 29th, and current, sultan, Haasanal Bolkiah.

Ethnically, the majority of Bruneians are Malay (67%) and Chinese (11.2%). Brunei's official religion is Sunnī Islam (67%); other sizable religious groups include Buddhists (13%) and Christians (10%). All other faiths (including followers of indigenous beliefs) are represented by fewer than 10% of Bruneians.

Brendan Newlon

See also Indonesia; Islamic State; Malaysia; Philippines; Postcolonialism; Southeast Asia; Sunnī Islam

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BUDDHISM

See Mahayana Buddhism; Theravada Buddhism; Vajrayana, Tibetan

BUDDHIST COMPASSION RELIEF TZU CHI FOUNDATION

The Tzu Chi (Ciji) Foundation is a large and multifaceted Buddhist organization based in Taiwan, best known for its charitable activities and altruistic ethos. Tzu Chi represents the fastest growing humanistic or this-worldly lay Buddhist movement in the Chinese cultural sphere in the 21st century, and it is one of the world's largest non-profit relief and charity organizations. Worldwide, this lay Buddhist organization claims more than 5 million followers, with branches in 39 countries; it has implemented rescue and relief work in more than 61 countries, including Afghanistan, Iran, El Salvador, and South Africa.

Its extraordinary growth is among the notable features of the Taiwanese Buddhist revival of the late 20th century. It is also intertwined with the social and political changes that marked Taiwan's transition to democracy and the growth of an

urbanized middle class. Although it is still headquartered in Taiwan—where it is one of the largest, richest, and most powerful religious groups—over the years, Tzu Chi has grown into a complex organization with vast resources and an impressive global footprint. In terms of its membership, it is primarily a lay organization; however, at the top, it has a monastic leadership, personified by Cheng Yen (Zhengyan, b. 1937), a charismatic nun who founded the organization and still remains its undisputed leader.

The organization was founded in 1966 by Venerable Master Cheng Yen and 30 female followers. She was born into a prosperous Taiwanese family and became interested in Buddhism as a young woman. Although lacking formal education, she officially joined a nun's order under the auspices of Yinshun (1905–2005), arguably the most respected scholar-monk in Taiwan. When Cheng Yen founded Tzu Chi in 1966, its original mission was to help the poor and educate the rich. The next year, she established a convent, the Abode of Still Thoughts, which to this day remains the spiritual nucleus of Tzu Chi. She instituted a self-sustaining lifestyle for her monastic disciples, although the majority of her followers were (and still are) pious laywomen. Although she was not known for her sophisticated understanding of Buddhist doctrines, Cheng Yen has emerged as a prominent advocate of humanistic Buddhism, whose this-worldly vision and teachings are important elements of modern Chinese Buddhism.

From early on, Tzu Chi's charitable activities involved the wide-ranging involvement of the laity, who made generous donations and volunteered their time and expertise. Over the past four decades, Tzu Chi has experienced extensive growth in its membership and notable expansion of its activities, first throughout Taiwan and then increasingly around the world. Currently, its 5 million members come from 45 countries. Tzu Chi's success in mobilizing legions of volunteers and allocating large resources, dedicated to an array of welfare projects and charitable undertakings, is largely based on its effective organizational structure, which is set up hierarchically. The organization oversees many local branches, located across Taiwan and other parts of Asia as well as in the Americas, Europe, Africa, and Australia.

Tzu Chi's public outreach and charitable work—ostensibly undertaken in the spirit of universal compassion—involve helping the poverty-stricken, delivering disaster relief, and providing free medical care. Its leaders and volunteers are also involved in educational activities and environmental protection. Tzu Chi opened its first free clinic in 1972. That was followed by the establishment of a hospital (in 1986), the creation of a bone marrow donor registry (in 1994), and the opening of nursing and medical schools (in 1989 and 1994, respectively). Tzu Chi also runs schools, a university, a television station, and publishing ventures that produce a variety of magazines and books. Its volunteers also organize youth camps and public lectures.

Tzu Chi's mission is focused on charity, medicine, education, and culture. As such, Tzu Chi is intimately involved in providing social, educational, charitable, and medical relief to the underprivileged and underserved throughout and beyond Taiwan, reaching the United States and other parts of Asia, including mainland China. Tzu Chi has been especially proficient at providing disaster relief after typhoons, floods, and earthquakes. The provision of international relief started in 1991, when the American branch of Tzu Chi in Los Angeles helped victims of a cyclone in Bangladesh. After the severe earthquake in Taiwan on September 21, 1999, Tzu Chi relief workers did most of the early rescue work as government officials dallied over who had jurisdiction. In addition, Tzu Chi has continuously provided medical and charitable relief to areas in Southeast Asia following the December 26, 2004, tsunami and earthquake. Tzu Chi USA became a national player in relief work following the terrorist attack of 9/11 in New York City and in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, which shattered the Gulf Coast. In the United States alone, there are a total of 49 Tzu Chi branches, including three free clinics.

In 1994, Tzu Chi created the first bone marrow registry in Asia. The organization encouraged volunteers and members to organize blood drives in their neighborhoods throughout Taiwan. Within 2 years, Tzu Chi's bone marrow bank became one of the major registries in East Asia. Today, the Tzu Chi Bone Marrow Bank is connected to those of other countries, making it more efficient and, thus, crossing national as well as potential ethnic and racial boundaries.

Tzu Chi's transnational structure grows larger and more intricate day by day, and its global mission of environmentalism, health care, education, cultural pluralism, and disaster relief extends worldwide. Tzu Chi's organizational structure is transnational in scale, but its mission is *global* in ambition. Tzu Chi has transplanted its "just-do-it" socially engaged Chinese-Buddhist relief work onto the global religious landscape. *Compassion* coupled with *upaya* ("expedient means"), two central teachings of Mahayana Buddhism, guide its relief efforts to serve clients without regard to age, sex, race, ethnicity, class, or religious affiliation. Although a religious institution, its primary goal is not evangelical; rather, it encourages followers to emulate or to become living bodhisattvas who actualize compassion to assist others in need. As such, Tzu Chi is an important player in the development of global civil society.

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See also Engaged Buddhist Groups; Mahayana Buddhism; Taiwan; Theravada Buddhism

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BUDDHIST LAW

Buddhist law is a multifaceted term that may be used in reference to a number of areas, including (a) the Buddha's doctrine (*Dharma*), (b) monastic codes of behavior and discipline (*vinaya*), and (c) legalistic characteristics in societies that have been influenced by Buddhist concepts of jurisprudence. Therefore, when discussing Buddhist law, a distinction can be made between purely legalistic forms and nonlegalistic forms. Although convenient, the dichotomy between legalistic and nonlegalistic understandings of law in Buddhism is highly artificial. Such a distinction presupposes an

understanding of law and a legal culture predominantly of Western orientation, where legalistic matters are rigidly defined and are distinct from nonlegalistic matters.

The Sanskrit term *dharma*, for example, is often translated as “law.” However, such a connotation does not necessarily refer to a type of legal system. In Buddhism, *Dharma* may refer to the natural universal and moral law that must be followed and deeply understood if an individual is to attain enlightenment. Thus, in this context, law has a cosmic soteriological connotation instead of a legal connotation.

Other foundational Buddhist doctrines—such as the principle of action and causal effect (*karma*), compassion (*karuṇā*), and interdependent origination (*pratītyasamutpāda*)—are also constitutive of Buddhist legal reasoning and tightly intertwined with legal systems and institutions. In the 13th century, Pagan (present-day Bagan) King Klacwa’s edict on theft promulgated in 1249 illustrated a clear correlation between legal punishment and karmic retribution. Additionally, the 14th Dalai Lama, speaking at the University at Buffalo Law School in 2006, remarked that law exists for the protection of the people and the reason for such protection arises from compassion. Thus, the Dalai Lama suggests that the foundations and workings of legal law should be intertwined and guided by Buddhist understandings of compassion.

The *vinaya* illustrates another type of Buddhist law. More specifically, the *vinaya* characterizes a type of Buddhist ecclesiastical law since the prescriptions contained in the *vinaya* aid in maintaining the order of the Buddhist monastic institution. The *vinaya* contains regulations governing a staggering array of aspects relating to monastic life, including regulations on acceptable eating times; what kind of robes can be worn; what kind of bowls, seats, beddings, and lodgings are acceptable; how to study properly; and how to properly interact with monks, nuns, and the laity. Not only does the *vinaya* contain regulatory guidelines, but it also details the consequences of transgressions. The most fundamental are the four cases for expulsion from the monastic order (nuns have an additional four): sexual intercourse, theft, killing another human being, and making fraudulent claims regarding one’s superhuman attainments.

However, the guidelines in the *vinaya* are not always restricted within the parameters of the monastic community since their influence often spills over into secular settings. In the early development of Sri Lanka’s judicial administration, monks were often recruited to work in the royal courts because of the experience they possessed in their own ecclesiastical system of governance. Even today, Sri Lankan monks are sought after as advisors to politicians and military officials.

The compilation of the *vinaya*, according to tradition, came about shortly after the death of the Buddha (ca. fifth century BCE), when 500 enlightened monks gathered to take part in a communal recitation of the Buddha’s *Dharma* in the city of Rājagrha. The *Dharma* was divided into two sections: (1) the discourses of the Buddha (*sūtras*) and (2) the *vinaya* (some Buddhist traditions cite three sections). The former was recited by the monk Ānanda, and the latter was recited by the monk Upāli. Many Buddhist narratives attest to the high regard placed on *vinaya* during this first gathering. In the *Saṅgītyavaṃsa*, a Pāli text written in Thailand in 1789 by Vimaladhamma, the assembled monks are asked which should be recited first, the *sūtras* or the *vinaya*. The monks quickly reply that the *vinaya* should be recited first since it is the life of the Buddha’s teachings (*sāsana*) and the *sāsana* exist only when the *vinaya* exists.

Several versions of the *vinaya* exist, and no single version of the *vinaya* maintains authority across all the various Buddhist traditions. Thus, Tibetan Buddhism adheres to the *Mūlasarvāstivādin-vinaya*, Theravada Buddhism adheres to the *Theravādin-vinaya*, and the majority of Buddhists in China, Korea, Japan, and Vietnam adhere to the *Dharmaguptaka-vinaya*. From the very earliest stages of Buddhism, disagreement has arisen within monastic circles over the *vinaya* regarding concerns such as the period of composition, length, and lawfulness of certain behaviors and actions. Although still a matter of debate, some scholars maintain that such disputes concerning the *vinaya*, in contrast to disagreements over doctrinal points, provided the primary stimulus for the early fragmentation of the monastic community.

The Buddhist community, the Buddhist *Dharma*, and originally the Buddha himself, have all influenced the political elite and other influential members of high society in various ways during various

historical periods. As a result, the ways in which a region's law were created, altered, and enforced have at times been directly or indirectly affected by Buddhism's presence. The Mauryan emperor Asoka (r. ca. 268–232 BCE) became a Buddhist lay devotee (*upāsaka*) after the conquest of Kāliṅga (ca. 260 BCE). He also became an active patron of Buddhism and other religious groups of the time. Among other activities, his inscriptions reveal how he renovated the reliquary shrine (stupa) of the Buddha Konākamuni and promoted and enforced a dharma throughout his realm that, while not exclusively Buddhist, was not contradictory to Buddhist teachings. Asoka also took an active interest in maintaining unity and resolving conflict within the Buddhist monastic community, as seen in his edict of Kauśāmbī promulgated toward the end of his reign. Based on his own inscriptions, however, it would be a mistake to claim that Asoka created a “Buddhist state” (a foreign concept during his milieu) or that Buddhism was the “state religion” of his empire (he supported many other religious groups). Nevertheless, Asoka was influenced by Buddhist thought, and his proclamations—many related to the spreading and maintenance of the law (dharma)—helped establish a cultural environment that allowed Buddhism to rapidly expand.

Buddhist traditions—such as the Theravada traditions of Sri Lanka and many parts of Southeast Asia—later exalted Asoka as the ideal Buddhist, wheel-turning emperor (*cakravartin*). This, in turn, led other rulers in other regions and times to emulate his example and establish Buddhist societies—countries in which Buddhism was, or is, both religiously and sociopolitically dominant. Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Myanmar are current examples of Buddhist societies. Such countries have all been influenced by concepts of Buddhist jurisprudence throughout their histories. The collection of Buddhist legal literature that emerged around the 13th century CE in Southeast Asia, known as the *dharmathats*, illustrates well Buddhism's influence in the sphere of law.

While Buddhism has played an important role in influencing and shaping the legal systems of many countries, other important factors have also contributed to the development of the legal cultures that came into contact with Buddhism. First, most countries to which Buddhism spread had preexisting indigenous systems for adjudicating disputes

and maintaining order. Often through a process of appropriation, indigenous legal culture was repackaged in a way that better conformed to a Buddhist worldview, but this process could not always cover every cultural nuance. There is nothing inherently Buddhist in Burmese laws of inheritance.

Second, other systems of legal thought that preceded Buddhism's entry into an area, whether indigenous to a region or imported, remained highly influential and rooted regardless of the level of success that Buddhism enjoyed in the area. Brahmanical legal culture imported to regions of Southeast Asia from the Indian subcontinent continued to be highly influential despite Buddhism's eventual success in the area. Confucian and Daoist thought originating in China, and later deeply influencing Korea and Japan, were also never completely superseded even during Buddhism's most triumphal periods in Central and East Asia. These antecedents do not lessen or deprecate Buddhism's impact in the sphere of law. Instead, they merely indicate that the foundation for some Buddhist law was obtained via appropriation and reconfiguration of systems not strictly Buddhist in origin and, above all, highlight the multifaceted and multilayered nature of Buddhist law.

Phillip Scott Ellis Green

See also Asoka; Dharma, Karma, and Samsara; Gautama, Siddhartha; Mahayana Buddhism

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BULGARIA

Bulgaria is an eastern European country that was dominated by the philosophy of secular Marxism during the Cold War but has enjoyed a religious revival in the post-Cold War period. The largest denomination in Bulgaria is the Bulgarian Orthodox Church (BOC), regarded as the “traditional” church of the Bulgarian nation. Under communism, the BOC was marginalized in society; at the same time, the authorities used it as a tool for foreign policy ends. It was thus heavily politicized as an institution, while its inner life and social witness were both disabled.

Since the end of communism, the BOC has been able to restore religious education, but it is still weak in resources and hampered by the legacy of a compromised leadership. From 1992, mainly as a result of political interference, it has suffered from a debilitating schism. A new law on religion in 2002 granted the BOC official status and automatic legal personality; all other denominations have to go through a process of registration. There is always a tendency for “Orthodox” identity to be claimed in the name of nationalism. Meanwhile, like “traditional” religions in all postcommunist countries, the BOC has been faced with the novel challenge of political, cultural, and religious pluralism.

Around 83% of Bulgarians self-identify as Orthodox. Around 12% are Muslims, who are divided among ethnic Turks, Roma, and ethnic Bulgarians (Pomaks), the latter probably constituting about 3% of the population. Communist policies toward the Muslim minorities saw considerable variation. Muslims seem to have maintained a higher level of religious activity than the nominally Orthodox. Since the end of communism, Muslims have boosted their profile in the society, with religious and cultural revitalization and political mobilization. A big issue now is the perceived threat of “fundamentalist” ideas penetrating the traditional Muslim communities from abroad.

Other Christians probably constitute about 1% of the population (half of them Catholics and half, various types of Protestants). They were all repressed under communism. As in other postcommunist countries, from the early 1990s, there was an influx of Protestant missionaries as well as representatives

of new religious movements. This caused alarm in the BOC, which feared for its canonical territory and its own legitimate flock, and indeed more widely in society, as fears spread about “destructive cults” and “dangerous sects” as a threat to national identity and family life. This influx had ebbed away by the late 1990s, however.

Bulgarian society is one of the most secular in Europe, and the religious market there seems to have stabilized. People tend to know little about their own religious traditions, let alone about those of others. Historically, relations among the so-called traditional religions have been marked by passive tolerance and coexistence, and this continues, but there is the risk of the reinforcement of the fortress mentality inherited from communist times.

Philip Walters

See also Eastern Orthodox Christianity; Marxism; Russian Federation

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BURKA

The burka (also transliterated as *burqa* or *burkha*) is a particular form of Islamic clothing worn by some Muslim women, usually consisting of a long piece of fabric attached to a cap or draped over the head and loosely cascading down to cover the entire body, allowing only for slits or a screened portion of the fabric for the eyes. This form of dress may also be made up of multiple fabrics, such as one covering the head (hijab), a veil for the face, and a loose coat covering the rest of the body. The burka is usually worn outdoors over regular clothing and is meant to completely conceal the

body in public. It is usually made of blue or black material. The word is a derivative of the Arabic verb meaning “to sew” or “patch.”

The burka is the most widespread form of modest dress worn by Muslim women and can be found in regions of Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India, although it is not limited to these countries. There are a variety of reasons why Muslim women choose to wear the burka. Modest dress, or hijab, is an important aspect of Islam and is proscribed within the Qur’an for both men and women, although it is unclear what modest clothing should entail. Women who choose to wear the burka believe that it is a marker of piety and modesty. Some argue that the burka has allowed women a greater degree of mobility within overtly patriarchal societies, allowing them to enter into the public sphere for work, education, and social engagement without the fear of punishment or social stigma. Some argue that the burka removes the stress women often face regarding their appearance and keeps unwanted sexual advances at bay. Some enjoy the privacy and anonymity the burka provides. These are only some of the reasons given for Muslim women’s preference to wear this type of modest clothing.

The burka is also one of the most controversial and least prevalent forms of modest dress among the varieties of Islamic veiling. It is often associated with the Taliban, who mandated this form of dress in public when they took control of Afghanistan in 1996, and thus, it has received much criticism from those opposed to the Taliban regime and the group’s treatment of women. The use of the burka has been restricted or banned in some countries based on its controversial status as a symbol of oppressive patriarchal rule, for fear of security breaches, and in light of Western feminist positions.

Kendra Sarna

See also Afghanistan; Clothing; Hijab; Islam; Taliban

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BURKINA FASO

Islam, Christianity, and traditional ancestral religion make up the religious landscape of Burkina Faso, a small country on the Atlantic coast of North Africa. Muslims represent some 50% of the population, with the majority belonging to the Sunnī branch. Many Sunnī Muslims adhere to the Tijaniyah Sufi or Salafi traditions. A smaller number of Muslims identify with the Shi’a branch. Christians constitute about 20% of the population, with 15% Catholics and 5% Protestants. About 30% Burkinabe openly practice the traditional ancestral religion.

Small neighborhoods in the cities build small mosques as their daily worship places. However, worshippers in such places join larger mosques on Friday for the Big Prayer. Many people combine traditionalist funerary rites and Catholic ones, though often secretly. Because traditionalist practices are mostly perceived as “outmoded,” educated and urbanite members of families leave that practice to senior villagers, who perform it independently in lineage shrine sanctuaries simultaneously with the performance of mass service at Church.

Interfaith relations in Burkina Faso are remarkably peaceful. In addition to interfaith marriage in which each spouse maintains his or her faith, major religious holidays are opportunities for Burkinabe to evidence closeness with friends of parallel religious practices through visits and meal sharing. It is also now common for most households in the cities to cook a special dish on religious holidays of the other faiths. National media also gloss over the Archbishop of Ouagadougou, the country’s capital city, frequently participating in the Muslim’s public prayer on the day of the Aïd el-Kebir, one of the most important Muslim holidays.

Though state and religion are clearly separate in today’s Burkina Faso, the Catholic Church still

enjoys a privileged representation and influence in the nation's politics. Muslims, however, control substantial sectors of the economy, such as transportation and commerce. Meanwhile, the government straddles to give all religious confessions equitable visibility and has improved its relationships with the country's major religious confessions in the past two decades. These relations took a negative twist in the 1980s, when the Sankara socialist regime viewed religion as an antiprogresive instrument.

Finally, many people who declare their affiliation to be one of the "imported" religions still integrate traditional religious practices, mostly during occasions of birth, marriage, or death. In fact, though many people secretly resort to their ancestral religion to solve personal and practical concerns, they tend to view these practices in a low light in public spaces. This is certainly one consequence of the denigration of ancestral religion during Christianization of the region, when it was depicted as a "satanic" path that guarantees no salvation. Many urbanites conceal their ancestral religious faith, maybe as a way to distance themselves from what sounds more like a religious practice of the *non évolué*, the rural. In some areas of Burkina Faso, many young people and women now convert to Catholicism or Protestantism for practical purposes. Other than aiming to look "modern" and mainstream, they do so as a stratagem to escape the economic exploitation that elders exercise through traditional religious practice.

Batamaka Somé

See also Africa; Islam; New Religions in Africa; North Africa; Roman Catholicism; Secularization

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BURMA

See Myanmar

BURUNDI

Burundi is a small central African nation located south of Rwanda, west of Tanzania, and east of Lake Tanganyika and the Rift Valley. Politically recognized as a crisis nation-state experiencing civil war, strife, and genocide in recent history, notably due to infighting between the Hutu and Tutsi ethnopolitical factions, Burundi is struggling to find its place as a competitive survivor within the global market.

Today, Burundi is ethnically composed of 85% Hutu, 14% Tutsi, and 1% Twa. Nearly two thirds of Burundians self-identify as Christian; there are 62% Roman Catholic, 5% Protestant, 10% Muslim, and 23% indigenous practitioners. Like many African nations, practices of honoring familial ancestors are common among nearly all religious practitioners, and long-held oral traditions, ceremonies, and festivals worshipping a local divine creator (called Imana in Kurundi, Burundi's national language) are often still acknowledged.

Though Hutus are traditionally agriculturalists and Tutsis are cattle herdsman, cultural differences between the two groups are minimal. Rivalries were exacerbated and preyed on throughout colonial rule, including by ethnic divisions promoted within the Catholic Church. In 1959, conflict flared between the majority Hutus and minority Tutsis in Rwanda and Burundi. Belgian administrative response at the time involved removing Tutsis from political office and appointing in their place the Catholic Church-supported Hutus, as well as forcing all colonial subjects to carry identity cards distinguishing the person's "race" as Hutu, Tutsi, Twa, or other.

Between 1894 and 1898, after the European "Scramble for Africa" meetings, Burundi and Rwanda became protectorates within German East Africa, and the Catholic White Fathers established two permanent mission stations. The region came under Belgian power in 1916 and became independent from Belgium in 1962, with Rwanda

under Hutu rule and Burundi established as a Tutsi monarchy. The Hutu-Tutsi rivalry most likely originated from the Tutsi royal, Rwabugiri, who between 1860 and 1895 instituted *uburetwa*, a feudal system that redistributed lands and required poorer Hutu families to farm Tutsi lands for several days per week.

In 1965, tensions over Hutus not receiving political appointments incited an attempted coup and riots; 1966, 1976, and 1988 saw three more military coups. Thousands of Hutus were killed by Tutsis, along with forced migrations of the surviving refugees to Rwanda, following the military coup of Pierre Buyoya in 1988. The first Hutu president was elected in 1993 and was assassinated barely months later. The loss of life in 1994 was estimated at more than 200,000 persons, following the mysterious plane crash and deaths of Burundi and Rwanda's presidents. The Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), led by former Tutsi refugees, took power following the massacre and ended the most horrific ethnic cleansing in history since World War II. Nevertheless, in 1996, another coup

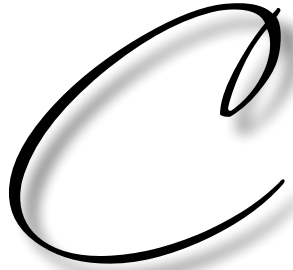
occurred, and a decimating 6-year civil war began. With more than 300,000 killed, Burundi's civil war ended in 2002, when the Hutus reentered government. Presently, the Hutu-majority government, led by second-term President Pierre Nkurunziza, struggles to maintain order and a semblance of peace. In 2010's contested election, only the incumbent was listed on the electoral ballot following severe intimidation of political adversaries, scattered bombings, and purported voter fraud.

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See also Africa; Democratic Republic of the Congo; Rwanda; Uganda

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CAIRO

See Egypt

CAMBODIA

The religious culture of the Southeast Asian nation of Cambodia and the expanding Cambodian diaspora draws from a rich and dynamic Buddhist and Hindu heritage that is multifaceted, resilient, and unique. Living at the crossroads of Southeast Asia for centuries, the Khmer people of Cambodia both received from and contributed to many world cultures and continue to do so both in their homeland and in the many parts of the world where they have settled. The grand temples of Angkor Wat, Bayon, Preah Vihear, Koh Ker, and several others incorporate ideas from Indian traditions and share the architectural idiom of other monuments in Southeast Asia but in the end are uniquely and distinctively Khmer. Khmer dances showcasing stories from the epic *Ramayana* and other compositions include narratives known in India as well as others that are unknown there. Since the 20th century, there has been a distinctly transnational trend, as communities of the Cambodian diaspora, which now flourishes in America and in parts of Europe, regularly invite dancers and religious personnel from the home country and also celebrate festivals to showcase their culture.

Cambodia is about 95% Theravada Buddhist; Muslims and Christians form most of the religious minority population. The early recorded history of Cambodia as found in Chinese sources speaks about the Funan kingdom (third to fifth centuries CE) and the Zhenla kingdom—which may have been a collective of smaller states—in the sixth and seventh centuries CE. Extensive contact with many parts of the world is seen even at this early stage. Early inscriptions dating possibly back to the late fifth or early sixth centuries tell us about rulers with Indian/Hindu names with sectarian Vaishnavite and Shaivite affiliations. While Mahayana Buddhism was prevalent, most kings seem to have been, at least nominally, followers of the Hindu god Shiva. The Angkorean age began around 802 CE with the rule of Jayavarman II and is noted for its accelerated pace in the building of large, prestigious temples. There is general agreement that Hindu traditions declined after the 15th century CE, but the memory of the many deities and the stories of the Hindu epics have lingered, and the performing arts have been rediscovered, adapted, and reinvented through the centuries.

Cambodia and other countries of Southeast Asia had a reciprocal relationship of trade and culture with many parts of the world since the beginning of the first century CE. There were, of course, extensive connections with India, probably both by land and sea routes. The boundaries of these kingdoms in Southeast Asia have fluctuated through the centuries, and at the height of its power, the Khmer empire consisted of vast tracts of Southeast Asia, including parts of present-day

Myanmar, Vietnam, Thailand, Laos, and the Malay peninsula; the grand Shiva temples in Wat Phu (Laos) and Phnom Rung (near Korat, Thailand) are examples of the major temples built at the height of Khmer rule. After Thai invasions in 1431, the capital was moved south, toward Phnom Penh. After centuries of turbulent relationships with the neighboring countries, Cambodia became a French protectorate in 1863, and there has been considerable sharing of cultures between these countries. During the violent Khmer Rouge regime (1975–1979), religious activities were prohibited. In the large diaspora and resettlement that followed, political refugees took their diverse traditions with them to Europe, Canada, and the United States.

Origin stories in Southeast Asia distinctly talk about a coming together of global cultures; inscriptions speak of a prince or a sage coming from India and marrying a local Naga princess. The term *naga* in Indian (Buddhist, Hindu, and Jain) narratives refers to a semidivine group of people associated with serpents. Variations of the story appear in inscriptions in the Mi Son temple complex in Vietnam as well as in Cambodia. *Nagas* are also prominent in Khmer architecture; they form long balustrades along temple walls, and mythical serpents that morph into human beings are found in popular visual and expressive arts and folklore.

Temple architecture and iconography tell us about the spread of Hindu culture in the Khmer empire, at least among elite circles, in the latter part of the first millennium. Temple plans and architectural styles also offer clues about areas in India with which the Cambodian population had contact; specifically, the eastern seaboard in India, including Kanchipuram and Kalinga, is likely to have been in conversation with the Angkor. Angkor Wat (built ca. 1135 by Suryavarman), a temple dedicated to Vishnu, was west facing, such as the many Vishnu temples in the Kanchipuram region and three storied, such as the Vaikuntha Perumal temple in that city. Although some scholars have called the process by which Hindu and Buddhist cultural influence was received in Cambodia as *Indianization*, this term is questioned, and if used, it is with abundant caution. Indian culture was not imposed from outside on a passive land; rather, local rulers in Southeast Asia probably invited Indian Brahmans to serve them and selected what

they wanted of Indian culture. The idiom in the architecture here is distinctive to Southeast Asia, and the local kings seem to have had control over what elements of Indian culture they wanted to adopt, magnify, or discard. The most pervasive areas of influence seem to have been in the dissemination of epic narratives such as the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, architecture, performing arts, and rituals. Words of Sanskrit origin such as *naga* (“serpent”) and *apsara* (“celestial dancer”) are part of everyday life in Cambodia.

Although Mahayana Buddhism was strong in the first millennium CE, Cambodia has been a Theravada Buddhist nation since around the 15th century CE. Many young men even now spend several months as monks (this is not a lifetime commitment); monks, Buddhist temples, and Wats are ubiquitous. Many festivals celebrated in Cambodia have a global dimension and share a common religious or calendrical heritage with South and Southeast Asia. Dates for festivals of Indian origin are based on a lunar calendar that is adjusted periodically to the solar calendar—hence the shared dates. Examples of these are the Cambodian New Year, the birthday of the Buddha, and the festival of ancestors in the fall. The most important festival is the Cambodian New Year (*Chaul Chnam Thmey*), which is celebrated in April at the same time when many calendars in India begin the new year. *Vesak* or *Visaka Bochea* (Sanskrit *vaisakha puja*) is a Pan-Buddhist holy day that commemorates the birth, enlightenment, and death of the Buddha and is celebrated most often on a full moon day in May. In recent years, it has been marked with grand cultural festivals at the Bayon or other monuments and includes Buddhists from many countries. The Ancestor or *Pchum Ben* Day, on the new moon day in late September/early October coincides with the day that ends the “fortnight of ancestors” (*pitṛ paksha* or *mahalya amavasya*) in India, and as is common in ancestral rites in South Asia, the dead are offered balls of rice in Cambodia. Perhaps one of the most popular festivals is the Water Festival (*Bon Om Thook*), which marks the end of the monsoon season with elaborate boat racing.

Khmer populations in the diaspora have worked hard to preserve their culture while in the process of adapting to the local milieu. Language and dance classes, and transmission of local arts are all

encouraged. Local communities are engaged in transmission of culture across generations and across nations; teachers are brought in from Cambodia, and Cambodian Americans visit the country of their ancestors for enrichment courses. Khmer arts festivals in many cities in the United States are becoming highly visible. Speaking of the many forums where Cambodian Americans reconnect with their culture, renowned Cambodian scholar Khatharya Um notes that Cambodian religious culture is as visible in Lowell, Massachusetts, or in the suburbs of Los Angeles and Washington, D.C., as it is in Siem Reap or Phnom Penh.

Vasudha Narayanan

See also Hinduism; Killing Fields (Cambodia); Southeast Asia; Sacred Places; Theravada Buddhism

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CAMEROON

Cameroon, a West African country colonized by Germany in the 1880s and ceded to France and Britain following World War I, became independent from France in 1960 and from Britain in 1961. It is the only West African country with two official languages: French and English. It is located in west-central Africa, along the Atlantic coast, bordering Nigeria on the east. The surface area is

475,440 square kilometers, and the total population is estimated at around 18 million inhabitants as of July 2007. The majority of its people are of Bantu and Sudanic origins. A culturally diverse nation, Cameroon is home to more than 200 ethnic groups.

Cameroon experienced two types of colonization: first, by the Muslim Fulani, who entered the territory from the western Lake Chad region as early as the 17th century, and, second, essentially by Christian Europeans, who came in from the Atlantic Ocean through the Gulf of Guinea during the 19th century. Both colonizations employed both violent and peaceful means to occupy positions of influence and structure and consolidate their presence. Islam benefited from the work of brotherhoods (Tijaniyya, Qadiriyya, and Mahdiyya) and the impact of trade to expand and create an African Islamic culture among the converts. The Muslim strategy consisted of occupying urban areas and converting acting rulers—sometimes through matrimonial transactions—before heading to rural areas and to the masses. The expansion of Christianity remained stronger along the coastal areas but retarded in the hinterlands due to rivalry between religious orders. To reinforce their respective congregations, Christian churches primarily targeted the rural populations surrounding urban areas with a well-elaborated, gradual three-point strategy focused on building health centers, schools, and churches before moving to towns and cities. By setting up a health center and a school in the locality of their choice, the Christian congregations engendered dependence from the host societies; this was instrumental in obtaining land for construction of their churches. The traditionalism that is indigenous to Cameroon is still active in rural areas even though it is threatened by the allure of Western culture and technology and the continued appeal of both Islam and Christianity.

Christians, who constitute about 45% of the population, are concentrated mainly in the southern regions, while Muslims (30%) are dominant in the north, and traditionalists, who constitute 25% of the population, are represented in all 10 administrative regions.

There is no established religion in Cameroon, but Catholic and Presbyterian forms of Christianity, along with Islam, compete to influence both private and public life.

The drive toward the construction of mosques, temples, and churches in urban areas as well as in rural regions is indicative of the appropriation strategy carried out by each religion to progressively privatize public space while erecting affiliated niches and branches. The same competition is recorded in the political and social sectors. Most of the public holidays are religious holidays. Cabinet members are appointed according to their religious background, so as to proportionally reflect religious representation. This social balance, framed along religious and geographical lines, has repercussions on lower administrative structures and is regarded as an important component for maintaining social peace in Cameroon.

The confessional private sector of education serves the majority of pupils. Over the last decade and in terms of quality education provided and admission rate into state universities, Christian private institutions have performed far better than Islamic schools, which have recurrently recorded poor performance owing to historical factors such as resistance to the colonial system of education. Both sectors of education receive consistent annual subventions from the state. The literacy rate is more than 70% nationwide.

Hamadou Adama

See also Africa; Christianity; Islam; Missions and Missionaries; New Religions in Africa

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CAMPBELL, JOSEPH (1904–1987)

Joseph Campbell was the most prominent North American mythologist of the 20th century. A prolific writer, editor, and speaker, Campbell was a pioneer in the emerging field of comparative mythology and introduced the study of mythology to much of the American public. As a professor of

literature at Sarah Lawrence College for 38 years, Campbell authored some 12 books, including *Myths to Live By* (1972), *The Mythic Image* (1974), and the four-volume survey of world mythology, *The Masks of God* (1959–1968); among other volumes, he edited the posthumous papers of Indologist Heinrich Zimmer (beginning with *Myths and Symbols in Indian Art and Civilization*), *The Portable Jung*, and six volumes of Jung's *Papers From the Eranos Yearbooks*.

Campbell's international renown was established in 1949 with *The Hero With a Thousand Faces*, which won the National Institute of Arts and Letters Award for Contributions to Creative Literature in that same year. In *The Hero*, Campbell identifies a *monomyth* (a term he retrieves from James Joyce) or common plot to all hero myths and outlines the basic stages of the mythic cycle, from separation to initiation and return. Campbell suggests that the hero—an operative metaphor for the individual and culture—confers deep truths about self-discovery and transcendence. *The Hero* has been highly influential for creative artists internationally.

Campbell's influences were highly diverse—James Joyce, Thomas Mann, Sri Ramakrishna, and Arthur Schopenhauer—and his books cite and quote widely different texts, but the influence of Heinrich Zimmer and Carl Jung probably typify the two dominant themes of Campbell's work—a psychological or quasi-spiritual interpretation of mythology. From Jung's work, Campbell absorbed a theory of archetypes that allowed him to connect the patterns of world mythology to a universal structure of mind (it also allowed him to analyze dreams as effluxes of the same mythological organ); from Zimmer, he adopted a dynamic concept of myth that was not simply an explanation of a reality but rather a story about how the individual subject can have a different experience of the world. This synthesis created a highly elastic field for the study of comparative mythology.

Mythology for Campbell was an unquantifiable collection of stories that draw from the fund of archetypes to communicate something essential about the life experience. Myths were symbolic expressions (often originating in the collective unconscious) that act as guides toward spiritual transformation. Campbell held that all myths originate from the same basic psychic pattern and that they are all different masks for the same

(fundamental, transcendent) Truth; and since the Truth, as Campbell understood it, exists beyond conceptual knowledge (beyond language), it is the work of mythology to evoke that which cannot be evoked, and it does this through metaphor. Myths are metaphors about the Truth. In the preface to *The Hero*, Campbell quotes the Rig Vedas: “Truth is one, the sages speak of it by many names.”

“I like to think that a good life is one hero journey after another,” Campbell explained once during a lecture; “over and over again, you are called to the realm of adventure, you are called to new horizons. Each time, there is the same problem: do I dare? And then if you do dare, the dangers are there; . . . there’s always the possibility of a fiasco. But there’s also the possibility of bliss” (Campbell, 2004, pp. 132–133).

An accomplished speaker, the many different recordings and lectures Campbell left show that he wanted, more than anything else, to make the mythological predicament viable again. He wanted the reader or audience to feel that unique and particular feeling—joy and insight—that comes when an old story is understood for the first time to have always been about you.

Brett Eadon Land

See also God; Jung, Carl Gustav; Myth; Saints

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CANADA

Although the North American country of Canada can still today be considered as a predominantly Christian nation, it has become highly secularized and, since 1971, has chosen an official policy of multiculturalism that accentuates the value of religious toleration. However, the different Christian churches and sects have played a key role in the historical development of the nation, and the study of Canadian religious history helps understand many facets of its political culture, including the innovative multicultural model of integration, much vaunted for contributing to the successful integration of ethnic and religious minorities.

The 2001 census report by Statistics Canada revealed a predominantly Christian nation: 77% of the population defined themselves as adhering to some form of Christianity, this breaking down into 43% Catholic, 29% Protestant, and 5% for other Christian affiliations. The great majority of the self-proclaimed Protestants belong to a mainline church, which represents a major distinction with regard to the Congregationalist tradition found in the United States. Non-Christian religious affiliation in Canada represented in 2001 only 6% of the population, although the numbers are rising. This group included Muslims, accounting for 2% of the population; Jews, Hindus, Sikhs, and Buddhists, each group making up about 1% of the total population; all other religious affiliations together represented less than 0.5%. In fact, a much larger group (16% and rising) declared themselves to have “no religion,” and certainly the country’s high level of secularization is one of the key elements in the contemporary study of religion in Canada. The 2001 official Census Report published by Statistics Canada reported that only about one third of Canadians engage in regular religious activities, with “regular” being relatively loosely defined as attending services “once a month or more.” The General Social Survey conducted also by Statistics Canada in 2001 found that only 20% of the population 15 years old and above attended religious services on a weekly basis.

Historical Background

This has not always been the case. In fact, Canada’s history has been greatly influenced by the churches,

which have been present since the very beginning of the colonial period. Notwithstanding a settlement established and later abandoned by the Vikings in Newfoundland in the 11th century, the English laid claim to the northern half of North America when John Cabot reached Newfoundland and then Cape Breton Island in 1497. However, in an atmosphere of European colonial competition, it was the French who first established permanent settlements with the founding of Quebec City in 1608 by Samuel Champlain. The Catholic Church played a prominent role in these early settlements. It was granted control of large tracts of lands for which it found settlers who farmed under the seigneurial system; it set up monasteries and actively supported missionary outposts for the conversion of indigenous peoples.

After the defeat of the French forces by the British in 1759 in Quebec and the signing of the Paris Treaty in 1763, which gave control of French colonies in Quebec to the British, the Catholic Church became the central instrument for maintaining the French presence in North America. During the colonial period, the Catholic clergy maintained a close relationship with the British colonial administration, and the latter made major concessions to the former to gain their loyalty, concessions that included notably the freedom to practice their religion and to administrate Catholic schools (Quebec Act, 1774). This conciliatory policy was undoubtedly related to demographic realities, with the French Catholic settlers outnumbering the English, and to the need to ensure the loyalty of the French-speaking Catholics toward Great Britain in the face of unrest in the American colonies to the south. The British would later develop an official policy advocating the assimilation of the French Catholics (Durham Report, 1839). However, the Quebec Act can be seen as the beginning of a tradition of religious toleration between Catholics and Protestants, and the efforts to find a *modus operandi* between the two groups led to the creation of the Dominion of Canada in 1867.

Religion in Present-Day Canada

Catholicism is still today the reported religion for the vast majority of the almost 7 million French-speaking Canadians. However, in contemporary Canada, there are just as many Catholics with a

mother tongue other than French, and more than half the country's Catholics (54%) live outside the province of Quebec. (It should be noted that the classifications by province and by mother tongue are not synonymous. While the province of Quebec has a French-speaking majority [83%], it is also home to 1 million people having either English or another language as mother tongue; about 1 million people with French as mother tongue live outside Quebec.)

It should also be noted that recent demographic trends, due largely to changes in the ethnic origins of new immigrants, have increased the relative weight of the Catholic Church among Christians in Canada. New immigrants to Canada are less likely to be members of a Protestant church, but countries with a Catholic tradition continue to provide immigrants (eastern Europe, Latin America, and the Philippines). This has allowed the Catholic Church to more or less maintain its relative weight in terms of the total population and to increase its share of the Christian population. The second trend will likely continue: Members of a Protestant denomination tend to be older than their Catholic counterparts, and the traditionally predominant mainline Protestant churches have not been successful in renewing their ageing membership.

While it is clear that the mainline Protestant denominations are in decline due largely to secularization but also, as seen above, due to new trends in immigration and to a much lesser extent to the growth of independent Protestant churches, their historic importance should not be underestimated.

The two most important Protestant denominations in Canada are the Anglican Church and the United Church of Canada. The former is directly linked to English colonial history and was granted the status of official state church in the English-speaking colonies of Upper Canada (later to become the province of Ontario), Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island. This title gave the Anglican Church control over large tracts of land, and its members were found in positions of political authority. A powerful Anglican oligarchy, referred to as the Family Compact, controlled positions of political and economic importance in Canada in the 19th century. However, at the time of the Confederation in 1867, the Anglican Church had been disestablished in all the colonies, and it thus has never enjoyed the status of official state church in Canada. Anglicanism is the reported

religion for 7% of the total population (23% of the Protestants), but these figures represent a 7% decline in its membership since 1991.

The United Church of Canada constitutes one of the particularities in Canadian religious history. Created in 1921 by the amalgamation of the Methodists, most of the Presbyterians, and a large number of the Congregationalist churches, it can best be described as an attempt to create a national church for Canada. Greatly influenced at the time of its founding by the social gospel, the church's doctrine continues today to insist on the collective nature of society and the social mission of the church, taking its distance from the more individualistic evangelical sects, which tend to concentrate on saving the soul of individual Christians. The United Church grew in size in the mid-20th century and became the largest Protestant denomination; it was the most influential Canadian church during the postwar period. Today, the United Church is in decline; its membership declined by 8% between 1991 and 2001. Like their Anglican counterparts, they suffer from the same trend of secularization, and their membership is aging. What is more, as a home-grown Canadian church, it has no hope of reinforcing its numbers with immigration. Today, the United Church is still the largest Protestant denomination in the country and represents almost 10% of the total population (33% of the Protestants).

As a corollary to the strength of mainline Protestant churches in Canada, there has traditionally been a relative weakness of independent Protestant churches. Some recent studies suggest that independent churches with an evangelical outlook are gaining influence in Canada. There is certainly anecdotal evidence of evangelical churches with high growth rates: The Evangelical Missionary Church, for example, a small church in relative terms with only 60,000 members, increased its membership by almost 50% in only 10 years. Some recent field research has also pointed to a rise in the number of practicing Christians espousing evangelical doctrinal positions. These early trends may well be a sign of future transformations of religion in Canada, but it is too early to affirm that a major change is taking place.

The strength of Catholicism, and of the mainline Protestant churches, which, as seen above, also make a claim to having a role to play in the management

of temporal questions in collaboration with state authorities, is one of the key differences between Canada and its neighbor to the south. These churches have influenced political attitudes in Canada, and their presence helps explain differences in political culture between Americans and Canadians—Canadians being less individualistic and more inclined to show confidence in government to find collective solutions. Among these recent government-led initiatives can be found the official policy of multiculturalism, which accentuates the value of religious tolerance. This law can be seen as a natural development in a country whose history had required it to develop a tradition of religious toleration between Catholics and Protestants, which had become highly secularized, and which continued to pursue an active immigration policy at a time when candidates for immigration were to be found mainly in non-Christian countries.

Andrew Ives

See also Anglicans; Christianity; Indigenous Religions; Liberal Protestantism; North America; Protestant Christianity; Roman Catholicism

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CANDOMBLÉ

Candomblé is a Brazilian version of West African religions as they were remembered and reconstructed under the new conditions of a 19th-century Catholic slave colony. It is one of a family of religions now sometimes classified under a global rubric as “Religions of the African Diaspora,” alongside Cuban Santería, Haitian Vodou, and others. Originally a consequence of the transatlantic slave trade to Brazil, in recent years, it has expanded into Uruguay, Argentina, and the United States as well. Thus, it shows the trajectory of how an African indigenous religion became a global religion, from the early modern trauma of forced migration to, in the present day, voluntary affiliations and even web-based communities. Following a brief history, this entry introduces key concepts of the religion: *axé*, or the nature of power; *orixá*, or the nature of deities; and the “mother (or father)-of-saints” (*iyalorixá*) and the nature of religious authority.

History

African religious practices have existed in Brazil since the 16th century and historically were divided into “nations”—ethnic and religious affiliations in

which Yoruba, Angolan, Dahomean, or other ethnic affiliations and languages predominated. Through practices that were severely repressed by Portuguese and then Brazilian authorities, enslaved Africans maintained collective memories and social structures against all odds. Such practices were unified as an independent “religion” known as Candomblé by the first decades of the 1800s. The religion took shape especially around the frame provided by Yoruba philosophy and ritual practice. The Yoruba of southwest Nigeria were the primary targets of the slave trade to Brazil from 1780 to 1850, and with their powerful concentration in cities such as Salvador da Bahia and their fresh memories of Africa, the Yoruba religious system became a watershed for Brazilian religious practice in general. Whereas Candomblé began as the reconstructed African religion of African Brazilians, it has during the last century become a national Brazilian religion with a strong foothold even among urban groups without African ancestry.

Axé: Transforming Power

Candomblé involves a relation of exchange with a group of superhuman entities called orixás, that mediate between Olorun (lit. “King of *orun*, the otherworld”), a distant high god, and human beings. In the religious world of Candomblé, everything and everyone “eats,” not only people but also musical instruments, such as drums; natural phenomena, such as rivers, trees, and stones; and significant places, such as *terreiros* or temples. The world must be fed to replenish the force of movement and transformation, called *axé*. This is especially true of the orixás, the divine but humanlike agents who mediate and redistribute the power (*axé*) that animates nature but that also helps human supplicants with everyday needs of health, prosperity, and fecundity. Candomblé involves an elaborate set of religious practices that work to preserve life with its abstract problems of meaning, but above all, in all its pragmatic needs, it works against the forces of anomie, death, and consumption. Initiates seek to expand their *axé* through the ritual work of maintaining proper reciprocal relations with the orixás, the personified forces of nature, culture, and history.

Axé refers not only to transforming power but also to ancestry or lineage. *Axé* is not only a transforming force that can change one's personal

life, it is also a lineage one may enter and engage in. To undergo an initiation in a specific terreiro is to enter that house's *axé*, its "nation" and lineage. Terreiros usually possess *axé* that is descended from one of the original houses of Candomblé, in Bahia, founded in the 19th century, and often even from a specific African source.

Offering sacrifices to the orixás, and incorporating them in spirit possession, expresses the memory of Africa and its traditions. They are also the ritual modes through which *axé*—both as transforming power and as enduring memory and lineage—is made and maintained.

Orixás: Mediators Between Nature, God, and Man

Terreiros today remember, incorporate, and "feed" between 12 and 20 orixás during ritual events spread throughout the year, usually coinciding with the day devoted to the Catholic saint who served as the orixá's public face during slavery. One of the most important is Oxalá (or Obbatalá), the orixá of sky, creation, and purity. Oxalá is regarded as patient, just, aged, and venerable. Oxalá is said to walk slowly but always arrive at his destination, and in ritual, the drum rhythm that calls him is calm and dignified.

Another orixá, Oxum, is a female orixá of freshwaters. Known in Nigeria for the river that bears her name and for her powers of aiding pregnancy, in Brazil she has additionally acquired qualities of a coquette, revered for her beauty, vanity, and love of wealth and refinement. Drum rhythms are played to honor and call Oxum with the bare hands rather than with sticks and thus sound gentle and "cool," unlike, for example, the rhythms of her husband Xangô, which in their volume, speed, and texture are unmistakably "hot." Iansâ (or Oya), another wife of Xangô, dances with the force of a windy tempest, and those who claim her as the master of their head are considered to be energetic, charismatic, and immensely capable.

Oxôssi is the orixá of the hunt and the forest, a companion there to Ogum, lord of ironwork and the opening of paths. Oxôssi's symbols include a bow and arrow, and when he appears in the bodies of his human initiates, he is often draped in green and bears a quill in the band of his cap. Initiates to

Oxôssi are blessed with agile feet, quick wits, and winsome personalities; especially when compared with Ogum, who, while courageous and strong, is heavy limbed and obstinate. Oxôssi is also remembered as the king of the Yoruba city-state of Ketu and therefore the founding orixá of the important Ketu "nation" of Candomblé in Brazil.

Nana Buruku is a female orixá associated with the primordial depths of the cool mud at the bottom of the sea and underground. She is among the very oldest, said to have been present during creation itself, in some myths, as a consort of Obbatalá. Because of her great age she is also linked with death and plays an important part in dispatching the dead to orun, the otherworld of the ancestors. In ritual performance, her appearance is rare and fortuitous, and the body of the "horse" bends over almost to the ground with the weight of her years. Nana originally appears in myths of the West African Fon, neighbor and rival to Yoruba city-states, where she was the mother of the sacred twins Mawu and Lissa, who appear in the pantheon of Haitian Vodou. Her appearance in the Brazilian Candomblé of the Ketu and Jeje "nations" carries a reminder of the historical exchanges between Yoruba and Fon city-states in West Africa. The orixá pantheon thus carries historical and geographic markers, and its ritual enactment is a form of embodied history making.

The orixás are more than just agents to be bargained with. They are also a grammar, a cognitive system, and a map of relations by which practitioners are located and embedded in the world. Everything can be schematized through the lens of the orixá complex, and thereby contemplated, understood, and "worked." New computer technologies fall within Ogum's domain, since he is the orixá of iron technological innovation. Struggles with infertility fall in the purview of Yemanjá, goddess of the sea and motherhood, and are viewed and ritually remedied through the prism of her stories, characteristics, and needs. Apartment-building security problems often fall to Exú, the orixá of doors, roads, and access. Ossaim, master herbalist, has the introspective qualities needed by a scholar or research scientist.

Yet since many orixás were forgotten or rendered insignificant through the forced migration to Brazil and the new life conditions enforced there, while others were assimilated into Candomblé's

pantheon, what seems as important as the specific entities are the structuring principles of the pantheon. Some orixás govern “hot,” sudden, and dramatic forms of transforming power, while others are “cool.” There are orixás of air, earth, plants, and sea and of cultural change, political power, and history. The principle guiding Candomblé is the achievement and maintenance of *balance* between modes and kinds of power experienced in practical life, rather than a strictly defined notion of the good or pure that is anchored in canonical texts or centralized orthodoxy.

Religious Authority: The Mother (or Father) of Saints

Without such centralized measures of orthodoxy, every priestess (*iyalorixá*) is master over her own house and her initiated “children.” A priest’s or priestess’s work in Candomblé is to choreograph the production of axé and its transmission to those in her initiatory family. *Production* is the most fitting word: At an evening *fiesta* (a “party” in honor of an orixá), when the drums call the orixás to possess the dancing bodies of initiates consecrated to that task, this magnificent display can only arrive after days of ritual labor. Before the *fiesta*, the terreiro is a place of intensive manual work—grinding corn or beans, gathering leaves, fetching water, cutting and hanging decorations, and endless other tasks to transform the terreiro into a place conducive to the qualities and tastes of the god who is awaited.

A priest’s or priestess’s authority depends on his or her ability to render the deities and their *axé* manifest and accessible. She can fall from repute through disparaging gossip, a decline in charisma, lack of economic resources, or competition from rivals. If in its aesthetic materiality Candomblé is a religion of the hand, directly linked to the animals, costumery, and herbs that must be acquired to make the *orixás* manifest, it is also a religion of the marketplace, subject to competition from rival groups, like Pentecostal Christians or Kardecist Spiritists, who offer similar potential sources of pragmatic healing and economic well-being through the idiom of spirit possession.

Given this menu of religious options in Brazil, who comes to Candomblé? First, many initiates describe having been “ill” (*passando mal*) prior to initiation. This may often denote symptoms such as

anxiety, agitation, or depression or simply a relentless sense of “bad luck” in the areas of love, work, or family life. These symptoms are interpreted as a summons obliging the person to become the *orixá*’s vehicle.

A second common paradigm is that of participants who hold Candomblé as their traditional or familial religion. Candomblé initiation especially appeals to those who strongly identify themselves with an African heritage. Thus, it remains very much an African Brazilian religion, both culturally and in its constituency, in spite of the large number of Candomblé initiates not of African biological descent.

A third but less important scenario of initiation is that those who ally themselves with a social avant-garde have sought out Candomblé as an alternative religious expression. Particularly in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, for example, the male gay community has over decades developed a strong association with Candomblé—long enough that it too has become nearly “traditional.”

Paul Christopher Johnson

See also Africa; Angola; Brazil; Diaspora; Latin America; New Religions in South America; Nigeria; Santería; Shamanism; Vodou

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CANTERBURY

Canterbury is a relatively small city (approximately 44,000 inhabitants) in the southeast of England. Canterbury Cathedral—officially the Cathedral and Metropolitan Church of Christ at Canterbury—is the cathedral of the Archbishop of Canterbury, who is leader of the Church of England and symbolic leader of the worldwide Anglican Communion. This entry addresses each of these topics in turn: the city, the cathedral, and the role of the archbishop.

The City

The geographic area of Canterbury has been inhabited since prehistoric times. In the first century CE, the Romans captured the existing settlement and named it Durovernum Cantiacorum; they rebuilt the city on Roman lines. The Romans left Britain in 410, after which the city languished for nearly two centuries. In 597 CE, however, Pope Gregory the Great sent Augustine—a Benedictine monk—to convert King Æthelberht of Kent to Christianity. This mission was successful, and Canterbury became the center for an episcopal see in Kent with Augustine as the first archbishop. The town flourished once again. In 673, the Synod of Hertford gave to the See of Canterbury authority over the entire English Church, at which point the city gained national as well as regional significance.

Events of huge significance have occurred in Canterbury, including in 1170 the murder in the cathedral of Archbishop Thomas à Becket by knights of King Henry II. It is clear that the king had had frequent conflicts with the strong-minded archbishop and is said to have exclaimed, “Who will rid me of this turbulent priest?” Four knights enacted this wish literally. Some 3 years later, Becket was canonized by Pope Alexander III. As a result, Canterbury became one of the most visited towns in Europe, as pilgrims from all parts of Christendom came to visit Becket’s shrine. The pilgrimage was immortalized in *The Canterbury Tales*—a 14th-century collection of stories written by Geoffrey Chaucer and a Middle English text of literary as well as historical significance. The shrine as such was demolished during the Dissolution of the Monasteries under Henry VIII (see below),

bringing an end to the pilgrimage. In 1982, however, Pope John Paul II—the first pope to visit the United Kingdom—knelt alongside the then Archbishop of Canterbury at the site of the martyrdom of Thomas à Becket. This deeply symbolic gesture signified the growing friendship between the Roman Catholic and Anglican churches.

The Cathedral

Canterbury Cathedral is one of the oldest and most well-known Christian buildings in England and has been designated a world heritage site. A worshipping community has existed in this place since the time of Augustine. Traces of the original structure lie beneath the floor of the present nave. The building was extensively rebuilt and enlarged by the Saxons before being completely reconstructed by the Normans in 1070 following a fire. In 1077, the Norman church, the work of Archbishop Lanfranc, was described as “nearly perfect.” There have been many additions to the building over the past 900 years, but significant elements of the present structure and some of the windows (including the stained glass) date from the 12th century.

Until the 10th century, the cathedral community lived as the household of the archbishop. Thereafter, it became a community of Benedictine monks, which continued until the monastery was dissolved by Henry VIII in 1540. The dissolution or suppression of the monasteries denotes the administrative and legal processes between 1536 and 1541, by which time Henry VIII disbanded monasteries, nunneries, and friaries in England, Wales, and Ireland, appropriating their income and disposing of their assets. Once the monastery had been suppressed, responsibility for the services and upkeep was given to a group of clergy known as the Dean and Chapter. Today, the cathedral is still governed by the Dean and four canons, with the addition more recently of four lay people and the Archdeacon of Maidstone.

Significant damage was done to the cathedral by the Puritans during the English civil war of the 17th century, and extensive renovation took place in the 19th century. During World War II, the precincts of the cathedral were heavily bombed and the library destroyed, but the cathedral itself was not seriously damaged. Currently, almost 2,000 services are held in the building each year. Quite apart from its liturgical function, the cathedral is a

major tourist attraction, receiving 1 million visitors per annum.

The Archbishop

The Archbishop of Canterbury has a variety of titles and four main roles:

1. He is the diocesan bishop of the Diocese of Canterbury, which was founded in 597, the oldest diocese in the English church. Given the archbishop's frequent absences, the diocese is effectively managed by the Bishop of Dover.

2. He is the metropolitan archbishop of the Province of Canterbury, which covers the southern two thirds of England. The remainder of the country constitutes the Province of York, under the authority of the Archbishop of York.

3. He is Primate of All England, meaning that he is the leader of the Church of England, bearing in mind that the British sovereign remains the Supreme Governor of the church. In this role, the Archbishop of Canterbury plays a central part in national life, officiating at ceremonies, including coronations.

4. As spiritual leader of the Anglican Communion, the archbishop is recognized by convention as *primus inter pares* among the Anglican primates worldwide. In his person, he acts as "an instrument of communion." Since 1867, the archbishop has convened the more or less decennial meetings of worldwide Anglican bishops, which are known as the Lambeth Conferences. The name comes from the archbishop's principal residence, which is not in Canterbury but at Lambeth Palace, in the London Borough of Lambeth. In addition, as holder of one of the "five great sees" of England, the Archbishop of Canterbury is *ex officio* one of the Lords Spiritual of the House of Lords as this is currently (2009) constituted. In terms of official precedence, he is one of the highest ranking persons in England.

Since the time of Henry VIII (i.e., since the Church of England established its independence from Rome), the Archbishop of Canterbury has been selected by the monarch. Nowadays, the choice is effectively made in the name of the king or queen by the prime minister, who chooses from a short list of two established by the Crown Nominations

Commission (until 2003, the Crown Appointments Commission). The current holder of the office is the Most Reverend and Right Honorable Rowan Williams, who was enthroned in 2003 as the 104th Archbishop of Canterbury.

Among his predecessors, two outstanding archbishops are worth noting. The first, Archbishop Thomas Cranmer, held office during the reigns of Henry VIII and Edward VI—a pivotal moment in the history of England. Under Henry, Cranmer supported the king in his struggles with the pope, endorsing the principle of Royal Supremacy (in which the king was considered sovereign over the Church within his realm). The doctrinal and liturgical structures of the nascent Church of England began to emerge. Under Edward, Cranmer was able to promote more radical reforms. Specifically, he authored two definitive Anglican documents: the *Book of Common Prayer*, a complete liturgy for the English Church (a book admired as much for the cadence of its language as for its statements of doctrine), and the *Thirty-Nine Articles*, an Anglican declaration of faith. Cranmer was tried for treason and heresy when Mary I (a Catholic) came to the throne. He was imprisoned for 2 years and at times vacillated in his faith. He died, however, as a Protestant martyr.

William Temple was Archbishop of Canterbury for a short but once again very critical time in the nation's history (1942–1944). In the year when he became archbishop, he published *Christianity and Social Order*, which set out not only an Anglican social theology but a vision for a just postwar society. At the height of the war, he was also instrumental (together with the then Chief Rabbi) in establishing the Council of Christians and Jews—a voluntary organization in which members of both faiths came together to combat anti-Semitism. Prior to becoming archbishop, Temple was known primarily for his support for the working-class movement and his advocacy of economic and social reforms. He was the first president of the Workers' Educational Association and a member of the Labour Party. He was also a supporter of the ecumenical movement, involved in both the Lausanne Conference (1927) and the World Conference of Churches in Edinburgh (1937). His death in 1944, after only 3 years in office, was greatly mourned.

Grace Davie

See also Anglicans; England; Europe; United Kingdom

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CAO DAI

Caodaism, or the “third great way of salvation,” is an indigenous religion of Vietnam that reflects a singular sociocultural and historical environment—Cochin China of the 1920s and the French colonial presence. Inspired by Chinese spirit mediumship and divination and also by Western spiritualism and Theosophy, a group of Vietnamese civil servants entered into communication with local, Chinese, and European spirits. The first oracles quickly constituted a canon, rituals, and a strong hierarchy inspired by Catholicism, from which Caodaism intended to differentiate itself, becoming its main competitor on Vietnamese soil.

Theologically, the “Master [residing in] the high tower” (*thay Cao Dai*)—an avatar of the Chinese Jade Emperor—augured a renovation of Buddhism and, more broadly, a codified unification of the Sino-Vietnamese Three Teachings (Buddhism, Confucianism, and Daoism). Moreover, this global pantheon incorporates Jesus and spiritualist figures (e.g., Victor Hugo and Joan of Arc), who are absorbed into the Sino-Vietnamese syncretistic system.

The oracles, greatly imbued with Vietnamese patriotism and seeking the independence of this religion, which claims to be “national,” were soon cutting a wide swath through the peasant population

and the networks of business people and landowners. The number of followers exceeded 500,000 beginning in the 1930s and has continued to grow despite the heavy crackdown on Caodaists during the Catholic regime of Ngo Dinh Diem.

Engaged in the country’s decolonization, the Cao Dai and communist movements enjoyed a competitive relationship from the 1930s onward. After 1975 and the country’s independence, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam sought to reconcile its ideology with a more market-based economy and a certain social and religious peace. There was a gradual shift from the initial violent totalitarian repression toward a consensual management of its relations with the Caodaists, transforming the “Holy See” of Tay Ninh into a tourist site and, for example, granting Caodaism “religion” status in 1995 in exchange for transparency in all its religious propaganda activities.

The community today (between 1 and 4 million followers) is constituted of a network of holy sees, propaganda publications, and meditation centers formed during the 20th century in accordance with the political or theological rivalries, which play different roles at the regional, national, and transnational levels (the politically engaged international branch of Tay Ninh; the local, meditative branch of Chieu Minh, etc.).

Finally, 15,000–30,000 Caodaists live outside Vietnam, mainly in the United States and Australia, as a result of the dramatic exodus of the boat people. They perform a revitalizing role in Caodaism by dynamizing Caodaist relationships around the world, as can be seen, for example, from the multifarious international networking activities of the Cao Dai Overseas Missionary (scouting, editing, websites, sponsoring of pilgrimages).

Jérémy Jammes

See also Hoa Hao; Indigenous Religions; Religious Nationalism; Southeast Asia; Spiritualism; Vietnam

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CAPE VERDE

Named for the Cap Vert peninsula in West Africa, adjacent to the nation of Guinea-Bissau, the archipelago that makes up the nation of Cape Verde houses a majority Roman Catholic populace. Nine of the 10 islands under the nation's banner are inhabited, mostly by a mixed creole population, and the Portuguese legacy of the first inhabitants of the islands remains in the official language of the country. Between 85% and 95% of the population is at least nominally Catholic, although many are nonpracticing and many others engage in syncretic practices within the church. The largest Protestant Christian denomination is the Church of the Nazarene, and other groups active in Cape Verde include the Seventh-Day Adventists, the Church of Latter-Day Saints, the Assemblies of God, and smaller evangelical churches. There are also a small Baha'i community and a small but growing Muslim community, but no reliable statistics on membership existed at the time of this entry. There are also some who practice traditional African religions exclusively, especially on the island of São Tiago.

The islands of the country were uninhabited when the Portuguese landed in 1460, and the region soon became important as a slave trade post between the African continent and the New World. Some of the slaves were kept on the island plantations (known as *latifundas*), but nearly the entire area was deserted after the French assaulted the islands in 1712. Settlers would reinhabit the archipelago soon after, but the land lost much of its economic value with the decline of the slave trade only to regain some wealth in the 19th century as a stop on the global trade routes. Cape Verde became an overseas territory of Portugal in 1961 and became fully independent after Guinea-Bissau's war for freedom in 1975. Some pushed for incorporation with Guinea-Bissau following independence, and the Catholic Church originally stood in opposition to the ruling Party for the Independence of Cape Verde (PAICV). Due in part to conflict within the Movement for Democracy Party, which originally enjoyed the support of the Church, many Catholics have now begun to back the PAICV.

Identity in Cape Verde is determined largely by geographic location. An individual's identity is linked to his or her island of origin, and speaking

generally, the northern islands (*barlavento*) are influenced more by their Portuguese heritage while the southern islands (*sotavento*) identify with Africa. There is also a large diasporic population, and it is estimated that the population of Cape Verdeans in the United States rivals the total number of people in the islands themselves. The number of people claiming adherence to Catholicism notwithstanding, church weddings are rare in Cape Verde, and traditional systems of life still dominate. There is a *de jure* separation between church and state, but the Catholic Church enjoys a preferential standing with the government that stops short of claiming it as a state church. Religious organizations must register with the country's Ministry of Justice before engaging in any activities, and legal penalties exist for any violations of a Cape Verdean's free exercise of religion. Admitted to the United Nations the year of its independence, the small nation now has membership in the G-77 and the World Trade Organization.

John Soboslai

See also Africa; Guinea-Bissau; Portugal; Postcolonialism; Religion and State; Roman Catholicism; Syncretism

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CARGO CULTS

Cargo cults are millenarian and messianic movements that have emerged in the island nations of Melanesia, though with local variations, as a

result of cultural contact. They sprang from the 19th-century arrival of Westerners with their ships loaded with what must have appeared as mind-boggling, out-of-this-world cargos on islands whose inhabitants had hitherto lived in cultural isolation. The doctrines and rituals of the cults derive from traditional beliefs and rituals blended with the moral and apocalyptic teachings of Christian missionaries. They led to nationalistic rebellions, fueled by *konors* or prophets, against the colonization imposed by Europeans and Australians.

In 1857, the Mansren movement prophesized the coming of a saving god. In 1871, the catalyst around whom the cargo cults would develop, Nikolai Miklouho-Maclay, a Russian scientist, landed on the northeastern coast of New Guinea. He began to be viewed as an avatar of deities—as Moon-Man, a messiah. The Papuans fell under the spell of his lack of fear and the sign of his supernatural power that produced superior objects—the cargos.

The cargo cults can only be understood within the social organization of the islands, the *koula*; material goods are handed out by deities and must be permanently exchanged according to specific codes. Since he knew how to give, Miklouho-Maclay attained the status of a god. Bound to their ancestors in a life-death continuum, the Melanesians imagined cargos had been fabricated by the departed to help their descendents but had been diverted by the Whites.

In 1883, a *konor* predicted that a steamer would unload cargo to restore the *koula* and the golden age. The Papuans killed a captain and attacked Dutch settlements. In Fiji, the Touka cult, under Ndougoumoï, evolved to fit the new conditions. Their god twins Kilibob and Manoup became known as Jehovah and Jesus. Their return would restore *koula*; the shops would be full of new cargos—fabrics and canned salmon.

The cults continued well into the 20th century. In the 1920s, the Vailala Madness spread over New Guinea. Through the symbolic appropriation of their power, they aimed at forcing the Whites to disappear and give back their cargo. In 1932, the Solomon Islands plunged into the Bouka revival under Pako, a leader who announced the arrival of food, tobacco, automobiles, and firearms. The departed souls would arrive on steamers. Churches had to be attended to benefit from the power of the

Whites' gods. Pako became identified with Jesus. In the 1940s, the Mekeo Madness sought to address the fear of famine. The souls of the dead would return by plane to drop food and weapons to expel the Whites.

John Frum, the most famous cargo figure, is said to have appeared in the 1940s on Tanna Island (south of the New Hebrides). He was seen as a White God, one of those Americans who were viewed positively as they had not partaken in colonization. It was believed that in typical apocalyptic style, he would distribute money, order the mountains to collapse and the valleys to be fruitful, and create a bridge that would link the island to its neighbors. His soldiers would throw the invaders into the sea. More John Frum-like figures appeared. One, Neloig, called himself King of America and of Tanna. He recruited an army and labor to build an airfield to allow for the landing of the American Liberator planes that would bring the awaited cargo sent by John Frum's father. When the planes failed to appear, the adepts placed a model plane on the tracks as decoy. In the 1990s, his cult was still being celebrated.

Bernadette Rigal-Cellard

See also Apocalypticism; Fiji; Hybridization; Indigenous Religions; New Religions; Pacific Islands/Oceania; Papua New Guinea; Syncretism

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CARIBBEAN

Because of strong European colonial and missionary influence, the predominant form of religion in the islands of the Caribbean Ocean is Christianity. During the period of slavery, the British imparted their Protestant culture and the French and Spanish, their Catholic forms of worship to the enslaved

Africans who had been brought to the islands. Over time, Christianity was combined with the Amerindian and African elements through a process known as syncretism. Although there is debate about whether such syncretism produced new forms of religious creations or simply a grafting of European elements onto African practices, it is evident that all three world cultural complexes are present: Amerindian, African, and European. Both views have merit; historically, religion played a revolutionary role in combating slavery and helping the former colonies resist the cultural dominance of Europe. And yet, since each nation was essentially cut off from Africa, over time, people formed uniquely indigenous forms of spirituality that incorporate European ideas.

The best known of these Caribbean syncretist movements are Rastafarianism (Jamaica), Santería (Cuba and Dominican Republic), and Vodou (Haiti and Dominican Republic). Each of these has a history of tenuous relationship with the state and native elites. Each is frequently misunderstood by outsiders but increasingly appealing to a multicultural world, and each borrows heavily from Christianity.

In the Rastafarian religion, Christianity is reinterpreted to support a pro-Black ideology. During the mid-18th century, Baptist and Methodist missionaries brought Christian messianic beliefs to Jamaica, and later, Marcus Garvey brought his Pan-Africanist philosophy to the island. These worldviews melded to form a common identity of Blackness and resistance among an oppressed people. Thus, the ferment was laid for the Rastafarian movement among Black workers in the 1930s. Its goal of the liberation of the oppressed meant cultural opposition to those European beliefs, shared by Whites and middle-class Jamaicans, that vilified Blackness. Hence, the adoption of dreadlocks and beards, the smoking of marijuana during ritual circle celebrations known as “reasonings” or *binghi*, the distinctive style of Rasta drumming, and the symbolic red, green, and gold colors of the Rastafarian flag—all done out of an aesthetic defiance and with a prophetic sense of destiny. Today, the influence of Rastafarianism has declined sharply as its symbols and rituals have become trendy and adopted by the multiculturally minded all over the world. Still, the faith enjoys significant influence at home and has the distinction of having helped elite Jamaicans rediscover their African heritage.

Beginning in Cuba in the late 16th century, Santería was started by slaves to disguise their forbidden worship of African gods. Slaves baptized by Spanish imperialists were disallowed the practice of the ancestral religion; in response, slaves appropriated the names of Catholic saints for each of their African gods. This subterfuge allowed them to safely worship by speaking in the “code” of Santería or “the way of the saints.”

Santería has been influenced mostly by slaves from the Yoruba region of Nigeria, who worship up to 500 different intercessory spirits called *orishas*. In Cuba, however, only 16 such *orishas* are recognized, together known as the *Lucumí*. The religion holds that every person is born under a different *orisha*'s protection and guidance, and in return, the *orisha* must be worshipped throughout one's life. To communicate with an *orisha* requires the practice of divination, in which priests or priestesses tell the inquirer who their *orisha* is and what it demands. Ceremonies (*bembes*) are often held to invoke the *orishas* who then possess their host and participate in the celebration, leaving the host with no memory of the possession.

Because of recent migration to the United States, primarily to southern Florida and New York, Santería is increasingly practiced outside Cuba. There is an interesting dark side to Santería in the United States, though; some immigrants have begun to use its divination to promote criminal activities. Such activities are far from the norm within the U.S. Cuban community, however, and are apparently symptomatic of the struggle of a small minority to reconcile old beliefs with the material demands of their new world.

Vodou is an indigenous religion founded in the Haitian melting pot of slavery. Since slaves from many different regions of Africa were deliberately commingled to prevent any unified resistance, Vodou arose as an amalgam of various African deities and practices and with a longing for a mythical ancestral past in the land of Nan Guinee, or Africa. Usually practiced in secret, it was a Vodou ceremony in 1791 that began the world's second successful colonial rebellion—the Haitian Revolution.

As in Santería, Vodouists primarily worship intercessory spirits, called *lwa*, or *loa*, and clergy consist of priests (*houngans*, male, and *mambos*, female) and apprentices (*hounsi*). Each houngan and mambo

oversees his or her particular *houngfor* or “house.” Since there is no doctrinal central authority, there is variety regionally and among houses.

Contrary to sensationalized, inaccurate Western notions, Vodou plays an indisputably positive, socially binding role in Haitian life, and its followers share the same values as those of other faiths—namely, peace, love, charity, and moral virtue.

Beyond these three, and apart from adherence to mainline Protestantism (about 25%) and Roman Catholicism (60%), many other faiths have smaller, but stable and/or growing, groups of adherents. In Trinidad and Tobago, about one quarter of the population practices Hinduism, which claims about 2% adherents regionally. Judaism and Islam (each with less than 1%) is now practiced throughout the Caribbean, in nearly every country, and Buddhism is now growing, along with Chinese folk religion. Notably, each faith has edifices in the major cities.

Not to be discounted, several smaller Christian denominations have taken root since the missionary efforts of the early 20th century. Assemblies of God, Seventh-Day Adventists, Church of God, Jehovah’s Witnesses, and Church of Latter-Day Saints are all clearly present throughout the Caribbean, though each likely has no more than 5% of any given population as members. Most interesting is the rise, in terms of numbers and influence, of Pentecostalism/evangelicalism. Tapping into their exasperation with the status quo, Pentecostal churches give the poor charity and hope for a better life through moral discipline, prayer, confession, and tithing (donation). This provides adherents with an almost countercultural sense of identity. These churches tend to position themselves as alternatives to both the secular state and the dominant forms of Christianity, generating imitations of its charismatic worship style in other churches’ services.

Leonard D. McMahon Jr.

See also Africa; Indigenous Religions; New Religions; Santería; Vodou

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CATHOLIC CHARISMATIC RENEWAL

Catholic Charismatic Renewal has been characterized not so much as a movement but rather as a stream of spirituality running through the believers’ universe. It has found expression in spiritual growth groups who are given to prayer and meditation about the Scriptures. They invoke the Holy Spirit to experience its power and its “gifts of growth and hope.” In this aim, Charismatic Renewal intends to recover the primordial apostolic community’s spirituality, according to which the descent of the Holy Spirit was a source of knowledge and spiritual renewal. Just as it used to happen within primordial communities, renewal moments of prayer are characterized by events such as “speaking in tongues,” prophecies, and healings.

Catholic Charismatic Renewal represents a Catholic version of the wider religious awakening that developed within Protestantism in the context of traditional Pentecostalism and neo-Pentecostalism. Traditional Pentecostalism originated within the North American Methodist Church in the early 20th century and then began to influence other Christian denominations during the first half of the century. Since the 1950s, the primordial Pentecostalism spirit has been reflected in different Protestant churches; its main characteristic is the award of the “gift of the Holy Spirit,” which is meant as a second and definitive conversion after the first (baptism).

Born inside American universities at the time of Vatican Council II, Charismatic Catholic Renewal develops the idea of a religious life based on a strong restoration of the spiritual dimension that is built around communitarian prayer, a direct confrontation with the Bible, and the constant invocation of the Holy Spirit. From this perspective, it manifests an implicit critique of the superficiality of the behaviors of Catholics and the formalism of the Catholic institutions.

Charismatic Catholic Renewal, also defined as “Groups of the Renewal,” is characterized by the

strong autonomy of each renewal community, but at the same time, it develops many ways of organization and communication among communities. The “Renewal in the Holy Spirit” is an example of this tentative organization recognized as a private association of believers; it embraces most “Groups of the Renewal.”

In 1975, on the occasion of the Third International Council, leaders of the Charismatic Catholic Renewal were given an audience with Pope Paul VI, which was interpreted by the movement’s followers as showing its allegiance to the Holy See and its loyalty to the ecclesiastic hierarchy, from which it has sought guidance and advice. Therefore, Charismatic Catholic Renewal takes on the shape of an interior revitalization inside Catholic churches. Through the “Baptism in the Spirit,” it can realize the objective of a renewed religious enthusiasm, in contrast to secularized society. In this way, it becomes functional to the process of pastoral reform and spiritual rebirth that was begun in the Catholic world by Vatican Council II.

Salvatore Abbruzzese

See also Charisma; Desecularization; Italy; Pentecostal Movements; Roman Catholicism; Vatican Council, Second

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CATHOLIC CHARITIES

A century-old faith-based organization founded in the United States of America, Catholic Charities provides social services to vulnerable and marginalized people.

Until the 20th century, Catholic charitable efforts had been undertaken exclusively at the local level through parish-based, person-to-person

initiatives performed by volunteers. With the advent of nationalization and professionalization of social services in the United States, many Catholics feared that Catholic charitable work would be stripped of its spiritual significance, no longer undertaken out of love of neighbor, as commanded by Jesus. Critics feared that a National Conference of Catholic Charities (NCCC) would lead people to view charity as a remunerated task undertaken only by professionals, thus relieving the nonprofessional of the obligation to help those in need.

This more traditional view of charity did not hold. Catholics followed the trend of other Americans at the dawn of the 20th century who were concentrating their efforts on the scientific study of society and the professional treatment of social problems. Pioneers in the Catholic Church, such as the priest-scholar William J. Kerby (1870–1936), the first American Catholic sociologist, advocated a nationally centralized charitable organization that would make it possible to coordinate the disparate and at times redundant local services. In 1910, Bishop Thomas J. Shahan (1857–1932), then rector of The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., and Kerby hosted an organizational meeting at which the NCCC came into existence. In addition to the clergy, a large contingent of lay people was present at the founding of the NCCC, most notably the Society of St. Vincent de Paul represented by their leader Thomas M. Mulry (1855–1916). Coordination of and cooperation between local charitable efforts among Catholics was under way.

In 1986, the NCCC became Catholic Charities USA. The organization continues to provide leadership for a national network of local Catholic Charities initiatives. In addition to assisting local initiatives to respond to immediate human needs, Catholic Charities USA has become increasingly involved in advocacy at the national level, seeking to create structural change in society. At times, this pursuit of the common good has required the organization to downplay, albeit controversially, its Catholic identity in order to promote a more just society for all.

Nicholas Rademacher

See also Roman Catholicism; Social Justice; Vatican Council, Second

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CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF WORLD RELIGIONS

See Smith, Wilfred Cantwell

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

The Central African Republic (CAR) is a landlocked country in the heart of Africa bordered by Cameroon, Chad, Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the Republic of the Congo. It is one of the poorest countries in Africa and in the world, and also has one of the lowest population densities in the world. There are more than 80 different ethnic groups represented, with no overwhelming majority. As elsewhere in Africa, religious elements are of central importance in social life, and nearly everyone practices and adheres to a religion. Roughly half of the inhabitants are Christian, evenly split between Catholics and Protestants; 15% are Muslim, and 35% follow African traditional religion primarily. Jehovah's Witnesses, Baha'is, Mormons, and Seventh-Day Adventists have a small presence as well.

There is archaeological evidence of settlements in the central region of Africa as early as the seventh century BCE. The area was beyond the reach of the initial spread of Islam in North Africa, and its inhabitants were highly isolated from surrounding civilizations until the arrival of Muslim-Arab traders in the mid-1800s and the arrival of the French in the 1880s. Between 1860 and 1910, much of the population of eastern CAR was

exported by slave traders from West Africa. By 1910, the French established the colony of Oubangui-Chari in the region. Since achieving independence in 1960, the country's history has been marked by economic instability and a series of dictatorships, although in the early 1990s, some steps were taken toward multiparty democracy.

French Catholic and Swedish Baptist missionaries arrived in the region by the end of the 19th century. Converts were won slowly, mostly through the missionaries' offerings of education, literacy, and medical care. In the 20th century, two locally initiated prophetic movements, the Mission to Africa (MTA) and the church of Simon Kimbangu, attracted huge numbers to their distinctly Africanized form of Christianity and greatly contributed to the spread of that religion across central and western Africa. Both of these groups claim many adherents in the CAR today and are characterized by faith healing, prophecy, divinely inspired prayer, and long, ecstatic worship services.

Traditional religious beliefs and practices are still strong among the various ethnic groups of the CAR. Although there is no uniform traditional religion in the region, some commonalities across groups can be found in their belief in a supreme god, veneration for ancestors and for the elderly, emphasis on divination and prophecy, and belief in witchcraft. Although only 35% of the population practices traditional religion exclusively, Christians and Muslim groups are also heavily influenced by the traditional worldview. Interactions between religious groups are generally peaceful, and there is a high level of tolerance from the government and religious freedom.

Nicolette D. Manglos

See also Africa; Ancestors; Christianity; Indigenous Religions; Islam; Missions and Missionaries; New Religions in Africa

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CHAD

The Republic of Chad is located in the north-central region of Africa, sharing borders with Sudan, the Central African Republic, Libya, Cameroon, Nigeria, and Niger. Most of its population is rural and concentrated in the southern region, and urban life is restricted to the capital, N'Djamena. It is one of the poorest countries in the world, and its principal source of income is its natural oil reserves. In all, 54% of the population are Muslim, while the rest are Catholic (20%), Protestant (14%), followers of traditional African religion (10%), and adherents to various other religious sects (3%).

Due to its position on the Sahelian strip, a belt of semiarid tropical savanna just south of the Saharan desert, the area that is now Chad has a long history of human settlement and cultivation. From the seventh century BCE, a series of states arose to control trade routes along this strip, leaving behind some of Africa's most well-preserved archaeological sites. The more recent of these kingdoms were Islamic and contributed to the establishment of Islam as the common religion among the region's inhabitants. The area was fully colonized by the French by 1920, though they made little effort to unify or develop the territory. The nation achieved independence in 1960, and since then, it has gone through two major civil wars and a series of military dictatorships.

Islam arrived early in the region, spreading gradually and becoming widespread by the 14th century. Christianity arrived much later, beginning with French Catholics at the turn of the century. Protestant missionaries from America arrived in the 1920s, often coming from the region just south of Chad, which is now the Central African Republic. As in other parts of the region, Christian missions have attracted converts through their investment in educational and medical centers, though they have seen less success in Chad than in surrounding areas to the south and west due to the early spread of Islam. In the northern desert region, the Sahelian strip, and the capital, Muslims are the strong majority, while those who practice Christianity and traditional religion are concentrated in the south among the Sara people.

Among both Christians and Muslims in Chad, there is a strong tendency to maintain elements of indigenous religion and the traditional worldview.

The belief in the influence of ancestral spirits on the lives of human beings is particularly strong, as is the belief in witchcraft and the practice of coming-of-age rites. Ritual specialists and herbalists, as they are often called, continue to play an important role in Chadian communities for determining the sources of disorder in the community. Despite ongoing civil conflict, religious groups enjoy a high degree of freedom from the government and generally coexist peacefully.

Nicolette D. Manglos

See also Africa; Ancestors; Central African Republic; Christianity; Indigenous Religions; Islam; Missions and Missionaries

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CHARISMA

Charisma is a trait found among individuals who possess a seemingly natural talent to lead or inspire a large following. The word is derived from the Greek word for "gift" or "divine favor," which emphasizes its popular view of being a god-given quality or ability. It is a popularly debated subject in psychology and has important implications in politics and religion. Indeed, most religious leaders throughout history are thought to have had a great deal of charisma, which many feel explains their success in attracting followers.

A person who has charisma is thought of as a natural-born leader. Researchers find it challenging to give charisma an exact definition; rather, most people find it easier to identify a person who has it. He or she may possess some or all of the following traits: confidence, charm, persuasiveness, attractiveness, eloquence, assertiveness, enthusiasm, and expressiveness. It is characterized by a certain magnetic appeal that a person has that attracts others to his or her cause. Having the ability to speak to large crowds effectively is also a skill associated with

charisma. Although it is thought by most to be an inborn trait, some researchers believe that charisma can be taught or imitated. Other than in politicians and religious figures, a high degree of charisma can be found among actors, musicians, and chief executives of corporations.

Not surprisingly, charisma is a trait often associated with religious figures throughout history. In the religious context, charisma may be taken a step further than being defined as simply a character trait; it is important to note that it is thought of as a “divine favor.” A leader may claim to have been “touched by God” and thus have exclusive knowledge or special powers that were bestowed on him or her by a supernatural being (i.e., God). As a result of this charismatic authority and its supposedly divine nature, such leaders command a degree of obedience that would not normally be established and are thus seen as possessing higher authority than anyone else in their followers’ eyes. Of course, to gain this type of power, these leaders must not only claim to have divine contact, but they must also be able to convince their followers that they have indeed had contact with God. It is not beyond anyone to claim that God has spoken to him or her, but it is much harder to convince people of it.

The relationship between charismatic religious leaders and their followers is highly emotional in nature. Since there are no existing human standards by which to measure the validity of the leader’s claim of divine contact and no legal basis that justifies the leader’s authority, followers must rely heavily on the person’s words and actions. In a typical scenario, a traditional set of laws and norms is already in place when religious leaders start to take control, but since their authority is derived from a “higher power,” their leadership commands a higher degree of obedience than that granted to a “normal” person—for example, an elected official. If the emotional bond between the leader and his or her followers should break, their obedience will quickly fade. This subjective leadership based on charisma is thus typically unstable and sometimes volatile.

The most important figure in the study of charisma and charismatic authority was the German sociologist and political economist Max Weber (1864–1920), who defined charisma as a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which she or he is set apart from ordinary people

and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities. In his book, *The Three Types of Legitimate Rule*, Weber introduced a tripartite system of domination based on three different types of authority: charismatic, traditional, and legal. Traditional authority, as defined by him, is authority granted to an individual by way of convention or custom, such as the rule of a king, while legal authority arises out of rational or legitimate means, as in the case of an elected president. According to Weber, authority based on charisma rests on devotion to the exceptional sanctity, heroism, or exemplary character of an individual and of the “normative patterns or order” revealed or ordained by him.

To Weber, charismatic authority is a sort of hero worship that goes beyond normal standards of submission to a leader. The charismatic leader is set apart from his or her followers in every sense, and to maintain influence over his or her people, he or she must constantly prove that he or she does indeed possess some type of supernatural ability. Proving this may require him or her to perform miracles, win battles, or bring some type of benefit to his or her followers in general. Again, more important than actually passing these tests of charisma is convincing the population of successful completion of these tests. Jesus, Muhammad, and Moses are three religious leaders who succeeded greatly in achieving and maintaining a high level of charismatic authority over their followers. They are just three examples of the many prophets, oracles, heroic warriors, visionaries, cult leaders, evangelists, and gurus that fit Weber’s criteria of charismatic leaders. A more contemporary list would include Joseph Smith (1805–1844), founder of the Church of Latter-Day Saints; the founder of Scientology, L. Ron Hubbard (1911–1986); the Hare Krishna founder, A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (1896–1977); and the evangelist Billy Graham, born in 1918. It is not necessary to have only one figure at the head of the movement. Other coleaders are frequently chosen by the leader based on their charisma as well. The power to choose these “assistants” is one granted to the charismatic leader as part of his or her divinely given gift, and the chosen ones accept it as a call from a higher power. Jesus had Peter, Joseph Smith had Brigham Young, and in the political sphere, V. I. Lenin had Joseph Stalin.

An important aspect of charisma in religion that was also introduced by Weber is the idea of the institutionalization, or routinization, of charismatic authority. At first, the charismatic leadership is anything but routine as it has broken away from the normal standards of governing; in fact, it is revolutionary. Indeed, a charismatic leader introduces new and sometimes radical systems of obedience while he or she is alive. While the leader is still living and as he or she continues to gain more followers, these methods of worship become habitual. Eventually, however, the leader must die, and these observances become custom, tradition, and ultimately, religion. Christianity is a perfect example of this phenomenon. While still alive, Jesus attracted a following of disciples who adhered to his teachings and worshipped him. After his death, following Jesus had become so routine that it became the new standard of worship. Eventually, the routine would grow to become the religion that it is today. This explains, according to Weber, how many of the world's religions came into existence, with Islam and Buddhism following similar paths.

Leadership based on charisma is not always positive, with examples throughout history in both politics and religion. In the political realm, the authoritarian regimes of Adolf Hitler, Joseph Stalin, and Saddam Hussein all arose out of the high levels of charisma the leaders displayed. For the most part, they built a strong relationship with their followers, which allowed them to gain unprecedented power in their respective governments. Their authority had negative consequences, however, as all three eventually caused harm and destruction to their followers. On the religious front, the negative side of charisma can be found in religious cults, particularly ones that have ended in the death of its followers. People's Temple, led by the charismatic James Warren "Jim" Jones (1931–1978), is an example of the instability of charismatic leadership in religion. Jones encountered a number of challenges to his leadership over the People's Temple in the 1970s. On moving his sect to a settlement that he named Jonestown, in Guyana, he led more than 900 of his followers to commit mass suicide after convincing them that it was the right thing to do according to him. Jones, through his charisma, had built up such a strong following among his congregants that they had faith in him even as he led them to suicide, which

was actually the culmination of a number of defensive responses he went through as a result of threats to his leadership. Similar circumstances led to the mass suicides of members of the Order of the Solar Temple in 1994, led by Joseph Di Mambro and Luc Jouret, and to the death of a majority of the Branch Davidians, led by David Koresh, in 1993.

Zion Zohar

See also Authority; Branch Davidians; Heaven's Gate; New Religions; Peoples Temple; Weber, Max

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CHECHNYA

The Chechen Republic is part of the Russian Federation, located in the northern Caucasus Mountains. Islam is the dominant religion of Chechnya, claiming more than 94% of the 1.2 million population. Chechens are Sunnī Muslims following the traditions of the Khanaphi and Shaphii Mazkhab schools of thought. At the same time, Chechen religious practices are also influenced by Sufism, the mystical branch of Islam. The Sufi *Tarikats* ("orders") of Kadiria and Nakshbandia have the most influence in the country. These *Tarikats* are further divided into some 30 religious groups or *Virds* (brotherhoods, communities). Besides Muslims, there are some small groups of Christians in Chechnya affiliated with the Russian Orthodox Church and evangelical Protestant Baptists.

Before the arrival of Islam, Chechens observed paganism. The early spread of Islam in the area was linked to the Arab seizure of the northern Caucasus in the 8th to 10th centuries. Arab missionaries propagated Islam among domestic ethnic groups.

In the 9th to 10th centuries, Christianity arrived in Chechnya, coming from Georgia and other areas of the northern Caucasus. The process of Christianization of Chechens and other Caucasus peoples, however, was terminated by the war of Mongols with Georgia in the 13th century.

The most important period for Islam in Chechnya was in the 13th and 14th centuries, when Chechen elites accepted Islam under the influence of *Zolotaya Orda* (“the Golden Horde”). From this time on, Islam became the predominant religion among the Chechens.

In the 18th century, Islam and its clergy began to play a political role in Chechen society. The leaders of national freedom movements—Sheikh Mansur (in the 18th century) and Shamil (in the 19th century)—played an important role in Chechen history.

Sufi Islam began to become popular in Chechnya beginning in the mid-19th century. The most significant figure in the Chechen Sufi tradition was Sheikh Kunta-Khadji Kishiyev, who was a follower of Kadiriya’s *Tarikat* and was the founder of an independent *Vird*.

During the Soviet era (1917–1991), Islam was strictly controlled by communist authorities. During World War II, ethnic groups such as Chechens, Ingushes, and others were deported to Central Asia, and the practice of Islam was prohibited.

The revival of Islam began at the end of the Soviet era in 1989. Islamic traditions were restored, mosques were built, sacred places were reopened to visitors, and Islamic institutions were opened in Grozny and Nazran (Ingushetia). In the 1990s, many Muslim Chechens went on the hajj pilgrimage to Mecca (Makkah). Many students went to Arab and other Islamic countries to study. An independent institution of spiritual administration for Muslims was founded in 1991. The Wahhabi form of Islam has been spreading in Chechnya since 1992.

Islam has thrived in post-Soviet Chechnya. Within 20 years of the end of Soviet rule, there were 465 mosques and 31 madrasas (religious schools) in the country. A mosque described as “The Heart of Chechnya,” accommodating 10,000 worshippers, was built in Grozny in 2008. An Islamic university named after Kunta-Khadji Kishiyev was founded along with a Center of Islamic Medicine based in Grozny, which is the largest institution of its kind in Europe.

In 2009, more than 3,000 Chechens went on hajj to Saudi Arabia. Islamic traditions and ceremonies appear to be an important part of the everyday life of Chechnya as well as part of its regional identity.

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See also Russian Federation; Sufism; Sunnī Islam; Violence

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CHILE

Chile, a Spanish-speaking country winding down the Pacific Coast of South America, is a multiethnic society. More than half of its population of 17 million are people of European origin, and most of the rest are mestizos (people of mixed ancestry), with a small percentage (less than 5%) primarily of indigenous Indian ethnicity. In Chile, the church and the state are officially separate. The constitution allows for religious freedom. In 1999, a law was passed that forbade religious discrimination and granted other religions the same rights that the Catholic Church has.

About 70% of Chileans are Catholic, which is the religious tradition of the early Spanish colonial settlers. Protestants arrived in Chile in the 19th century with American missionary David Trumbull; currently, about 15% of the population of Chile is Protestant. The Chilean Jewish community in the country has approximately 30,000 members and accounts for less than 1% of the population.

Chile also has religious representation from Islam and Baha’i. There are 3,196 Muslims and

6,000 Baha'is in Chile. The first Islamic institution, The Society of Muslim Union in Chile, was founded on September 25, 1926. In 2002, the Baha'i community constructed a temple in Chile, the first Baha'i temple to be built in South America.

Other religious denominations in Chile include the following: 3.3% Mormons, 1% Jehovah's Witnesses, and 4.4% "other"; 8.3% are atheists.

Approximately 65% of the indigenous population in Chile identify themselves as Catholic. Another 29% are evangelical Protestant Christians, many of whom are Pentecostals, and 6% are in the category of "other."

Before the Spanish arrived in the 16th century in search of gold, Chile was ruled by the Incas. Under Inca rule, the Mapuche inhabited central and southern Chile. In 1520, the explorer Ferdinand Magellan discovered a navigable sea route at the southern tip of the South American continent, subsequently named the Strait of Magellan in his honor. The colonial period of Spanish control in Chile began with the conquistadors led by Diego de Almagro. Catholicism was introduced to Chile by the Spanish. On February 12, 1818, Chile declared its independence from Spain.

The role of religion as a vehicle of state power and of protest emerged during the Pinochet period. In 1973, a military coup overthrew the regime of president Salvador Allende, installing General Augusto Pinochet Ugarte into power. His government ruled with an iron hand, and thousands were killed, imprisoned, and tortured. In 1980, a new constitution was approved by referendum and General Pinochet became president of Chile for an 8-year term. In the late 1980s, Chile moved toward a free-market economy, and the government gradually allowed greater freedom of expression and assembly. On October 5, 1988, President Pinochet was denied a second term as president. On December 14, 1989, Chileans elected a new president as well as a new majority in parliament. Since then, Chile has flourished as a democratic society and as a developing economic power.

Chile is a founding member of the United Nations and the Union of South American Nations. In the 21st century, it is regarded as one of the most stable Latin American countries—one that has made considerable advances in the areas of human development, globalization, and economic freedom.

Laila Kamali

See also Argentina; Latin America; New Religions in South America; Roman Catholicism

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CHINA

The People's Republic of China, established in 1949, commonly known as China, is the largest country in the world (in terms of population) with more than 1.3 billion people, which is approximately one fifth of the world's population. In terms of the total land area, which is 9.6 million square kilometers, it ranks third in the world. As one of the world's largest economies and a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, China plays an increasingly important role in the world today. China is also a multireligious country. This entry is mainly about religions in *mainland China*, a term that usually excludes Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macao.

General Knowledge About China

Outline of History

Ancient Chinese civilization, which flourished in the fertile basins of the Yellow River and the Yangtze River, is one of the world's earliest civilizations. The first dynasty of ancient China was the Xia, and dates back to 4,000 years before the present. The Qin Dynasty, the first united central government of China, was founded in 221 BCE. The last dynasty, the Qing Dynasty, ended in 1912 with the founding of the Republic of China. With the end of the civil war, the People's Republic of China was established in 1949.

Administrative Divisions

Geographically, China is divided into seven areas—namely, northeast, northwest, southwest, north China, east China, central China, and south

China. Administratively, there are 23 provinces; five autonomous regions, each with a designated minority group; four municipalities (Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin, and Chongqing); and two special administrative regions (Hong Kong and Macao). The capital of China is Beijing.

Nationalities

There are 56 distinct nationalities in China, the largest one being the Han Chinese, who constitute/account for about 91.9% of the total population. The other 55 are usually called ethnic minorities. They mainly live in the northeast, northwest, and southwest of China.

Religions in China

China is a country of great religious diversity. But the religions recognized by the government currently are five—namely, Buddhism, Daoism, Islam, Catholicism, and Protestantism. Chinese folk religion is usually consigned to the category of folk customs or folkloric beliefs. Confucianism is mainly taken as a system of thought rather than a kind of religion, albeit there was once a movement of Confucianism in the early 20th century in an effort to promote Confucianism as a religion, and there is still debate today in academia as to whether Confucianism should be established as China's national religion.

Buddhism

Buddhism is the largest organized religion in China. It was introduced to China during the Han Dynasty in the first century CE, and it became quite popular during the periods of the Southern and Northern dynasties, Sui Dynasty, Tang Dynasty, Song Dynasty, and their successors. With centuries of development, Buddhism is so deeply embedded in the Chinese culture that it has been viewed as one of the traditional religions of China.

Buddhism in China has three branches: Chinese Buddhism (Chinese versions of Mahayana Buddhism), Tibetan Buddhism or Lamaism, and Theravada Buddhism. The large majority of Chinese Buddhists are Han Chinese. The believers of Tibetan Buddhism mainly live in the areas of Tibet, Qinghai Province, and Inner Mongolia, while Theravada followers are found among the ethnic minorities, such as Dai,

Blang, and Deang, who live in southwestern areas such as the Yunnan Province and the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region.

Daoism

Daoism is China's indigenous religion. It was established in the East Han Dynasty (25–220 CE) around the second century CE, but its philosophical concepts can be traced back to a great sage, Lao Ze (604–531 BCE), a contemporary of Confucius.

Dao means “path” or “way.” The ultimate aim of Daoism is to seek the way to a long life or become a celestial being. *Dao De Jing* or *Tao Te Ching*, written by Lao Ze, is the most important Daoist text. *Zhuangzi*, *Daozang* (“Treasury of Tao”) and *Taiping Jing* (“Scripture on Great Peace”) are other important scriptures. Daoism puts emphasis on the concept of *Wu Wei* (nonaction or doing nothing) and the harmony and balance of opposites (yin and yang). The symbols of Daoism are *Taijitu* (yin and yang) and the *Bagua* (“eight trigrams”).

Daoism is a multitheistic religion. The Daoists worship many deities, including the Three Pure Ones (among whom Lao Ze is the most important one, *Daode Tianzun*), Yu Huang, Guan Shengdi, Eight Immortals, and the Yellow Emperor and Jade Emperor, among others. Daoism is divided into two sects—*Quanzhen Dao* (or “Inner Alchemy”) in the north and *Zhenyi Dao* (or “Talisman”) in the south.

The majority of Daoists are Han Chinese. Daoism also has adherents among some other ethnic minorities, such as Mulao, Maonan, and Yao. Along with Confucianism and Buddhism, Daoism is one of the three most important components of Chinese traditional culture. It has had a significant impact on Chinese ways of thinking, their philosophy of life, traditional Chinese medicine, the martial arts, feng shui, many styles of qigong, and Chinese literature and the arts.

Islam

Islam was introduced to China in the mid-seventh century across maritime and Silk Road routes through trade and diplomatic exchanges. During the Yuan and Ming dynasties, and especially in the Yuan Dynasty, Muslims were very influential in the central government. Today, 10 ethnic minorities of China's total of 55 are predominantly Muslim—namely, the Hui, Uygur, Kazak, Kirgiz, Tatar, Uzbek, Tajik,

Dongxiang, Salar, and Bonan. The majority of Muslims live in the northwest and southwest areas of China, such as in the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, and Qinghai, Gansu, and Yunnan provinces.

Christianity

Christians in China consist of Catholics, Protestants, and a small number of Russian Orthodox Christians (who first entered China in 1715). But only Catholics and Protestants are officially recognized by the government.

The Christian mission in China can be divided into four periods, of which the first three were ancient missions; the fourth is modern and contemporary.

Christianity first entered into China in the form of Nestorianism from Persia in the year 635 in Chang'an, capital of the Tang Dynasty (today's Xi'an, capital city of Shaanxi Province). It was called *Jingjiao* or Luminous Religion. With the support of the emperor, Nestorianism flourished for a while during the Tang Dynasty.

Christianity came again to China during the Yuan Dynasty, brought by Catholic Franciscans commissioned by the pope. But with the disappearance of Mongolian control of China, both Nestorianism and Catholicism faded away.

During the Late Ming and Early Qing dynasties, Jesuit missionaries headed by Matteo Ricci, an Italian mathematician, arrived in China. To secure their success, the Jesuits followed a very tactful policy of "complement to Confucianism and exclusion of Buddhism" and accepted the traditional Chinese practice of ancestor worship to show their accommodation to the Chinese culture.

This pragmatic approach produced a positive result. Not only did the emperor, for example, Kangxi, show great interest in Christianity, but many Chinese intellectuals and high-ranking officials in the imperial court even converted to the religion. But the Jesuits' reconciliation with Confucianism was condemned by the pope and led to the far-reaching Chinese Rites Controversy, which eventually destroyed the peaceful Christian mission in China.

Christianity was reintroduced to China during the modern era after the "Opium Wars" (1839–1860) with Britain. This time it was under the protection of Western warships and unequal treaties. Given the background of imperialist aggression and

colonial expansion in modern China, Christianity was generally taken as the agent of Western imperialism by the Chinese, although Christians in China did establish the first modern clinics and hospitals, provide the first modern training for nurses, bring modern educational institutions to China, and so on. The anti-Christian movement and other New Culture movements among Chinese intellectuals and the Boxer Rebellion among the common grassroots Chinese were, thus, essentially forms of anticolonial expression.

Chinese Folk Religion

Chinese folk religion, a collective label given to various folkloric beliefs, is an important part of Chinese culture. But how to distinguish folk religions from folk customs is still debated among scholars in China. Some scholars suggest that religiosity and custom are two attributes of folk religion.

In contrast to the institutional religions such as Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam, folk religion is not organized, involves no authority, and is mainly practiced by the common people. There are various forms of practices and hundreds of gods and goddess, including immortals, demigods, historical figures, animals, and natural deities, such as heaven, earth, and mountain. Guan Yu (the red-faced, bearded hero), Caishen (god of fortune), Shouxing (god of longevity), Cheng Huang (god of city), Zaoshen (god of the kitchen), Tudi Gong (god of the earth), and Mazu are only a few folk deities.

Other Religions

Historically, along with the five major religions and the various Chinese folk religions, some other religions existed in China, including the following.

Manichaeism

Manichaeism entered China between the sixth and seventh centuries CE. It was first introduced to the Xinjiang area and then spread to the inner territories of China. Manichaean temples were established in Chang'an, Luoyang, and Taiyuan as well as in several other cities in northern and central China. After the Yuan and Ming dynasties, the religion gradually died out.

Zoroastrianism

Zoroastrianism was introduced to China in the sixth century CE. During the reign of the Sui and Tang dynasties, the Zoroastrian fire temples were established in Luoyang and Chang'an, capitals of the two dynasties. But the adherents were mainly foreigners. Then, during the reign of the Song Dynasty, temples were also established in Kaifeng, capital of Song, and Zhenjiang, a city near Nanjing in today's Jiangsu Province. It gradually faded out after the Song Dynasty.

Judaism

Judaism entered China perhaps as early as the reign of the Eastern Han Dynasty. There was a Jewish community in Kaifeng during the reign of the Song Dynasty. But the Jews of Kaifeng gradually lost their identities over the course of the Qing Dynasty through intermarriage and were absorbed into the general populace.

With the advent of the Nazi regime in Germany and World War II, many European Jews took refuge in Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Harbin (now capital of Heilongjiang Province). Shanghai, in particular, became home to more than 20,000 Jewish refugees.

Policy Toward Religion

China is a country with freedom of religious belief, though the government of the People's Republic of China is officially atheistic, viewing folk religion as backward superstition and Christianity as a tool of Western colonialism. The State Bureau of Religious Affairs is responsible for the administration of religions. To assist the government in its implementation of the policy of religious freedom, each of five government-sanctioned religions has organized its own associations: the Buddhist Association of China, founded in 1953, for Buddhism; the Islamic Association of China, founded in 1953, for Islam; the Daoist Association of China, founded in 1957, for Daoism; the Chinese Patriotic Catholic Association, founded in 1957, for Chinese Catholicism; the National Committee of the Three-Self Patriotic Movement of the Protestant Churches in China (founded in 1954, otherwise known as the Three-Self Patriotic Movement); and The China Christian Council (founded in 1980), for Chinese Protestantism.

These associations and their provincial or county and city branches take charge of all regular religious activities, training of religious personnel, and publication and distribution of holy books.

With regard to the relation between church/religion and state, there was no integration of the church/religion and the state but no clear separation of church/religion and state, either, in China's history. The principle of the People's Republic of China's policy toward religions is "Cherish the Motherland, Cherish the Church," wherein the Motherland comes first and then the church. Hence, religion in modern and contemporary China always bears a political attribute. The word *patriotic* in the names of the Chinese Patriotic Catholic Association and the Three-Self Patriotic Movement (Three-Self means self-governance, self-support, and self-propagation, with a connotation of removing foreign influences from the Chinese churches) best embodies this principle. Under this policy, the religious activities of those Christians who do not want to register in these state-sanctioned associations and remain loyal to the Vatican are banned, and this has led to the growth of "house churches" or "underground churches."

Statistics

According to China's central government estimate, China currently has about 300,000 religious personnel, more than 3,000 religious associations, and more than 100,000 sites for religious activities. There are more than 4,600 Catholic and more than 12,000 Protestant churches as well as more than 30,000 other types of Christian places of worship; Buddhist temples number more than 13,000; mosques more than 30,000; and Daoist temples more than 1,500. The total number of followers of various faiths is more than 100 million.

These figures are only rough estimates, although the numbers of mosques, churches, and Buddhist and Daoist temples may be relatively accurate. However, it is difficult to estimate the total number of believers in religion as such accurately.

Among the five main religions, only the number of Muslims is relatively definite. The number of people in the 10 groups totally, which are predominantly Muslim, is about 21 million, so the official figures of about 20 million Muslims is reasonably accurate.

According to the statistics supplied by the Chinese Patriotic Catholic Association and the Chinese Catholic Bishops Conference, the number of Chinese Catholics is about 5.5 million. This figure includes the Catholics of the underground churches. Considering that the growth of Catholicism in China is rather stable, this figure is also a reasonable one.

The number of Chinese Protestants given by the Three-Self Patriotic Movement and the China Christian Council is 16 million. But this figure does not include the members of house churches, as these churches are not officially registered. Over the past three decades, the house churches have witnessed rapid growth. So 16 million is a much underestimated figure. But the number of 60–80 million suggested by some surveys is clearly overestimated. Relatively acceptable estimates should be about 40–50 million.

It is even more impossible to estimate accurately the numbers of Buddhists and Daoists and those who practice Chinese folk religions because they do not have congregational memberships, and the majority of them do not participate in public ceremonies.

A more recent survey by a group of academics in Shanghai shows that China's religious population is about 300 million. This research was viewed by officials as the country's first major survey on religious beliefs. But the accuracy of the result is also questioned. To most Chinese people, the concept of "religion" is very ambiguous. Those who practice folk religion, such as worshipping the God of Fortune, burning incense in a temple, or having an ancestor shrine at home may not think themselves as religious. This particular difficulty in trying to count the number of religious people in China limits the reliability of any statistics.

New Religious Trends in China

The rapid economic growth and fundamental social transition since the "Reform and Opening-Up" policy instituted following the death of Mao Zedong have brought about new religious trends in China.

One of the most prominent changes is in the structure of religious followers. Directly after the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976), during which a policy of elimination of religions was adopted, believers were characterized as the "five majorities"

because of the following pattern seen for demographic characteristics: the majority were older people, women, less educated, from rural areas, and ethnic minorities and from less developed areas.

However, 30 years after the 1980s, the profile of believers has become more balanced. A recent survey shows that 62% of the believers are 16–39 years old, including middle school and university students, intellectuals, and wealthy entrepreneurs.

Significant change can also be found in the structure of religions. The five state-recognized religions are in a state of uneven development. Buddhism, Daoism, and Christianity (mainly unregistered Protestant house churches) have grown very fast, while Islam and Catholicism have remained relatively steady. Folk religion is experiencing its most prosperous period. At the same time, some "new" religions such as Mormonism, Baha'i, and Hinduism have entered China.

Due to the market economy and the nationwide population migration, the regional distribution of China's main religions is gradually changing, highlighted by Tibetan Buddhism going eastward, Christianity moving westward, and Islam migrating to the east and south.

There are positive changes with respect to state policy toward religion as well. After the Cultural Revolution, freedom of religion was guaranteed by the constitution, and the government adopted a more positive stance toward religion, especially traditional religions such as Chinese Buddhism, Daoism, and folk religion. Religion is now viewed by the government as an important ingredient of a "Harmonious Society." The immediate result of this moderate tolerance policy is a religious resurgence in China.

Guo Changgang

See also Chinese Popular Religion; Confucianism; Cultural Revolution (China); Daoism; Feng Shui (Geomancy); Mahayana Buddhism; Mongol Empire; Qigong; Shamanism; Silk Road; Taiping Rebellion; Tibet; Zen Buddhism

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CHINESE POPULAR RELIGION

Chinese popular religion continues to fascinate both scholars and the general public in the 21st century. It does not refer to a single religious tradition but to a multitude of religious practices among Chinese, including ancestor veneration, fortune telling, and exorcism. The plural forms and contents of popular religion are not necessarily all found in China in this age of globalization. Most popular religious practices were suppressed in the People's Republic of China between the late 1950s and the 1980s due to the communist revolution and the Chinese state's iconoclastic ideology against religion. Chinese popular religion is thriving, however, in Taiwan, Hong Kong, North America, and other places where Chinese diasporic communities are found, and since the early 1990s, many of these traditional forms of religious practices have returned to the mainland via the routes of economic globalization. This entry provides an overview of the studies of Chinese popular religion and its traditional forms and also demonstrates the complexities of new popular religious developments resulting from economic globalization.

Overview of Chinese Popular Religion

The predominant portion of scholarly literature on Chinese popular religion prior to the early 1990s focuses on Chinese religious practices in Taiwan and Hong Kong due to the inaccessibility of communist China for researchers, where religious expressions were suppressed. Unlike 19th-century Western missionaries who boldly declared that the Chinese had no religions, Western scholars writing in the 20th century uniformly acknowledged that religious sentiments and practices permeated all aspects of Chinese societies except the socialist society of the People's Republic of China due to adherence to communist ideology. This body of scholarly literature primarily aims to explicate the origins of popular forms of Chinese religion and how they are practiced. Conceptually, many scholars who do historical and textual studies of Chinese religion discern that popular religion is synonymous with folk religion, which refers to the religious practices among common people. From this perspective, they mark the boundary between popular and institutional religions. Institutional religion pertains to more structured religious forms, such as monastic versions of Buddhism, or to religious practices sanctioned by the state, such as Confucianism. Popular religion thus appears in some sense to be the opposite of institutional religion. It is largely not organized and yet is commonplace in the daily life of common folks.

Based on their ethnographic observations, however, many anthropologists of Chinese religion argue that popular religion is not necessarily fully divorced from institutional religion. It, in fact, has the function of mediating relations between the state and society. In the history of Chinese dynasties, when a religion was sanctioned by the state, it was often disseminated to society at large through both administrative and scholarly conduits; thus, its values and practices were absorbed by common people. The state and society in Chinese historical context reflected the dichotomy between the elite and popular. However, on the cultural level, both were not necessarily sharply divided. The interplay between the state and society via popular religion, in many ways, reinforced the stability of the state and the orderliness of society when folk customs and state values overlapped. For instance, in 17th-century imperial China, the "morality book" (*shanshu*) was commonly used among common

Chinese to record merits and demerits resulting from one's good and bad deeds. This type of morality book syncretically combined Confucian doctrines on moral commonwealth and the Buddhist idea of retribution for one's actions. Both state-sanctioned religious systems were well disseminated among common Chinese in a popular form of religion.

Chinese popular religion is an assortment of various religious practices. In most cases, different practices are syncretized, such as the 17th-century morality book. In this sense, Chinese popular religion can also be understood as a cultural system or a way of being. This cultural system is a result of the syncretic forces that remold different religious practices according to the needs of people in particular localities and at different times. This type of syncretism has largely to do with peoples' effort to sacralize the pragmatic aspect of their lives and to make the uncertain certain and the future present. Religion in this regard is tantamount to culture pervading the lives of its members. This is particularly pertinent in the context of traditional China where life is integrally connected with mythical narratives of different deities and the traditional calendar marking festivals invoking the presence of the deities. The syncretic manifestations of Chinese popular religion are thus inherently a part of traditional Chinese culture.

Examples of Syncretized Popular Deities

The Jade Emperor (*yühuangdadi*) is popularly known and revered in various Daoist-inspired popular religions in China. He is venerated as the king of all gods and goddesses. It is said that, as the embodiment of Dao with a magnificent appearance, he governs the entire universe and brings knowledge to humankind. His jurisdiction covers the Three Domains (the heavens, the earth, and the in-between) and the six Realms (containing celestials, humans, animals, ghosts, hell, and hungry beings). His subjects include four types of life—namely, the embryo born, the egg born, the water born, and the reincarnated. His residency is in the heavens; however, he descends to Earth on the 25th day of the twelfth month of the lunar calendar, inspecting the state of human affairs and bringing fair judgments to both malevolent and benevolent deeds. The 9th day of the first month of the lunar

calendar is the Jade Emperor's birthday and is popularly known as "the Festival of the Jade Emperor" (*yühuanghui*). In Fujian and Taiwan, the Jade Emperor is better known as the Heavenly Lord (*tiangong*). On his birthday, people show their reverence by prostrating to his image. Many people may fast and bathe before offering incense to and entertaining him with local operas. In northern China, the format of celebrating the Jade Emperor's birth starts with a sacrificial ritual. The height of the celebration is a lengthy procession with the Jade Emperor's portrait.

In the popular religious realm of the Chinese people, while the Jade Emperor is revered as the omniscient Heavenly Lord and the ultimate judge of one's deeds, the Earth God (*tudigong*) is commonly venerated as a deity who reigns over the earthly affairs of people. There are two folk tales concerning the origins of the Earth God. Some say that the Jade Emperor sent him to the earth, while others say that he was a commoner whose name was Zhang Fude. When he was 36 years old, he was appointed as a tax collector by the Imperial Court. He never excessively collected tax from common folks; instead, he was always considerate of the poor and the wretched. It is said that because of his kind deeds, he lived 102 years. Three days after his passing away, his facial expression still looked like that of a live person. One poor family built a shrine for him with four large boulders. Shortly after this reverent act, this family became wealthy. People believed that Zhang Fude, the tax collector, was a god and, therefore, built temples to honor him as the Earth God. In rural China, farmers had a saying: "Wealth comes from land." Thus, the Earth God has been worshipped as the guardian of people's land and their crops. Most farming families honor the Earth God in their polytheistic shrines. In fact, the Earth God is venerated more frequently than the Jade Emperor. In most instances, on the 2nd and 15th day of every lunar month, farmers set up a large table with incense and candles and offer items as a public display of their devotion to the Earth God. The best known public worshipping is on the second day of the second lunar month when every farming family in a village would make rice cakes. The shape of these cakes is round but the size varies. They symbolize prosperity and are called "the Earth God cakes." The communal consumption of the Earth God cakes is

coupled with sacrificial pork, family-brewed wine, and other food items. The festive mood is intended as collective prayer for the coming year's harvest and wealth in the forms of healthy crops and prosperous family businesses.

The universal theme of Chinese popular religion is often concerned with the earthly prosperity of its adherents. The Wealth God (*caishen*) is another popular deity among the Chinese, serving the worldly purpose of one's miraculous or accumulative prosperity. The Wealth God is one of the most popular Daoist deities. In Chinese folklore, he was an actual historical figure of the Song Dynasty named Zhao Gongming. He lived in Mt. Zhongnanshan, in the current Shanxi Province, practicing Daoist alchemy. Because of his eventual attainment of Daoist enlightenment, the Jade Emperor appointed Zhao Gongming as a marshal overseeing the affairs of common folks' health, commerce, lawsuits, and other daily businesses. Eventually, he became popularly known as the god of wealth. His image is widespread in the forms of statues and posters. Restaurants and stores often display statues of the Wealth God in the center.

The Wealth God has been woven into the Chinese calendar of festivals, particularly the Lunar New Year. Welcoming the Wealth God is a critical part of the celebration of the Lunar New Year. In northern China, the whole family makes *jiaozi* or dumplings on New Year's Eve. The shape of the dumplings is identical to that of ancient Chinese silver and gold bullion. Thus, the festive consumption of dumplings becomes the family's symbolic act welcoming the Wealth God. Street peddlers take the opportunity to peddle posters of the Wealth God door to door. One family could end up buying 10 posters or more as nobody wants to turn away the Wealth God. The fifth day of the New Year marks the culmination of paying tributes to the Wealth God. Many families stay up on the night of the fourth day until the early morning of the fifth day as an expression of their devotion. Business owners start the fifth day with firecrackers invoking the Wealth God's blessings for the coming year.

These popular religious practices signify the religiosity inherent in traditional Chinese life as its expressions are found in nearly all aspects of traditional households. Different deities have different functions, maintaining daily orderliness and

bringing prosperity to the household. Many scholars have reached the conclusion that the pantheon of Chinese popular deities mirrors its worldly counterparts, such as judges, doctors, and business owners. The division of labor among deities is integrally connected with both the physical and human dimensions of the household. All gods are in charge of specific parts the household, such as the kitchen, doors, and the familial land. The order of things among the deities is likened to that among its human counterparts. The hierarchy of the pantheon reflects the patriarchal hierarchy of the family. For example, the Jade Emperor is the ultimate ruler of heaven and earth, and the father of the household holds the most power to determine the course of the family. The practice of popular religion in traditional Chinese culture ensures sustained communication between humans and a polytheistic divinity. This communication is materialized in the forms of daily offerings to the deities and festive celebrations associated with the key divine figures determining the prosperity of the household. When worldly authorities hinder the household's wishes, divine authorities are invoked and offered sacrificial meat, grains, and fruit so that the family can override worldly hindrances. Thus, the sacred is frequently invited into the worldly affairs of common Chinese.

Globalization and Revivals of Popular Religion on the Mainland

The iconoclastic destruction that occurred during the Chinese communist revolution between the 1950s and the late 1970s exterminated most religious practices. Some traditional forms and practices of Chinese popular religion dissipated. Since the late 1980s, however, many traditional forms of Chinese popular religion have been revived. The process of religious revivals in China is inextricably linked with China's effort to build a market economy as a part of the global economic network. It should be noted that the Chinese state did not deliberately revive once-suppressed religions via its market economy. Instead, inadvertently, the globally linked market in China also became an alternative social space facilitating the revivals of various religious traditions. Coastal provinces, such as Fujian, Guangdong, and Zhejiang, were among the primary locations where the resurgence

of popular religions took place due to their traditional ties with Taiwan, Hong Kong, and North America, where Chinese popular religious forms have been preserved. Often, overseas Chinese businessmen from these regions played a pivotal role in reintroducing and giving financial support to popular religious revivals. Folk religious forms in Fujian and Zhejiang provinces are particularly identical to those in Taiwan and in Chinese communities in North America.

Economic globalization, on the one hand, has reintroduced many traditional forms of religion. On the other hand, it also generates new social and political circumstances under which new syncretic popular religious forms emerge. The case in point is Falun Gong, a popular religious movement in contemporary China, which has attracted people in particular who are socioeconomically marginalized. Privatization and marketization processes in China have created a large segment of the population that is unemployed or retired without adequate retirement pensions and health care benefits. Falun Gong is a prominent example of new syncretic religious forms in this social context. Li Hongzhi, its founder, successfully created this new popular religion by incorporating the doctrines of Buddhism and Daoism into his Qigong practice. His syncretic style has drawn several millions of adherents as he is able to convince his followers that the practice of Falun Gong revitalizes one's spiritual and physical wholesomeness. His self-healing techniques encourage his adherents not to visit doctors when sick. This aspect of Falun Gong means much to those who cannot afford costly medical attention from conventional hospitals. In this background, Falun Gong could be seen as a product of China's economic and social conditions. Although it is currently suppressed by the Chinese state, this large-scale religious movement highlights and responds to the economic insecurity and psychological pressures among common Chinese in the midst of China's fast-growing economy in this age of globalization.

In this regard, the forms of popular religion in 21st-century China continue to be syncretic, and in the meantime, intimately connected with China's economic development. Its social settings are not limited to rural regions traditionally defined as the basis of common Chinese culture. The Internet, as an integral part of the infrastructure of China's

market economy, has become a critical means for popular religious adherents to connect with each other. The virtual aspect of contemporary popular religion permits popular religion to become translocal, reaching populations beyond its initial cultural location. The atemporal and aspatial nature of cyberspace makes these traditions ever more accessible to the general public of China. Thus, sizable urban populations in China also take part in the revival of popular religion.

Especially popular among today's Chinese are Guangong and the Wealth God. Guangong (162–220 CE), a prominent warrior in the era of the Three Kingdoms, became a deified figure among both China's elite and the common people. Symbolizing the spirit of justice and loyalty, he, like the Wealth God, is revered for guarding the financial safety of a household or a business. The emphasis of these two popular deities in contemporary China similarly reflects the current issues of systemic corruption in the Chinese political system and economic insecurity among the majority of Chinese citizens.

Both the name and the religious significance of the Wealth God are inextricably woven into the economic sphere of the Chinese populace. In cyberspace, different rituals concerning the Wealth God are shared among Internet users, and virtual discourses on money making interlace the supernatural with the economic reality of China. Hundreds of financial search engines and forums are named after the Wealth God. This pattern of connecting the sacred with the worldly in contemporary China is identical to the traditional characteristics of popular religion in the presocialist era. In this context, the Wealth God is also being pluralized, not limited to its singular historical origin but inclusive of any other deities that could potentially bring wealth. For instance, the mantras and recitation rituals associated with wealth gods in Tibetan Buddhism are readily available online. Apparently, wealth gods of Tibetan Buddhism are being syncretized into contemporary Chinese popular religion. The syncretizing process, conspicuously utilitarian in nature, concerns itself with invoking and maneuvering supernatural prowess in support of personal needs and desires in the modern, global context of Chinese society.

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See also China; Confucianism; Daoism; Indigenous Religions; Mahayana Buddhism; Popular Religion

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CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTIES

Christian Democracy is a political ideology that found expression in Christian Democratic parties, which became prominent in postwar Europe.

Christian Democracy emerged as an ideology at the end of the 19th century, largely as a result of Pope Leo XIII's encyclical *Rerum Novarum* (1891), subtitled "Rights and Duties of Capital and Labor." This rejected both communism and unrestricted capitalism but affirmed the right to private property. It also supported the rights of working people to form unions. Of primary importance was the need to improve the lot of the working class, reflecting a concern for the poor that was embedded in Catholic social teaching. The Catholic origins of Christian Democracy remain important, although the movement has developed variously in different parts of the world.

Following World War II, Christian Democracy was welcomed as an alternative to the discredited doctrines of fascism and became the creed of moderate conservatives in many parts of Europe. In several countries (e.g., in Germany, Austria, Italy, and Belgium), Christian Democratic parties formed

the major conservative grouping, constituted in opposition to both socialism and communism, on the one hand, and to the excesses of the market, on the other—essentially, "conservatives of the heart." Specifically, there is an emphasis on human rights and individual initiative, keeping in mind the duties of the individual toward the community. Community in turn is related to solidarity, expressed in a welfare state. The notion of the market is accepted but requires regulation. Secularism is firmly rejected.

Such parties played a major role in the development not only of the nation-states of Europe but of the European Community itself. It is no coincidence that the architects of the postwar European settlement—Robert Schuman in France, Konrad Adenauer in Germany, and Alcide de Gasperi in Italy—were all Christian Democrats. Here were the leaders of national elites whose cross-border communication and coordinated policies built a Europe in their own image. It was, for example, the Schuman Declaration that called for the placing of the coal and steel industries of France and West Germany under supranational control, from which arose the European Coal and Steel Community, the forerunner of what eventually became the European Union.

In the Protestant countries of Europe, small Christian Democratic parties (e.g., in The Netherlands or the Nordic countries) were founded by conservative Protestants in reaction to growing liberal tendencies both inside and outside the churches. Elsewhere, the emphasis on conservatism is less marked. In the very different economic and political environment of Latin America, for example, caring for the poor finds a new resonance resulting in Christian Democratic parties that lean more to the left than to the right.

Grace Davie

See also Encyclicals; Europe; European Union; Latin America; Politics and Religion; Secularism; Social Justice

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CHRISTIAN IDENTITY

The Christian Identity movement, which is made up of small separatist organizations whose leaders preach intolerance and hate through religion, exists on the far religious fringes of the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, South Africa, Australia, and various western European countries. It is arguably an ideological movement first and a religious movement second; nevertheless, religious themes are central to its teachings and motivations.

Adherents of the Christian Identity movement admire Nazism and display hostility toward non-Whites, gay men and lesbians, and members of faiths outside Christianity. They embrace an extreme form of the doctrine of British-Israelism, asserting that the true inheritors of biblical Israel are in Britain and that God's chosen people were not the present-day people known as Jews but an imagined race of Israelis consisting of those of Anglo-Saxon, Celtic, Germanic, and Scandinavian heritage. They believe that people known as Jews and persons of color lack souls and are thus somehow less than human. Jews, in particular, are perceived as mortal enemies of White people and are said to harbor elaborate plans to take over the world. Christian Identity leaders preach that the end times are imminent and will involve a large-scale race war. As such, Christian Identity adherents arm themselves heavily in preparation for Armageddon, living together in remote compounds, spinning conspiracy theories, and often resisting taxation by government.

Organizations, congregations, and even loose clusters of individuals affiliated with the Christian Identity movement in the United States are commonly thought of as hate groups and are thus tracked closely by the Southern Poverty Law Center, whose mission is to encourage tolerance and combat discrimination in all forms. The best known American Christian Identity organizations are the Ku Klux Klan, which was revitalized in the 20th century by a Christian minister, William Simmons, and Aryan Nations, also founded by a Christian minister, Wesley Swift, in the mid-20th century. Swift in particular was known for interweaving anti-Semitism and pushing the limits of British-Israelism in his California

congregation, the Church of Jesus Christ Christian, and on his daily radio program. By the 1970s, Swift's combination of Christianity and hate had gained influence not only in the Ku Klux Klan but also in traditionally secular right-wing hate groups, including neo-Nazis and racist skinheads. The Christian Identity movement also has links to militia movements and other manifestations of right-wing antigovernment activism in the United States and abroad.

Despite having relatively few affiliates (most estimates place its size at no more than 50,000 people), the Christian Identity movement in the United States has attracted publicity due to some of the more violent actions taken by its followers. The 1992 standoff at Ruby Ridge, Idaho, between the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Christian Identity follower Randy Weaver made headlines across the world. Convicted Oklahoma City bomber Timothy McVeigh—who specifically mentioned the Ruby Ridge incident as a prime motivation for his 1995 crime—had links to Christian Identity, as did Eric Robert Rudolph, who pled guilty to bombing abortion clinics, a lesbian bar, and a public gathering at the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta. In 1999, another adherent of the Christian Identity movement, Benjamin Smith, went on a shooting spree in Illinois and Indiana, wounding several Orthodox Jews and Asian Americans and killing two people, including Northwestern University's men's basketball coach Ricky Byrdsong, who was African American.

Laura R. Olson

See also Anti-Semitism; Apocalypticism; Christian Militia; Conspiracy Theories; Racism; Terrorism; Tolerance; Violence

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CHRISTIAN MILITIA

The phrase *Christian militia* (“Soldiers of Christ”) can be traced back many centuries. Until around the fourth century CE, however, given the Church’s original condemnation of warfare, it had no connection to the bearing of arms. Instead, it referred to monks struggling alone against bodily temptation. Not until the 11th century did the Church explicitly declare that Christian soldiers dying in war would go directly to heaven. *De Laude Novae Militae* (A Celebration of the New Militia), a recruitment pamphlet written for the Knights Templar (ca. 1120), promises that those serving as God’s ministers can slay heathens and apostates with impunity, for in doing so, they commit not homicide, but *malecide*: the killing of evil. “To die for Christ and to kill his enemies, there is no crime in that, only glory.”

The first bona fide soldiers of Christ were never granted priestly powers. However, their ministry was sanctified through a rite tacitly recognized by church officials as an “eighth sacrament.” It involved confession of sins, a purifying bath, and the donning of white linen, followed by an “armed vigil,” wherein the initiate’s sword was placed on an altar and blessed. After this came a homily on the code of chivalry, a Mass, and the formal girding on of the initiate’s hauberk and helmet. The final step was a sharp blow to the cheek, the so-called dubbing. This was to be the last blow he could take and not return.

The Hussite Revolt (1420–1434), named after the Anabaptist Jon Hus, engaged Roman Catholic Crusaders in southeastern Europe over disputes about the proper age of baptism and how best to distribute communion, evidence of the power of religion to generate militant and violent action. Later Martin Luther (1483–1546) rejected the notion of holy war as an oxymoron and along with it, the idea of Christian militia. State violence, he argued, should deal only with matters of this world; the Church should concern itself only with the spiritual needs of believers in the next. Thus, there must be two separate domains: the natural realm of politics and war versus the supernatural realm of the “new law,” overseen by Christ’s commandment to love and forgive one’s enemies.

This pronouncement had momentous consequences. First, it freed the Church of corrupting

political-military entanglements; second, it liberated the state to pursue its own power interests without the Church’s moral supervision. Third, and most important, it drove the impulse toward Christian warfare underground. Henceforth, soldiers of Christ would enact their desire to erect a New Jerusalem from the margins of society.

A closer approximation to what has since become familiar in the modern era was Thomas Müntzer’s League of Elect, a 16th-century German peasant force that fought under a rainbow-colored flag for a New Jerusalem “purified of all un-cleanliness” (Cohn, 1970, pp. 247–248). Certain that their righteousness would grant them immunity from harm, they stormed into battle only to be exterminated; this time by a new breed of army: secular and iron disciplined.

Modern Christian Militias

Christian militias have arisen repeatedly during the modern era. In the 20th century alone, each European nation has had its own variations, many of which have had fascist (anticommunist, xenophobic, and jingoist) overtones. Some, furthermore, have received the enthusiastic endorsement of Catholic laity, if not of the Church itself (e.g., Franco’s Falange Española, the Croatian Ustashe, and the Hungarian Arrow Cross). Others have been tied to the Eastern Orthodox Church, such as the Romanian Iron Guard. A notorious recent case in the Middle East concerns the military arm of the Kataeb Party of Lebanon, which draws support from the Maronite Christian community. During the Lebanese civil war (1975–1982), it was implicated in the murder of up to 3,500 Palestinians entrapped by Israeli soldiers in the Sabra-Shatila refugee camps of Beirut.

Because historically the great majority of the U.S. population has been Protestant, most American Christian militias have been Protestant inspired. In the 1890s, they called themselves the American Protection Association and in the 1920s, the Ku Klux Klan. Two more recent examples are the neo-Calvinist Christian Reconstructionists and the evangelical Christian Dominionists. These two movements disagree about many theological issues. However, they concur in the belief that Christian warriors must “occupy” secular institutions until the Second Coming, enforcing Old Testament law on the nation, with the exception of Jewish

ceremonial prescriptions. Among other things, this would involve establishing local theocratic rule, compulsory Sabbath, and American citizenship restricted to believers. In addition it would require death by stoning of adulterers, homosexuals, witches, abortionists, juvenile delinquents, blasphemers, and idol worshippers and, according to some proponents, the reintroduction of slavery and concubinage. In the New American Jerusalem, there must be neither public education, nor welfare, nor minimum wages; there should also be no progressive taxes, “frivolous lawsuits,” “fiat (paper) money,” or industrial pollution laws. In other words, unless it is explicitly abrogated by Jesus or the apostles, it must be permitted.

The reconstructionist agenda rarely gets beyond debates among the minuscule memberships of groups such as the Chalcedon Foundation, for example, or Wallbuilders, Inc. However, a number of believers have tired of apocalyptic fantasies and have turned to action. This includes members of various Christian Identity congregations such as the Aryan Nations Church; the Covenant, the Sword and the Arm of the Lord; and the Army of God. Since 1980, these and related groups (e.g., the *Bruders Schweigen*, the Order Strike Force II, and the Bob Mathews Brigade) have been prosecuted for armored car heists, arsons, bank robberies, counterfeiting, assaults on minorities, and murder.

Identity Christianity is so titled for the conviction shared by believers that they alone are the true Israelites, that the Bible was written for them, and that as Israel’s “lost sheep,” Christ came to redeem only them. The “them” are blue-eyed, blond, White-skinned European Americans. Jews are held to be imposters, if not Satanists; Blacks are considered soulless, subhuman “mud people,” whose filth is evidenced by their skin color.

The Sociology of Christian Militias

There exists a vast underground media of pamphlets, short-wave radio broadcasts, cable TV shows, and Internet webpages that propagate the romance of the Christian militia, heroically fighting against the reputed “sons of darkness.” Yet research demonstrates that people do not ordinarily become God’s battle axe and weapons of war by means of mass communications. Nor are members of contemporary Christian militias any less educated than their peers, more neurotic, or

socially estranged. On the contrary, they appear to be recruited by the very same ways in which psychologically normal, relatively intelligent, community-involved people become peace activists or vegetarians—namely, through personal contacts with others already in the movement. That is, people do not join a Christian militia because they have come to believe in the cause; they first “join with” an activist, and *then* begin altering their beliefs to nourish that relationship. For many, the recruiters in question are fathers, husbands, older brothers, or uncles.

In America, since 1800, Christian militias have arisen approximately every 30 years. These uprisings have less to do with economic booms and busts than with generational cycles. The names of the respective foes of these militia uprisings, of course, differ: the Illuminatism, Free Masonry, Mormonism, “Papism,” Jewry, Communism, the Bilderburgers, secular liberalism, and so forth. But the world view of the protagonists has remained remarkably stable since 1800:

1. *Manichaeism*: There is a cosmic struggle between God’s agents and those of Satan.
2. *Conspiratorialism*: God’s foes are allied in a secret conspiracy to establish a reign of death over the globe.
3. *Signs*: All discomfiting recent events are markers of this conspiracy. Today, these signs include everything from public education and labor unions to minority voting rights and illegal immigration and from pornography and divorce to “drugs” and Darwinism.
4. *Last days*: The Final Battle (and Christ’s predicted victory over Satan and his minions) is imminent.
5. *What to do*: “God, guns, and guts!” Stand with God, gird up your loins, and (to quote Müntzer), “Go at them. . . . Don’t be moved to pity. . . . At them, . . . while the fire is hot!” (Cohn, 1970, pp. 247–248)

The terrorist attack of Anders Breivik in Norway on July 22, 2011, indicates that these characteristics are part of European Christian militia as well as American groups. Breivik claimed to be part of a new Knights Templar militia reviving the spirit of the medieval Crusades and intent on ridding Europe of Muslims, whom he regarded as alien intruders.

The life span of the typical American Christian militia has usually been short, with the end following the exposure of its own leaders' sexual improprieties, financial shenanigans, and the militias' involvement in terrorism, leading to public disgrace, police crackdowns, and legal prosecution. As mentioned earlier, this is precisely how the *Bruders Schweigen* and its derivative came to an end (Flynn & Gerhardt, 1989); the same is true of the the Ku Klux Klan of the 1920s—in the latter case, amid rumors of rape, embezzlement, and homicide.

James Aho

See also Apocalypticism; Christian Identity; Christian Reconstructionism; Cosmic War and Cosmic Conflict; Crusades; Millenarian Movements; Terrorism; Violence

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CHRISTIAN RECONSTRUCTIONISM

Christian Reconstructionism is a Christian movement based in the United States that advocates the reconstruction of society in terms of biblical law. Rousas John Rushdoony, founder of the movement, established one of its more influential organizations, the Chalcedon Foundation, in 1960. Small in number, the Reconstructionists provided some of the early intellectual foundation for the American Religious Right. Through their work in Christian schools and home schooling, they were an important force in the early mobilization and organization of the movement.

Christian Reconstructionist theology is rooted in two ideas: postmillennialism and presuppositionalism. Reconstructionists believe that Satan was defeated in Christ's resurrection and that we are currently

living in the 1,000-year reign of the Kingdom of God. Postmillennialist Reconstructionists believe that creation was redeemed with the resurrection and that the Kingdom of God is increasingly apparent as history progresses and as Christians, exercising dominion, labor to build it. Postmillennialism was prevalent in America in the 19th century, but it is a rather obscurely held view today; presuppositionalism is a technical theological/philosophical position unfamiliar to most conservative Christians. Presuppositionalists hold that all knowledge is derived from presuppositions that cannot be proved or disproved. They hold that godly presuppositions and worldly (humanistic) presuppositions are mutually exclusive. The corollary to Reconstructionist presuppositional epistemology is *Theonomy* (meaning "God's law"), which asserts that there can be no neutral, objective way to determine ethics and law. Humans must live under God's law or substitute some humanistic value system; the only alternatives are an objective absolute (the Bible) or abject moral relativism resulting in chaos. While there are few explicitly Reconstructionist churches, postmillennialism and presuppositionalism are widely influential in American conservative Protestant culture in their respective popularized forms: dominion theology and the critique of secular humanism.

Some of the most important Reconstructionist books have been Rushdoony's two-volume commentary on the Ten Commandments, *Institutes of Biblical Law*; Greg Bahnsen's defense of theonomy, *By This Standard*; and David Chilton's postmillennial works, *Paradise Restored* and *Days of Vengeance*. In addition to these relatively technical theological, exegetical works, Reconstructionist authors have also produced an extensive list of books designed to help everyday Christians apply the theology in their own lives: in their families, their churches, and in civil society as a whole. Key figures in this dimension of the movement include author and publisher Gary North. He published the multi-volume Biblical Blueprint Series, which, in a widely accessible style, addresses economics, government, and family issues. Both the more technical theological works and the more popular strategic works have been used as Bible study materials and sold in church bookstores in fundamentalist Christian churches.

A key strategy for Reconstructionists' efforts to transform society is to "raise up a generation of leaders" imbued with a "biblical worldview" and trained to "exercise dominion." To this end, they

have promoted Christian schools and advocated that Christian families home school their children, producing and distributing instruction and curricular materials. While this is primarily a North American movement, there also exist small Reconstructionist groups in Europe, notably in Switzerland and in Denmark.

Julie Ingersoll

See also Apocalypticism; Bible; Christian Militia; Fundamentalism; Millenarian Movements; Politics and Religion; Violence

Further Readings

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CHRISTIANITY

Christianity is one of the world's most global religious traditions and is also the largest. Although it is associated with the culture of Europe and America, the numerical balance tipped in the late 20th century with the growth of the Christian population in other parts of the world. In the 21st century, the majority of the world's Christians are in Latin America, Asia, and Africa.

With such a diverse population in continuous existence for more than 2,000 years, general descriptions can only have limited value. The obvious central and essential element in Christianity is Jesus Christ, the leading figure of the tradition. The particular forms, features, and role of Christ vary considerably; where there is some agreement, the membership has aggregated into denominations. Disagreements as to the necessary features of Christianity between self-professed Christians can constitute issues on the actual scope of Christianity. Divisions have developed over matters of perception, culture, and doctrine as well as practice. Where there are issues of peer acceptance, self-definition may be a wholly inadequate basis to objectively determine who is a practicing Christian.

In the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, Christians see the replication and the realization of all the salvific events in Jewish history. For Christians, Jesus' death and resurrection take salvation beyond the chosen community of Israel to the Christian community, which is charged with proclaiming a universal salvation. If the history from Abraham to Jesus is the history and preservation of divine promises to humans, with Jesus we have the history of fulfillment of the divine promises.

According to Christian scriptures, the followers of Jesus were first referred to as "Christians" in first century CE Antioch (see Acts of the Apostles 11:26). Etymologically, the term *Christian* is derived from the Greek term *Christos* meaning "the anointed one." As such, *Christ* and *Christian* initially refer to the anointed, and in this context, it includes Jesus and his followers. Jesus and his immediate disciples, who knew him during his lifetime, were Jews and familiar with Judaic teachings and traditions. In that tradition, anointing is conferred on one who is appointed priest, prophet, or ruler. In the person of Jesus, it is the belief of Christians that he is anointed as all three, and he is proclaimed to be the promised Messiah or in Hebrew, *Mashiach* ("the Anointed One").

This entry outlines briefly the 2,000-year history of Christianity from its beginnings to the present day and concludes with a discussion of its place in the contemporary world.

Pax Romana

The Roman Empire provides the larger immediate historical context for the life and times of Jesus and has profoundly affected the history of Christianity. It was the context and actions of Roman rule that were essential to the death of Jesus, became the foundation for the spread of Christianity, and resulted in the preeminence of Rome as the touchstone in Christian history. Of particular interest is the Roman authorities' reliance on order and law as the infrastructure that permitted the operation of cultural and philosophical plurality in its realm. A related Roman gift was the establishment of routes, which were necessary to exercise power, ensure communications, and maintain peace in the empire.

In the context of the Roman Empire, Jerusalem was a tiny outpost. Enforcement measures to maintain the peace included a deterrent component and

were designed for social effect as much as individual penalty. Scourging and crucifixion were used with some regularity and would not have been particularly remarkable events at the time. Enforcement with a firm hand complemented the availability of Roman military might and supported the need to maintain order in a large empire. Latin was used for legal proceedings and legislative purposes. Education and commerce were more usually conducted in Greek, and the small local Jewish community where Jesus lived would have spoken Aramaic, which is a dialect of Hebrew, while studies of Judaism and biblical works would be conducted in classical Hebrew.

Our knowledge of the circumstances obtaining there in the first century CE are based on archaeological analyses and the writings of persons such as the Jewish historian Josephus and fragments of texts, including the Dead Sea Scrolls. Just as no information concerning Moses and the Exodus has been uncovered in Egyptian archives, to date, no mention of Jesus of Nazareth has been found in Roman records of the first century CE.

Among the earliest written Christian accounts are the letters of the disciple Saul (Hebrew) or Poulos (Greek) or Paulus (Latin) or Paul (English). He appears to have been educated in Greek and Latin; as a rabbinical student, he would have known Hebrew and also spoken Aramaic. Multilingual capabilities would permit Paul to communicate his thoughts in relevant languages. However, even when the translator is perfectly competent, translation risks inaccuracy from untranslatable terms and the absence of equivalent meaning for words. Consequently, our understanding of the writings of first century CE works involving multiple translations across various languages and cultures requires complex analyses and inquiry. An awareness of this complexity is relevant to reading the Christian writings across 2,000 years and several cultures.

Following the death and resurrection of Jesus, the disciples initially accepted the task of conveying the message of their teacher to a Jewish audience who were familiar with Aramaic and Hebrew. However, very early, the disciples found a more receptive audience among those who were not Jews and those less familiar with Hebraic traditions. To a Hellenized audience, linguistic and cultural translation from Jesus' Hebraic concepts

into the Greek language and philosophical categories was unavoidable. It appears that considerable effort was expended to distill and maintain the integrity of the message that was to be conveyed across histories and cultures.

Historical events beyond the early Christian communities contributed to the spread of Christianity. Shortly after the death and resurrection of Jesus as described in the Gospels, some of the Jewish community attempted a revolt against Roman rule. The Roman legions responded by destroying the Temple and dispersing the Jewish community of Jerusalem.

The earliest Christian writings include the correspondence of Paul, who was converted to Christianity after the death of Jesus and was not taught by him personally. As the disciples who were Jesus' companions before his death aged, it became apparent that some form of transmission was necessary if the message was to continue beyond that generation. These writings sought to express the essential message of the death and resurrection of Jesus to divergent audiences. There were several such Gospels ascribed to different authors. Of these, four were included in the canonical scriptures and are known as the Gospels according to Mark, Matthew, Luke, and John.

One of the 12 apostles—Peter—was accepted as the leader, and the disciples who were with Jesus before his death were given special stature. “The Twelve”—as they came to be known—exercised a supervisory role and were consulted on matters pertaining to the teaching of Jesus. Paul and eventually others were accorded the title of apostle even though they were not known to the others before Jesus' death. Lines of succession in office traced back to the 12 apostles became the marks of authority.

In the first century CE, the group of disciples grew in number and distribution following the routes established by the Romans. In the process, the group evolved from a Jewish sect to becoming a religion that was initially the target of enforcement agencies that sought to eradicate the problem. As with other oppressed groups, vocalizing expressions of faith could lead to unintended consequences. Additionally, some of the early disciples may have been illiterate. In such circumstances, it would be reasonable to expect the disciples to rely on symbols to convey their faith. The earliest such

graphic symbol appears to be a simple line drawing of a fish. For the more verbally adept person, the Greek term for fish, *ichthus* or *ichthys*, may have also served as an anagram to stand for *Iesus Christus Theos* or *Thyus*, which would translate to “Jesus Christ is God.” The cross or the crucifix was apparently not the earliest symbol of Christianity.

As described in the Christian scriptures, the nascent group of followers had several discussions as they tried to discern the content and meaning of the message for emergent contexts. A disagreement between the disciples regarding the requirements to be made of non-Jews who sought membership highlights some of the issues. For the Jews, circumcision signified a man’s participation in the covenant with the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses (see, e.g., Genesis 17:13–19). For Greek sensibilities, the same procedure was repugnant as it constituted a mutilation of the body, damaging God’s creation. Some, including the leader Peter, thought it necessary for non-Jews to become Jews before they were eligible to become Christians and made them undergo circumcision. Paul opposed this interpretation and advocated the acceptance of non-Jews directly to Christian membership without requiring circumcision. In what has come to be known as the Council of Jerusalem and as described in the letter of Paul to the Galatians (Galatians 2) and the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 15), Paul’s view prevailed and Peter agreed that to be a Christian, it was not necessary to become a Jew or be circumcised.

The articulation of Christian beliefs and the continuing efforts at clarifying the understanding to maintain the integrity of the message can be traced from accounts in Christian scriptures and other sources. Much of the ongoing discussions were summarized at meetings such as the Council of Jerusalem, which are eventually reported either in canonical scriptures or other conciliar documents. As with the Council of Jerusalem, until the Second Vatican Council in 1965 CE, the agenda for the Councils was determined by the major disagreements of the day. Proceedings of the Councils resulted in the development of doctrinal statements known as *symbols of faith* or creeds. Two of the better known such creeds in current use are the Apostle’s Creed and the Nicene Creed. Symbols of faith were also crafted by individual authorities in different parts of the empire.

Councils and movements have used the term *ecumenism* from the Greek *Oikumene* (Οικουμένη)—literally “all the people of the world”—when they intend or wish to be seen as inclusive. An ecumenical council, then, is ostensibly one in which all the people of the world participate. Which councils and movements are accepted as ecumenical vary according to individual Christian communities and within a single tradition. For instance, the Council of Ephesus in 449 CE was termed the *Latrocinium* (Latin) or Robber Council, and its decisions were subsequently overturned by the Council of Chalcedon in 451 CE.

For various reasons, in the first few centuries CE, the Christians as a minority and frequently oppressed community had been a relatively select group who established standards to be met before someone could obtain membership. For instance, a soldier or diplomat of the Roman Empire could not be accepted into the Christian community. The oath of office required these persons to pledge allegiance to the Emperor as God, which was understood to be in direct conflict with an allegiance to the Christian understanding of God.

From about 300 CE, circumstances for Christians began to change. Armenia was among the first to adopt Christianity as the state religion, and when the Roman Emperor Constantine accepted Christianity personally and adopted it as the official Roman religion, it became established and grew in popularity. The ascension of Constantine as Emperor of Rome and his conversion to Christianity mark a major change for Christianity. For instance, being a soldier and a diplomat was no longer an impediment to membership in the Christian community. Standards for admission to the community generally changed sufficiently to make a marked difference from the ascetic lifestyle. Ascetics and their followers or associates with more particular lifestyles and foci eventually developed into monastic communities. Communities who had particular social or functional directions also formed. These subsequently came to be known as religious communities.

Along with the development of the community, liturgical practices and organizational structures also evolved and adapted to various cultural and national circumstances. Some features include a more developed annual cycle of liturgical celebrations, with Easter assuming dominance in the annual calendar. Linkages to existing patriarchates and the 12 apostles have remained common to all.

Constantine's move to the city of Byzantium in 330 CE and its renaming as Constantinople accorded it the status of capital of the eastern empire. With Rome continuing as the capital of the western empire, the Christian communities were not immune from conventional social tensions and perceptions. By the middle of the fifth century, Christians had established bases in Jerusalem, Antioch (now in Syria), Alexandria in Egypt, and Constantinople (now known as Istanbul, in Turkey), and Rome. The leader in each of these five centers was recognized as of greater organizational significance and given the title of Patriarch. The Patriarch of the Church in Rome is the pope.

Christian communities were also established in regions beyond the Roman Empire. For instance, according to some traditions, the disciple known as Thomas traveled as far as India. In South India, there exists a community of Christians known as the Mar Thomites, who trace formal connections with the church in Antioch. At least two liturgical rites in South India, the Syro-Malabar Rite and the Syro-Malankara Rite, trace their origins to one of the 12 apostles named Thomas and are associated organizationally with the church in Antioch in Syria.

Reliance on differing philosophical and cultural bases appears to have contributed to some of the doctrinal and disciplinary disputes in the communities. Councils did not always result in amicable solutions and on occasion heightened tensions. Some tensions persisted for hundreds of years. For instance, a tension between understandings and practices in Christian communities in Constantinople and Rome evolved until a major division occurred in 1054 CE when the then successor to the office of Peter the apostle, Pope Leo IX, and the Patriarch Michael Cerularius of Constantinople mutually declared the other to be excluded or excommunicated from the community of the true followers of Jesus Christ. The Great Schism or division resulted in the emergence of the Orthodox Christian community, who were not in communion with the church in Rome. This division was eventually reversed officially in December 1965 CE when Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras of the Orthodox Church based in Istanbul (formerly Constantinople) mutually nullified the excommunications of 1054 CE. Official positions of course do not describe the complete reality, and

tensions between Christian communities continue to be evident. Also, schisms and healing of divisions have occurred at various times and over varying periods for a variety of reasons.

The spread of the Christian message through Europe and the West followed political and social realities such as the prevalence of Roman order. Initially, Christianity in the West meant Roman Catholicism, which subdivided into other denominations following the period of the Reformation. Several Christian monarchs found a common cause when faced with the expansion of the Turkish and other empires where the dominant religion was not Christianity. Subsequently, denominational affiliations and social and political realities affected each other. The association of Jerusalem with Abraham continues to provide fertile occasions for conflict between empires with different religious affiliations. An example of the close link between western European empires and the form and distribution of Christianity was seen in conflicts over Jerusalem. In the East, Christian communities that had been more closely integrated with local cultures acquired correspondingly different organizational and operative features. The consequence of various cultural and social features distinguishing the East from the West European Christian communities was that many of these communities were not participants in the same conflicts.

Eastern Christians who maintained their association with Rome are historically known as Eastern Catholics, as distinguished from the Eastern Orthodox Christians. The term *Catholic* has come to be associated with Christian communities linked to the Patriarch of Rome. Accordingly, there have been Orthodox and Catholic Patriarchs in the same geographical location. The process of reconciliation between the Orthodox and Catholic communities, officially marked in 1965 CE, has not yet resolved such terminological and organizational issues. Arguably, the reconciliation may mean there is no longer any substantive significance to a distinction between Orthodox and Catholic Christians. The determination of the Patriarchate in a unified community has yet to be resolved.

In Europe, the centralized organizational structure of the Roman church was susceptible to local practices in a manner that did not arise in the Eastern Christian communities. When abuses of power were not effectively addressed in the hierarchical

organization operating in Europe, the authorities faced greater criticism. Unauthorized practices sometimes placed unacceptable burdens on local Christians. Additionally, continuing threats from external forces occupied the attention of authorities. Where there were concerns for survival and the ability to practice the faith, distinctions between matters of faith and more social matters became blurred. The availability of new information as well as the emerging technology changed the intellectual landscape and provided new communication channels and a wider voice for calls to reform the church.

The development of mass-produced movable metal type for use in a printing press process revolutionized duplication of printed materials. Johannes Gutenberg's first major production runs (about 1440 CE) were ecclesiastical indulgences. Indulgences at that time were certificates issued by the Church authorities that people voluntarily purchased. The certificate entitled the person who purchased it to a remission of a specified amount of time—for example, 365 days of penance due for sins committed in this life. Penance is understood as restitution for offenses committed. The concept survives in Roman Catholicism without the issuance of certificates and with the financial component replaced by a performance of specified actions such as prayer. For example, one can now gain a plenary indulgence if one celebrates the sacraments of penance and the Eucharist. After the printing of indulgences, Gutenberg's first major production was about 200 copies of the Bible in about 1455 with subsequent improvements. The mechanization of the printing process marks a social change in western Europe, which led to consequences that are still operating.

The sale of indulgences and the purchase of jobs working for the church authorities—also known as the sin of simony—are two examples of practices that earned supporters and critics. For some, the raising of funds was seen as pragmatic and necessary for the work to be done, while for critics, the same fund-raising activities were impediments to participation in the community. The practicalities of the situation can also be seen in the example of the Bishop of Worcester in England who at one point was an Italian who lived and worked in Rome, Italy, but was paid by the community in Worcester whom he had never seen. In the king's view, the bishop was providing a service as the

ecclesiastical diplomatic agent of the King of England to the pope in Rome and so was entitled to be paid from England. Critics could equally object to the arrangement as an abuse in requiring a payment by local people who did not obtain personal services in return. This was not the only example of the exercise of the king's power and its effect on papal authority and access to resources.

By 1496 CE, the call for reform was the principal topic of daily conversation. By 1500 CE, if the need for reformation of the Western church was generally accepted, there was little agreement as to the solution. The discussions were fed by the availability of information, ideas, and solutions propagated by deployment of printing presses and a plurality of voices. In these discussions, the general presumption was the continuation of the Roman Church, which was thought to be eternal. Reformation meant the elimination of abuses, the suppression of those minority groups who deviated from the established community, and the restoration of the authority of the church. It was then and still is the expectation that the clergy are to be the conscience of the community and to be held responsible for reforms to curb the competing powers, including those of the king. It was in this task that the church appeared to have failed.

Western European Christian Denominations: The Reformation and Its Aftermath

Erasmus was the preeminent humanist of his time. His teachings and actions in making paraphrased versions of the Bible easily available helped set up a contrast between what the ideal called for and the reality. In doing so, he laid a foundation for later reformers, which he later regretted. The better known person who followed was Martin Luther (1483–1546 CE), a Roman Catholic Augustinian monk and biblical scholar who also sought to raise the standard of practice in the Church. He eventually became known for a list of 95 theses against indulgences, which he nailed to the door of the local church. It was not his intention to separate from the Roman church, but his efforts at protesting the failure to stem abusive practices and calls for reform by about 1517 CE provided the focus for an unintended revolution.

Luther's denunciation of the indulgences got the attention of the people, which attracted a response

from the church authorities. Through discussions with his opponents, his focus on the indulgence was redirected and escalated into a challenge to papal authority. His position was then alleged to be the same as that of John Hus, who had previously been denounced at the Council of Chalcedon and who, when he refused to recant, was excommunicated.

Luther's treatment by his superiors propelled him into the position of leader of a revolution in Germany supported mostly by peasants. His initial support among the more powerful authorities was diminished when the revolution became a direct challenge to papal position and a threat to unity in the Church. However, with the majority of the people preferring to sever connections with Rome, at a meeting in Speyer in 1529, several princes delivered a protest against the proceedings of the emperor of Germany and the Catholic princes. The name "Protestant" is derived from this protest. Germany was divided, and a league of Protestant nations formed, changing the political landscape by introducing a third political power alongside Rome and the Catholic princes. The Turks also presented a threat. The interaction between these four prominent political powers influenced the emergence and continuity of the Protestant Christian denominations.

While Luther's triggering issue was with Roman Catholic practice, subsequent discussions and disagreements were between reformers. So, although the Roman Church also reformed, the period of the Reformation provided a variety of denominations that sought to distinguish themselves from each other. Philip Melancthon, for instance, provided alternative views, and his followers came to be known as Philippists. Less well-known reformers include Flavius Illyricus, Bucer, and Oecolampadius.

A central point of contention between Luther, Ulrich Zwingli, John Calvin, and other reformers was the differing meanings ascribed to the expression "This is my body," attributed to Jesus, who offered bread to his disciples at his last supper with them before he died. On this issue, for instance, Luther accepted the Roman Church's teaching that in the liturgy, the bread did really become the body of Christ—the "real presence" view. Calvin and others rejected that view. Further distinction developed when some preferred to explain the expression to mean that the body of Christ was communicated "with" the bread rather than "in" the bread. Besides differing views over the real presence

issue, denominational distinctions also involved varying views on a belief in saints, the relationship between church and state, the views of what constituted simplifying, what was essential, whether or not the Bible could be read in the vernacular, how much weight was to be given to the writings in the Bible, and what if any extra-biblical sources were acceptable as authorities in faith.

The distribution of different western Christian denominations originally part of the Roman Church in Europe was largely determined by the location of its leader and the ruler's choice. Additionally, an emerging sense of nationality and political interests operated alongside religious interests in different ways across Europe. While Lutherans were to be found mostly in northern Germany, the south continued to be in association with the Church in Rome. In Denmark and Sweden, the political interests were more significant than the religious. In England, under King Henry VIII, the Reformation was political, with the King resisting ecclesiastical reform, though the legendary account focuses on the refusal of the pope to grant Henry VIII a divorce, thus precipitating the break with Rome. According to some views, the English position appeared to be the same as that of the Roman Church, with the king replacing the pope as supreme ecclesiastical authority and preferring but not requiring clerical celibacy. Official positions sometimes arguably did not represent practice. For instance, even where some denominations rejected the elevation of some Christians to be martyrs and saints, they did consider their leaders and those of their own denomination who were brutally executed to be exemplary persons. Similarly, where some would only accept the biblical writings as the authority (Latin *sola scriptura*), they still had to contend with the views of translators and the absence of a single version of the writings.

Within a year of Luther's death, German Lutherans were almost destroyed by the Emperor Charles V who was free to attend to domestic matters as a result of a temporary lull in the wars with the Turks and the French. Following the battle of Muhlberg in 1547 CE, under the Augsburg Interim settlement, he permitted marriage for the clergy and the administration of communion under both species of bread and wine in Eucharistic celebrations. The effect of the settlement was to divide the Lutherans, and when war with the Turks erupted

again, they managed to gain the help of the French and achieved the Peace of Augsburg in 1555 CE. Principally providing physical safety to Protestant states, the agreement also included the principle later known by the Latin phrase *cujus regio ejus religio*, which meant that the people were to follow the religion of their ruler. Alternatively, they could either keep the peace or leave the kingdom. Later social realities effectively inverted the operation of the principle, as in England, with the ruler required to follow the religion of the people or abdicate. Until the Edict of Nantes in 1598 CE, the principle of one religion in one kingdom (in French, *un roi, une loi, une foi*) prevailed everywhere in Europe.

Following the Edict of Nantes, which permitted subjects in France to follow a different religion from that of the ruler, the trend continued with the growing sense of nationalism. For instance, the Dutch Reformers obtained the support of Catholics in opposing the Spanish rule in Holland. Subsequently, and to varying degrees and at various times, nations developed predominant rather than exclusive Christian denominations. Other major western European Christian denominations include the Huguenots in France, followers of Zwingli and the Calvinists centered in Berne and Geneva in Switzerland, Roman Catholics in France and Spain, the Reformed Church in Holland, and Presbyterians in Scotland. Even where a separation between church and state was alleged, in practice, rules still sought and obtained control over the kingdom through control of the Christian churches.

The Roman Church held the Council of Trent, which took place in various stages and in different places between 1545 and 1563 and addressed issues raised by the reformers. While the Roman Church insisted on the use of the Latin translation of the Bible—the Vulgate—in its liturgies, in practice, Catholics were involved in translating the scriptures into other languages. The availability of the *Codex Vaticanus* in the Vatican Library contributed to the task of translation. The decrees of the Council of Trent were determinative of the life and structure of the Roman Church and its ecclesiastical interaction with the traditions of western reform Christianity up to the last Vatican Ecumenical Council II.

The European Renaissance and the Age of Reason (about 1650 CE to 1800 CE) that followed provide the more recent backdrop to current realities for

Christianity in the West. Philosophers such as René Descartes (1596–1650) advocating reason as the normative value encouraged scientific investigation and a secular society in competition to the Christian denominations. Some of these ideas gained acceptability within Christian denominations. For example, Gregor Mendel (1822–1884), an Augustinian monk, made a systematic study of plant breeding in the monastery garden and developed a mathematical formula that has led to his recognition as the father of the science of genetics.

European groups and ideas translocated to the New World and imposed themselves on the Aboriginal peoples. The European doctrine of *terra nullius* as applied to the land they encountered across the Atlantic provided a justification to continue European forms of Christianity, initially by the authority of European monarchs and subsequently independently of them.

In Canada and Australia, for instance, the head of state has been Queen Elizabeth II, who is a constitutional monarch of the United Kingdom and also head of the Church of England—known as the Anglican Church in Canada and the Episcopal Church in the United States. French Catholics also established control in parts of Canada and the United States; the southern territory of the United States was dominated by Spanish Catholics in the West and Portuguese Catholics in the East. European Catholic and Protestant denominations initially settled in different parts of the continent and subsequently moved to other parts. Quakers initially settled in Pennsylvania, Catholics in Maryland, and the Dutch Reformed Church in New Amsterdam, now known as New York. Minority Christian denominations in European lands found new opportunity in the New World. Lutherans from Sweden, Huguenots from France, Baptists from England, and Presbyterians from Scotland moved across the Atlantic.

The dominance of the Age of Reason (ca. 1648–1800) explicitly or implicitly shifted the starting point of belief for consideration and acceptance of Jesus as Lord to that which is materially verifiable. With the attitude that all prior history unless it was demonstrably reasoned, was inferior, ambivalence in religious matters and an interest in social order became more prevalent. For instance, people such as Benjamin Franklin in the United States stated that he was agnostic about the divinity of Jesus

because he had not studied it. However, he did not see harm in believing that Jesus is God if the consequence is the implementation of Jesus' teachings.

The impetus of the Reformation encouraged an interest in returning to a genuine faith in Christ, which continued through the 20th century. The success of George Whitefield's revival sermons after his arrival from England in 1739 and that of others may be noted among the new movements. Jonathan Edwards was another who sought to motivate his hearers to seek salvation by detailing the consequences for those who do not have personal faith in Christ. Whitefield (1714–1770) was a personal friend of John Wesley (1703–1791), also a revivalist preacher who differed with him on the doctrine of predestination. The group founded by Wesley eventually became the Methodists.

An additional development was the reliance on science, which for some meant an alternative to reliance on Christ and a religious skepticism. The coexistence of skeptic and true believer along with traditional church communities required toleration for each other at least in some sense. The 20th-century World Wars, the Nazi regime, the Holocaust, the *Pax Americana*, and the establishment of the state of Israel transformed the political landscape. A formerly dualistic competition between the Christian-dominated nations of Europe and the Islamic-dominated nations to the east became an unprecedented competition for Jerusalem between political powers aligned with the three Abrahamic religions.

The Ecumenical Movement and Other Recent Developments

One of the most significant developments in the 20th century in the experience of Christian churches has been the rise of an ecumenical movement (Greek *Oikumene*), in which churches seek reconciliation, reunion, and restoration of oneness; the hope is to reverse centuries of history marked by separation and withdrawal of churches from one another—a sad history of confronting, competing, and criticizing each other in a bitter rivalry that descended to name-calling, insult, and even to internecine warfare. The ecumenical movement sought to change the goals and methods for churches to relate with each other and to seek an appropriate form of unity that would enable both

an immediate common Christian work and an eschatological hope for the restoration of the broken unity of Christian believers, “that they may all be one” (John 17:21).

The ecumenical movement acquired a diverse complexion. This concern for dialogue between differing religious traditions involved a Jewish-Christian dialogue, which was complemented by a three-way process with the addition of the Islamic traditions. Even within the Christian context, ecumenism meant dialogue between Christian traditions. In the North American context, ecumenism may be seen in the formation of the Canadian Council of Churches in 1944 and the World Council of Churches in 1948.

But this search for ecumenism carried with it a profound dilemma. From the outset, the defining goal of ecumenical discussions was the creation of more unified churches. From the formal founding of the World Council of Churches, many leaders of the movement used the phrase “full structural unity” to define its aim. Idealists even dreamed of restoring full world communion. Yet, paradoxically, this hope emerged at just the same time as profound challenges in 20th-century culture shook traditional foundations and assumptions, including the core tenets of religion itself. In this situation, churches were prompted to reevaluate and re-enunciate their own special traditions—their roots of certitude in the faith. In this way, key differences in tradition between churches were sharpened just at the time when the Christian movement entered into a serious effort to achieve ecumenical unity. “Full structural unity” came to be seen as remote wishful thinking or even as a detrimental threat to tradition. This was fully acknowledged by the World Council in the Toronto Statement of 1950, which stated explicitly that ecumenism was not a search for a “super-church.” The ecumenical atmosphere remained at best cautious—for various reasons, the Roman Catholic Church has never joined the World Council as a full member—and at worst, argumentative and even antagonistic.

The common interest in the Bible, the work of producing more current vernacular translations of biblical texts, and the study of the texts using modern analytical methods brought scholars of various traditions together. At the same time, interpretive and editorial attempts to improve earlier renderings that have been a continuing issue from the

earliest times, as can be seen in the *Codex Sinaiticus* and *Codex Vaticanus*, have not abated. The variations have not been helpful for those who seek to obtain a uniform interpretive result and to reduce strains between various Christian communities.

For the Roman Church traditions, the calling of the Second Vatican Council by Pope John XXIII (1965) with the agenda of *aggiornamento* or updating provided an occasion to restate central doctrines and revive ancient practices. The process involved a wide consultative process, including scholars from within the Roman church and beyond, which helped forge new channels of communications and appreciation of common themes. The dialogical processes that formed at that council complemented the ecumenical discussions within the Christian communities and with the other Abrahamic religions. While the focus remained on issues arising out of the European and American histories, there was an incipient recognition of other traditions within and beyond the Abrahamic religions.

With continuing change at the end of the 20th century, the predominance of capitalism, and an awareness of global issues, such as environmental concerns, new discourses emerged. Otherwise secular institutions such as the World Economic Forum based in Davos, Switzerland, describe a perceived crisis of values. Calls have been heard for an emerging reintegration of economy and religion and a reconstitution of society that includes environmental considerations. While the configuration of Christianity with its interpretive and structural diversity has evolved, in many essential respects, its adherents have retained continuity in their reliance on the founding image of Jesus, known as the Christ.

Lester de Souza

See also Anglicans; Bible; Eastern Orthodox Christianity; Ecumenicalism; Fundamentalism; Global Religion; Missions and Missionaries; New Religions; Pentecostal Movements; Protestant Christianity; Roman Catholicism; Syncretism

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CHRISTMAS

Authorized by narratives in two of the Gospel books of the Christian Bible, Matthew and Luke, and providing a prequel to New Testament Christology, Christmas celebrates the coming of God to earth through the birth of Jesus Christ. It is Christianity's second greatest festival, after Easter, and during this season the Church becomes a theater of incarnation. The apostle Paul claimed that Christ born in Bethlehem can still be located on earth: The Church as the body of Christ is the continuing extension of the incarnation.

A full account of Christmas requires a theological ear for what is irreducibly religious but also a sociological imagination for its holy day/holiday presence in lived Christianity, where the categories

of sacred and profane are continuously scrambled, and an anthropological appreciation for the formation of a distinctive Christian material culture inside the Church and its exuberant and uncontrollable migrations beyond it. Already in its early centuries, the Church set Christmas amid the winter solstice, a time long given to Roman celebrations, raising the question whether Christianity would indelibly mark material culture or whether the long history of the pagan festival would undermine Christian intent.

Christmas displays the risk of incarnation. As festival spins God into every matter, Christianity becomes complicit in forces it cannot control. Religious props soon enough are embraced and embellished on every worldly stage. Celebrations of Christmas migrate from great cathedrals to their public squares and markets and, later, to homes and villages—a multivalent incarnational extravagance.

Religious traditions always reflect a tension between original intention and contemporary realization. While sacred texts authorize religious festivals, they do not control their evolution. Embedding Christmas in a Christian liturgical year, preceded by the four-week preparatory season of Advent, was meant to situate it in sacred time and space. But narratives, characters, motives, and their ritualizations do not stay put as enthusiastic crowds carry them, along with the Christ child, to ever new sites. Hence, many Christians over the years have questioned whether Christmas should be staged at all, arguing that sensuous delight more likely distracts from rather than carries spiritual presence. Many have questioned whether the avalanche of material culture (presents, wrapping, toys, feasting, Santa Claus, family, kitsch and carols, and trees and lights) has buried the original significance.

Christian theologians assert that a festival of incarnation reaffirms that God's creation is good, that Christmas balances the emphasis on the death of Christ, that it carries the good news that God wants to be present on earth, in the midst of the human condition. But many, inside and outside Christianity, lament as inevitable the commodification of culture and religion and now claim that Christmas has reached its apogee as a sacrament of consumer culture, with global capitalism rather than Christianity as the host. But to dismiss

Christmas as the triumph of consumer capitalism over religion as its rival worldview misses too many of the meanings of Christmas and seems to accept the values of the market as the final stage of human evolution.

Donald J. Heinz

See also Christianity; Festivals; Holidays; Popular Religion

CHURCH OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

See Mormons

CHURCH WORLD SERVICE

The Church World Service (CWS) is a cooperative ministry founded in 1946 and is composed of 35 Protestant, Orthodox, and Anglican denominations and communions. As a Christian nongovernmental organization and in line with the best practices of Christian values, CWS provides services to individuals and communities in crisis around the world. Its mission is to connect Christians with partners to create intercultural and interreligious coalitions aimed at eradicating poverty, hunger, and other social injustices as well as promoting peace in a global context.

CWS offers programs globally that support sustainable grassroots development, disaster relief, and refugee assistance. This organization gives focus to education and advocacy in efforts to raise awareness about hunger-related issues and lend voice to the concerns of its partners and constituents. CWS seeks to nurture growth and development globally through education and innovation and empowering its partners to take an active role in the progress of their communities. It confronts the root causes of hunger and works toward food security through the protection of land rights, nutrition education, and food diversification. CROP (Communities Responding to Overcoming Poverty) Hunger Walks have become a major fundraising effort by CWS in the fight against hunger as well as for international relief and development.

Providing potable water and establishing an ecosystem-based management that allows for the purification and sustainability of water is also part of CWS's mission. In addition, this organization aims to raise awareness about poverty, the AIDS epidemic, human rights issues, and peace building. The efforts of CWS located within the United States also have an international focus and work toward promoting fair national and international policies.

CWS responds to emergencies worldwide and primarily focuses its efforts on individuals and communities who are vulnerable in the aftermath of disaster. The organization partners with communities to identify their needs and access resources for survival and long-term recovery in addition to providing physical assistance during crises. Through its Immigrant and Refugee Program, CWS is proactive in meeting the needs of immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers and assists with resettlement efforts along with other legal, professional, and chaplaincy services. In addition, immigration reform and political advocacy have become an important focus for this organization.

Some have claimed that CWS has made use of its efforts and the advantage of globalization to proselytize. However, CWS maintains that its humanitarian work has been grounded in service rather than evangelism and provides assistance to those in need regardless of religious background.

Gina Messina-Dysert

See also Catholic Charities; Refugees; Social Justice; World Social Forum

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CHURCHES

The English word *church* comes from the Greek word *ekklesia* (ecclesia), a term that literally means “the people of the Lord,” and from the third century has signified the community of Christian believers. Today the term *church* is applied primarily to fellowships of followers of Christ, yet the term has also been applied more broadly to refer to the gathering of the faithful in Buddhist and other religious communities.

Some scholars argue that prior to the emergence of Christianity in the Mediterranean region, the Greco-Roman populace of antiquity used the term *ecclesia* to refer to an association of free male Roman citizens, thus establishing boundaries on gender and citizenship. According to Yale New Testament professor Abraham Malherbe, the early Christian church was an “alternative community” that nevertheless had commonalities with other Greco-Roman societies, such as offering a home to socially uprooted, alienated individuals seeking a substitute to the dominant culture. What distinguished the early church communities from other volunteer societies of the Greco-Roman world was the makeup of its members and the center around which the community found its identity and unity together. The social makeup of early churches was strikingly egalitarian compared with similar volunteer associations of the Greco-Roman world. Starting as house fellowships, where followers of Christ would gather to pray and read letters from the disciples of Christ and early church leaders, thus gaining comfort and guidance in a context of subjugation, such household gatherings were characterized by a relativization of social statuses within the household of faith. In the words of the biblical writers, “For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him” (Romans 10:12) and “There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:28). In the biblical vision of the church—the gathering of the followers of Jesus Christ—social statuses are relativized under the banner of God’s new covenantal relationship with human beings, broadening the notion of God’s elect to include all people, male or female, slave or free.

Whereas the first distinct mark of the early Christian church is its social composition, a second distinguishing quality of the church is its theological content—its central affirmation that Jesus Christ is Lord and the concomitant commitment to be a community of believers guided by the example given by the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The message itself was quite radical given the cultural and religious constraints of the time—for a Jewish sect to open the covenantal promises of that tradition and widen the interpretation of Jesus' message as one that was not just for Jews but also for all peoples (e.g., Gentiles as well), regardless of ethnicity or gender. Though the Christian church started in the first-century Greco-Roman world, in a matter of a few 100 years its center of gravity had moved to the eastern Mediterranean (e.g., Constantinople), then to northern Europe (e.g., Ireland), then throughout the Americas, Africa, Asia, and the Pacific. Since the 1980s, there has been a massive shift in the demographic spread of Christianity worldwide, with more Christians in the Global South than in the Global North. This enormous southward shift, which has made Africa, Asia, and Latin America the global centers of church expansion, has given rise to a proliferation of kinds of churches, at once reflecting the specific struggles and opportunities presented by each social, cultural, and religious environment out of which the church has emerged as well as generating greater global connections through denominational and intradenominational conferences and ecumenically oriented missions and ministries.

Comparatively—and an issue of great importance today—members of churches in the North Atlantic region are decreasing in numbers. This is especially true in the mainline Protestant churches, which have been decreasing in membership for decades, whereas growth is occurring in Pentecostal, charismatic, and more conservative independent churches. When understanding the church worldwide, it is crucial to recognize the immense influence that the surrounding social, cultural, political, religious, and economic context plays in the self-understanding of the church and its actions in any given community. In fact, the context of churches in part makes each church so apparently distinct that many have commented that there are many Christianities located throughout the world.

A third distinguishing mark of the Christian church universally, thus all local Christian churches,

is its ontological identity. Christian churches are called the “body of Christ,” since it is believed that Jesus Christ dwells in the midst of the gathering of his followers. As such, the church is the body of Christ in the world and, at its best, functions as Christ did, by being an agent of reconciliation with God, an advocate of justice, and a channel of healing, service, and compassion to all people engaged in these activities, even to the point of suffering persecution for being a witness to the presence of the Kingdom of God. The existential nature of the church as the body of Christ illuminates its mission in the world—to be active an agent of reconciliation in the world by being at once a sign and instrument of the presence of God (i.e., the kingdom of God). In addition, churches are responsible for mission, worldwide. At the 1939 ecumenical meeting at Tambaram, India, church leaders reported that world evangelism was the church's obligation.

Historically, Christian churches have been divided broadly into three main categories: Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox with a subset of Oriental Orthodox, and Protestant. Yet this overly simplistic tripartite division of the church universal fails to capture fully the immense range of churches worldwide. To understand Christian churches globally, it is helpful to recognize that there are not only Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant churches but also numerous independent churches (e.g., African Initiated Churches) that reflect more directly and intensely the cultural, spiritual, psychological, and social makeup of local believers rather than that of the historic churches that have advanced through the Christian missionary movement. Several of these independent churches, which can be Pentecostal-charismatic in their orientation, replete with spiritual deliverance, physical healings, and all-night prayer meetings, have emerged as massive movements following a traditional spiritual, prophet-leader (e.g., Simon Kimbangu, Isaiah Shembe) whose combination of charismatic healing and prophecy attracts millions of adherents. If the growth of the churches continues along the trajectory established in the first decade of the 21st century, Africa will be the continent with the world's largest numbers of Christians. Scholars note that of all Christian churches, it is the Pentecostal-charismatic-oriented churches that are growing the fastest worldwide, with leaders of such Pentecostal fellowships in the Global South making their way

to the Global North, where they are engaging in healing and spiritual deliverance in churches located in modern, urban centers.

There are numerous ways to understand types of churches, ranging from their ethnic or racial makeup (e.g., Black church, Asian church), regional affiliation (e.g., Church of England, Roman Catholic), theological commitment (e.g., Wesleyan, Calvinist), liturgical rite (e.g., Roman Rite, Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom), and even worship style (e.g., Pentecostal, Reformed, contemporary). Notwithstanding the various ways to understand the vastly broad movement of churches, the global connections created by Christian churches, whereby church leaders and parishioners share fellowship, mission strategies, and worship, have made churches among the most influential social institutions worldwide, yielding at times enormous political weight in part because of the sheer numbers in their congregations and denominations. Among immigrant communities, churches are often the only social institution that enables the ongoing relational identities and the production of new social and spiritual persons required to successfully engage global and social realities of the late-modern period. The global linkage of the churches has enabled them to communicate to one another via the Internet, mobile phones, and other current technologies that have given many a sense of living in a smaller world, marked by a hitherto unparalleled access to distant locations at any time of the day or night. Beyond their social realities, churches help mediate the human-divine relationship, since it is believed that God speaks to the worshipping community through the sacraments, shared fellowship, and proclamation of the good news (i.e., *kerygma*) that through Jesus' death and resurrection, there is reconciliation with God.

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See also Anglicans; Christianity; Eastern Orthodox Christianity; Protestant Christianity; Roman Catholicism

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CINEMA

“God is box office,” a remark attributed to Cecil B. DeMille, has remained pertinent as religious films retain their global popularity more than 100 years after the advent of cinema. As a major icon of modernity, cinema might have been expected to ignore religion; instead, it has played an important role in disseminating religious belief and practice, with film showing a natural affinity for depicting the religious because of its aesthetic qualities; its narratives, spectacle, music, and performance; and the sense of wonder it conveys even today. Cinema is part of the continuing history of the mediated nature of religion itself and adds a new layer to centuries of images, plays, songs, storytelling, and other forms.

Religion is present in cinema not only in terms of theology, stories of religious figures, or the depiction of divine intervention in the lives of humans but also through cinema's ability to create new mythologies, in the powerful stories that give meaning to life, and in its central concerns with spirituality and morality, showing the way the world is and what it should be. Religion may also be present as part of wider culture because so many European and American films show Christian beliefs and festivals, just as Indian cinema is dominated by Hindu ways of life.

Religious cinema has flourished even though films are usually produced under censorship codes that pay particular attention to specific religious forms—whether it is the Christian, particularly Roman Catholic, influence on the U.S. Motion Picture Production (Hays) Code of 1930 or the Islamic codes of postrevolutionary Iran.

Biblical and Christian Films

Hollywood's early films included biblical epics—that is, films that took their stories from the Old and New Testaments. For many people, these films shaped their knowledge of the texts and created images of the prophets and others that became standard, while their use of spectacle in miracles was astounding. God himself rarely appeared in Old Testament films—and then, as nothing more than a voice—although the image of Jesus was portrayed. These films shared generic features with

the great historical epics—major stars, exotic locations and costumes, and casts of thousands, such as in *The Ten Commandments* (directed by Cecil B. DeMille, 1923 and 1956) and the later epic *Ben Hur*, directed by William Wyler in 1956, whose subtitle is *A Tale of the Christ*, where the Christian message is more subdued.

European cinema also made many religious films, with the Italian neorealists creating powerful images of Jesus, in the *Gospel According to Saint Matthew* (directed by Pier Paolo Pasolini, 1967), and of saints, notably Francis of Assisi, and popularized as well in melodramas such as *The Song of Bernadette* (directed by Henry King, 1943) to the very British satire on Anglicanism, *Monty Python's Life of Brian* (directed by Terry Jones, 1979).

At the beginning of the 21st century, it seemed that films in the West were focusing on new forms of religion and angels and individual spirituality rather than traditional theological topics. However, the success of Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ* (2004), with its overtly Roman Catholic view of the crucifixion, suggests that there remains a huge and enduring market for narratives based on traditional theological forms and approaches.

New forms of religion that are emerging in different parts of the world and new concerns of changing societies are reflected in cinema. It is striking that many of these films favor a melodramatic mode, in which tensions are negotiated and modernity and enlightenment rationality are critiqued, while “family values” and traditional codes of morality are upheld.

Films rooted in Pentecostal Christianity have become enormously popular in West Africa since the relatively inexpensive technologies of videotapes and now digital discs have allowed a proliferation of low-budget feature films to be disseminated. These films do not show holy figures but are about religious practices. The Ghanaian Pentecostal films emphasize urban modernity and consumerism, competing to address their devotees as consumers and clients, creating a Pentecostal public culture.

The more famous Nigerian cinema, Nollywood, dating from the 1960s, grew with digital camera and televising of theater productions on rapidly growing television stations. These are made in southern Nigeria, mostly in English, and are very popular in Nigeria and the rest of Africa and among its diaspora, where they now seriously rival

the products of Hollywood. Such films depict a Pentecostalist view of traditional African religion as witchcraft based on possession and magic in what has been called a “cinema of outrage” as it aims to shock with its social themes combining melodrama with the horror genre.

Hinduism

India has two genres that depict Hindu theology—namely, the mythological and the devotional. The former is defined largely in terms of its narratives, which draw on Hindu myths and legends, the oldest versions of which are found in ancient Sanskrit texts such as the Puranas. However, cinema has drawn more heavily on India's two great epics, the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*. The mythological was largely pushed into the B-movie circuit in the 1950s, where it has continued to flourish, with a brief resurgence in the 1970s when it famously spread the cult of a previously minor goddess, Santoshi Maa. In the late 1980s, the government relaxed its restrictions on the depiction of religion on television, where the mythological enjoyed phenomenal success in the new form of religious soap operas, especially serialized versions of the Hindu epics.

The second religious genre comprises films about devotees, drawing on India's rich premodern bhakti (“loving devotion”) traditions, narrating the often miraculous lives of India's many medieval singer-saints, who are associated with the traditions of bhakti, where the devotee's deeply personal and emotional relation to the deity is often expressed in song. This genre was particularly closely associated with Gandhian politics in the 1930s.

Many religious references can be found in ostensibly nonreligious Indian films, which are largely seen as a nongeneric category, most grouped into the “social” or “masala” film category. These contain many depictions of religion—religious communities, festivals, ceremonies, or divine intervention—and also raise and address issues that are central to religion such as virtue, suffering, and redemption.

Cinema and Islamic Cultures

While Islam prohibits the depiction of the divine or its prophets in human form, many films focus on Islam as part of culture and society. Arab cinema

more often deals with religion in terms of political issues such as the Arab-Israeli conflict, while Indonesian cinema looks at Islam as part of a broader national culture. Many cinemas worldwide deal with the Islamic resurgence, whether made in Pakistan (*Khuda ke liye*, directed by Shoaib Mansoor, 2007) or the United States, though with expectedly very different treatments. India, which has one of the world's largest Muslim populations, though they form a religious minority, has a number of "Islamicate" genres, including the Muslim social and nostalgic subgenres, such as the courtesan film, while historical films raise issues concerning the position of Muslims in contemporary India.

Islamic states have varied in their treatment of cinema. The Taliban forbade all cinema in Afghanistan, whereas Iranian cinema has flourished since the revolution in the Islamic Republic, producing major art films that have won international acclaim, with filmmakers such as Abbas Kiarostami and Mohsen Makhmalbaf. These films are produced under strict censorship and largely avoid criticism of religion, although there is social criticism. There is also a popular Iranian cinema that promotes Islamic values in more melodramatic modes.

Buddhism and Other East Asian Religions

Religion in east Asia often appears as part of national cultural history. Japanese films display Shinto and Buddhist elements, and although they often say little directly about religion, they incorporate themes, whether in Yasujiro Ozu's transcendental Zen style or *anime's* use of mythology and ritual as part of a wider Japanese culture of combining religion and entertainment. Korean films use Buddhism to address contemporary issues—for example, *Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter . . . and Spring* (directed by Ki-duk Kim, 2003). China's many religions, which are controlled by a central communist ideology, appear in the form of culture in life rituals and ancestor worship, while Hong Kong's supernatural films and ghost stories, such as *A Chinese Ghost Story* (directed by Siu-Tung Ching, 1987), are banned in China along with science fiction and horror films.

Films are among the most global of all media, circulating beyond the areas where they were made and the communities of believers who were the initially intended audiences. These films may even come to

represent those people and their religious beliefs. For example, Hindi films circulate among Muslim communities overseas who may have a very different view of religious issues from Indian Muslims. Many people consume several types of film and media even in a single day, and the audience's experience of religion in the film cannot be ignored.

Rachel Dwyer

See also Christianity; Hinduism; Islam; Mahayana Buddhism; Popular Religion; Television; Theravada Buddhism; Vajrayana, Tibetan

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CIVIL RELIGION

Civil religion became a popular topic of discussion in the sociology of religion during the late 1960s with the publication of Robert Bellah's essay "Civil Religion in America." The definition of civil religion has been a major point of contention throughout the debate, but Bellah initially writes of it as the religious dimension of civil life marked off by rituals, discourse, myths, beliefs, and symbols that unify the national community and point the nation toward proper domestic and international action. And even though previous researchers had written about similar topics in similar terms, Bellah's article struck a chord in the academy and was picked up by social commentators in the following years. But the origins of the term are found much earlier.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Civil Religion

While many writers have traced civil religion back to ancient Greece and the Roman Empire, Jean-Jacques Rousseau was the first to use the term *civil*

religion in his work, *The Social Contract*. Rousseau claimed that religion, and specifically Christianity, was antithetical to the cohesion of a political community. He believed that Christianity divided the allegiance of citizens between this world and the world of the afterlife. But Rousseau recognized that religion afforded legitimacy and authority to all known civil systems and that such a means to legitimacy and authority was necessary for good citizens and a properly functioning state. To implement his social contract without the entanglements of otherworldly religion while retaining that authority, Rousseau posited a civil religion that the state would recognize and maintain. This civil religion would consist of basic religious principles that all members of the society could agree upon without reference to a particular religion and its particular otherworldly concerns. This civil religion would consist of six simple, unembellished doctrines: (1) the existence of a benevolent deity; (2) the next life, where (3) the good are happy and (4) the wicked are punished; and (5) the sacred nature of the laws and the contract. These are the five positive doctrines. The sole negative doctrine is the rejection of intolerance, which is yet another reason for the exclusion of particular religious traditions from civil religious consideration.

From this viewpoint, civil religion is state controlled. According to Rousseau, the state sets the doctrines and enforces them on pain of banishment or death. And while such a civil religion may not have ever existed, at least not for any significant period of time, Rousseau's influence on the subject remains.

Émile Durkheim and Civil Religion

While Émile Durkheim never used the term *civil religion*, he saw himself developing a science of morality derived from and reinforcing social solidarity throughout his work. France was in turmoil after facing defeat in war with Germany in 1870, and the nation had been through seven governments and 14 constitutions since 1789. The rise of the Third Republic was an attempt to give new life to French Revolutionary principles. A morality grounded in society would find its legitimacy in that grounding and would be a force for stability in this republican form of government, which needed, as all republics do, a strong moral basis. Like so many other thinkers in tumultuous

eras, Durkheim strove to develop an orderly system for a time of disorder and instability. Bellah attempts to do the same in *The Broken Covenant* and "Religion and the Legitimation of the American Republic." Like Durkheim's concern with military defeat and political unrest, Bellah's concern in these works is that the experiences of Vietnam and Watergate undercut authority and trust in leadership, and this requires a rearticulation of the meaning of the republic and the civil religious covenant. Bellah's work in the 1980s goes on to deal with individualism as a reaction to the overtly self-interested use of authority in society. In much of Bellah's work, he attempts to show that this abuse was harmful in itself and in the reaction that it produced in Americans.

The beginning of civil religion in Durkheim is found in his concepts of solidarity—mechanical and organic—which arise from social contract theory. Mechanical solidarity requires the mass of members to conform to its principles, with punishment of various levels meted out to those violating that conformity, and this is found in systems such as law and religion. Meanwhile, the basic component of organic solidarity is *justice*. All contracts and all social solidarity are based on this principle, which transcends social circumstances. In this recognition of justice as the principal social ideal, Durkheim recognizes the "metaphysical" backing of society and the social contract. Furthermore, this sets social ideals off from state and church control, yet grounds them in the reality of social order. This separation of justice as a social ideal can be seen as the beginning of civil religious ideals, and their separation from state and church authority in the separation from mechanical solidarity indicates true civil religion's own transcendence while remaining grounded in the reality of society to which state and church also speak.

Another important civil religious concept for Durkheim is that the basis of modern society is the individual properly understood. Society must provide for the dignity of the individual, and this is accomplished first through justice, which implies equality under the law. This understanding of the individual's importance keeps society from assuming complete control over the individual and allows for internalization of the civil religion. While the civil religion provides an external contract or covenant with society or God, the internal control is necessary

for both Durkheim and Bellah, in that only through this internalization will society and its constituent individuals remain faithful to the contract and reap the long-term rewards of social cohesion.

Durkheim takes pains to show that a national civil religion ought to avoid exceptionalism by focusing national ideals on human ideals. He is concerned with establishing an international civil religion or a “religion of humanity,” which cares for the human being in whatever condition without regard to nationality. Both Durkheim and Bellah see this as a possibility; indeed, both see it as the proper end of a national civil religion.

Robert Bellah and Civil Religion

While some scholars argue that the religious institutions of America teach “the American way of life,” Robert Bellah sets civil religion in America beside these institutions and claims that it must be investigated as any other religion (or religious dimension) would be. In his 1967 article “Civil Religion in America,” Bellah explains civil religion through its usage in one of the most important political ceremonies in the United States and, therefore, one of the most significant for civil religion—presidential inaugural addresses. In considering the three times John F. Kennedy mentions God during his inaugural speech, Bellah recognizes many of the features of American civil religion.

First, it is clear that American political discourse deals in and values religious concepts. Rather than a simple, empty ritual of American politics, Bellah sees the rituals and symbols invoked on such occasions as marking off fundamental values that may not present themselves in day-to-day life and discourse. And rather than being void of content, Bellah affirms the substance and specificity of civil religion as it concerns American myths and narratives, but he acknowledges its generality as necessary if the entire nation is to come to an understanding of itself.

Second, though American civil religion has traditionally been Protestant, civil religion and Christianity are distinct, but the two share symbols with each other. According to Bellah, the God of the civil religion is “Unitarian” and “austere,” in that God is related to order, law, and right. The reference in the Declaration of Independence to “the laws of Nature and of Nature’s God” points

to a higher law that is not specific to a religion. But the God conceived in this process is not deistic since this God is active in history and has taken a particular interest in the United States as is seen most vividly in the rhetoric of America as the “New Israel,” which was invoked at the founding of the colonies and continues today.

Third, civil religion serves to constantly remind Americans of the divine foundation of their rights and to point them toward an end that transcends, yet is found through, the political process. This end, which has been a major civil religious theme since the Mayflower Compact, is the fulfillment of the will of God on earth, and it is obligatory for America and every American to measure up to this end. This concept was established at a crucial moment in the establishment of the civil religion, and it was restated in natural law terms in the Declaration of Independence.

The myths of America that connect it with Israel and “chosen-ness” were a product of the first crisis that the civil religion encountered, which was the struggle and eventual war for independence. This early period of the civil religion is connected to Hebraic/“Old Testament” stories of flood, oppression, and release, but the second crisis of civil war and slavery brought about a “New Testament” shift to American civil religion. Through the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln’s development of civil religious theology, and Lincoln’s death, the concept of sacrifice became a major theme in civil religious rhetoric along with Christian symbols of death and second birth.

After delineating the main aspects of the civil religion, Bellah contends with American civil religion’s third time of crisis, which deals with responsible global action. Bellah claims that navigation of this third time of trial requires a sustainable world order that would incorporate new international symbols into the American civil religion. If such a situation were obtained, American civil religion would be a part of a world civil religion, and we see that, as in the Durkheimian model, the fulfillment of American civil religion is international cooperation and synthesis, which would precipitate the world order needed for responsible global action.

In all this, Bellah brings the debate back around to the national needs that civil religion fills to make America what America should be. The civil religion is a means to guide America toward internal

uprightness, which ought to make America a righteous example to the nations.

The Civil Religion Debate in America

After the publication of "Civil Religion in America," a lively and wide-ranging discussion began among various thinkers, especially in the area of church and state issues. A broad acceptance of the concept of civil religion was found in the sociology of religion, while historians of American religion were more broadly skeptical. Although it was by no means a universal feeling, sociologists of religion saw civil religion as at least a useful conceptual category for phenomena encountered in their work. And very soon after Bellah's article appeared, sociologists began to test for empirical verification of the thesis. This endeavor produced mixed results, the explanation for which was often the lack of a clear definition of civil religion. Indeed, Bellah restated his position on multiple occasions in response to what he believed were widely varying interpretations of his meaning.

These restatements often served to drive the debate even further, especially as Bellah claimed in 1975 that civil religion was "an empty and broken shell." Bellah claimed this in the context of the breaking of the national covenant with God through the enslavement of Africans and the violent removal of Native Americans. This critique of the historical construction and the contemporary, academic reconstruction of civil religion came from multiple thinkers and undercut the civil religious goals of broad national identity and unity as well as international incorporation.

Beyond the troubling issues of mixed empirical evidence and the exclusion of large segments of the population, historians leveled three critiques. First, the contention was made that the civil religion debate concerned a phenomenon whose time had passed, as is usual in historical investigation. Second, some claimed that the phenomena that sociologists meant to examine with the aid of this concept of civil religion were already accounted for in other concepts such as civic piety, public religion, and public theology. Finally, the episodic nature of civil religion's importance was attributed to its revitalizing nature; rather than being a constant expression of national identity, civil religion was said to be invoked only in times of crisis. This last critique applied to

the historical record of civil religion as well as the contemporary construction of a civil religious reality that the academic debate brought with it.

Civil Religion Since the 1970s

The civil religion debate cooled off considerably in the mid-1980s after the torrent of texts previously produced. However, the concept has remained in use and has experienced a moderate "revival" in the first decade of the 21st century. Moving away from a Durkheimian model, which implies a single civil religion for a single society, American pluralism and the rise of the Religious Right in America brought about the greater use of an earlier (Weberian) view of civil religious types. For example, the division of traditionalist from progressive civil religions allows the use of civil religion as an analytical concept but avoids some of the problems of exclusion and verification. But this division into types of civil religion undercuts the civil religious goal of unity while providing for a more inclusive discourse on civil religion.

Though the concept of national myth has a long history in American scholarship, recent work on civil religion has used myth far more frequently. Although Bellah and other early thinkers dropped the concept of civil religion from their work in the face of the difficulties posed by the aforementioned critiques, national myth remains a popular concept in the analysis of national identity. As narrative constructions of historical reality, myths offer both continuity and flexibility, which earlier civil religious dialogue lacked.

Scholarly work on myth continues to carry the civil religious dialogue forward even though (or especially because) it is not necessarily a topic of civil religion. Most recently, scholars of American national myth have juxtaposed the binding intention of national myths to the divisive historical realities they describe. For example, Richard Hughes has critiqued the dominant culture's development and use of American myths through the lenses of African American and Native American experience. Hughes and others contend that national myths are marshaled to legitimize and lend authority to public and foreign policy decisions. But when reified, they can lead to an ossification of narrative meaning that turns the richness of myth into literal, absolute interpretations.

Civil Religion Around the Globe

On the global level, the proper eschatological goal of American civil religion is the attainment of or incorporation into an international civil religion—or that was the goal as Bellah assessed the third time of trial in America. In relation to other parts of the world, a Durkheimian understanding of civil religion assumes some level of functioning civil religious and ethnic symbols that is widely accepted. But some have argued that in comparison with other countries' civil religious situations, the American version works better because of American pluralism's softening of a particular religion's normally rigid symbol system to fit the need for broader acceptance among diverse peoples. However, comparative work on civil religion outside the United States further demonstrates the various forms that civil religion as an analytic concept may take for scholars. And most notable at the moment for the internationalization of civil religion is the question of the emergence of a global civil society. Certain scholars argue that the two concepts are mutually dependent on each other since civil society requires cultural glue, which civil religion supplies, and civil religion requires a cohesive, civil structure, which civil society supplies. The most promising prospect for such a situation may be in the rhetoric of international human rights. Still, the two concepts run into much the same issues, such as whether or not such a situation is definable and attainable or even desirable.

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See also Bellah, Robert; Civil Society; Global Religion; Pluralism; Politics and Religion; Public and Private Religion; Religion and State; Religious Nationalism

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CIVIL SOCIETY

The notion of “civil society” has had a long history in Western political thought, but it has been revived in modern discourse because it is seen to be the panacea for many problems in contemporary society, such as the growth of individualism, anomie, and the fragmentation of society. In the past, the idea of civil society was seen to be a key aspect of any successful nation-state with a democratic polity, but in contemporary debates, the idea has been extended to analyze the possible development of transnational communities and the emergence of a world civil society. Having been once the preferred solution for the problems of the nation-state, civil society is now promoted as the answer to the extensive and negative issues facing the global order. This entry proposes that we call the early development of the concept—namely, the emergence of civil society and the nation state from the late 18th century onward—Stage 1. We can then refer to civil society in relation to the process of globalization, the emergence of transnational capitalism, and the development of the Internet and network society from the second half of the 20th century as Stage 2.

Religion has played an important part in both Stage 1 and Stage 2. To some extent, as we shall see, the notion of civil society is the product of the Enlightenment and its secular legacies—Marxism,

positivism, and liberalism. Perhaps Immanuel Kant's essay that appeared in the *Berlinische Monatsschrift* in 1784 on the ideas of "a universal civil society" and of world peace is the first manifestation of the idea that democratic societies are unlikely to engage in mutually destructive warfare, and hence, the spread of Enlightenment ideas might also result in world peace. Kant argued that when people unite in a nation-state, they still have obligations to the rest of humanity. There would therefore be a two-tiered system of law relating to the nation-state and to the world or a "law of world citizenship" (*ius cosmopolitanum*) binding people into a commonwealth of nations. This union would not be simply a peace treaty but a league of peace (*foedus pacificum*). Kant's moral philosophy no longer required any transcendental justification from an almighty God but rested on a moral imperative to treat neighbors as we treat ourselves. It was therefore a secular theory of peace. This secular framework of the early theory of civil society suggests that religion would not play a large part in its subsequent history. But this was not the case. As we shall see, it was Jean-Jacques Rousseau who developed the idea that a civil religion would be fundamental to a successful society, and in subsequent debates, the Christian denominations came to be regarded as essential components of such a society. Finally, in contemporary philosophy, the idea of a postsecular society in the work of Jürgen Habermas has brought religion back into focus in both the national and the transnational contexts.

The present entry outlines this historical development and considers several theories that have argued that religion is a vital ingredient of any robust and effective set of civil society institutions. For various reasons, however, it is questionable whether this optimistic view of civil society as an institutional panacea of globalization and its problems can be sustained. The entry concludes by examining the limitations of the notion of civil society as a political solution to questions of identity, membership, and commitment. Global civil society is fragile and unstable, and there are powerful forces that will constrain its development. Any normative view of civil society, whether national or global, will have to address the empirical limitations of all actually existing forms of civil society.

The History of a Concept

In Western political theory, the concept of civil society was initially a product of the Scottish Enlightenment. Adam Ferguson in *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* in 1767 analyzed the historical shift from aristocratic to mercantile society and the decline of military society in favor of bourgeois society and its economic theory of international trade. Edinburgh was seen to be the ideal urban representative of the new civil society in contrast to the uncivilized tribal or warrior society of the Scottish Highlands. Civil society emerged with the collapse of feudalism and the creation of an urban space within which bourgeois life could develop. In Western political thought, a cluster of concepts—civil society, civility, civilization and citizenship—was associated with the social world of the bourgeois class. The rise of the theory of civil society was a product of the social crisis of the 18th century, which was created by massive economic changes under the impact of capitalist agriculture, early industrialization, and imperial expansion. There are of course many variations on this theory, but at their analytical core is the idea of a separation of spheres—in particular, the division between the political (the state), the economic (the market), and the social (civil society).

Civil society theory was rapidly developed in a critical line that connects G. W. F. Hegel, Karl Marx, Antonio Gramsci, and Jürgen Habermas. For Hegel, the emergence of civil society was one aspect of universal history that clearly distinguished the static societies of the Orient and the development of a universal consciousness in the Occident. In his *The Philosophy of Right* of 1821, he employed the notion of *bürgerliche Gesellschaft* to describe this emerging sphere of ethical life existing between the family or household (*oikos*) and the state. Marx adopted (and distorted) much of this Hegelian legacy, analyzing civil society in capitalism not as an ethical sphere but as an arena in which social classes with conflicting economic interests would struggle for power. He was skeptical of the civil liberties that were attached to modern society. In his *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* of 1844 and in the famous "Jewish Question," Marx complained that the political freedom of the individual was artificial, given the economic inequalities that constrained the working

class. The political and the economic had to be recombined to overcome alienation. The development of the 20th-century theory of civil society begins with the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci. Recognizing the hold that the Roman Catholic Church had over the working class, Gramsci argued in the *Prison Notebooks* that any radical political party would have to struggle to secure moral authority in Italian society—that is, to achieve hegemonic control over class relations in civil society. Gramsci thereby provided the classical definition of civil society as an arena of freedom lodged between the dull compulsion of the market and the coercive power of the state. This theme was taken up by Habermas, who famously argued in *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* that the foundational institutions of bourgeois society—a free press, independent political parties, effective educational institutions, debating societies, and the cafe as the meeting place of intellectuals—had been eroded with the development of capitalism in which free communication is compromised, for example, by media monopolies.

There is an alternative liberal tradition of democratic theory in which the concept of civil society played a critical role. Its principal spokesman is the French aristocrat Alexis de Tocqueville. In his 1835 and 1840 two-volume *Democracy in America*, Tocqueville identified voluntary associations as a critical element in American democracy in a context where the frontier and the struggle against British colonial power had placed an emphasis on individualism, self-help, and local autonomy. Voluntary associations were not only fundamental to the actual survival of local communities, but they were also an antidote to the excessive emphasis on social equality. Without a robust network of such associations, the individual would be exposed to the force of mass opinion. Tocqueville's ideas were taken up in England by J. S. Mill who also feared that the force of mass opinion in a society of limited educational resources would overwhelm individual opinion. Democratic civil societies required a delicate balance between individual liberty, community, and government.

These facets of colonial America have survived within the liberal democratic tradition—fear of central government, an emphasis on local activism, the autonomy of religious congregations, and charitable investment in education. Another aspect

of Tocqueville's vision of America was the idea that the "habits of the heart" were an important ingredient of democratic society. This theme was taken up by Robert Bellah and his colleagues in a survey of attitudes toward politics, in which they found that, while "politics" was often regarded with suspicion, there was a lively involvement of individuals in local community activity. The Tocquevillean tradition survives in populist political movements with their distrust of the Washington bureaucracy and the party machine.

This liberal legacy has been obviously subject to considerable critical evaluation. The role of voluntary associations in democracy has produced an extensive debate about "associative democracy" in contemporary political theory. Within this paradigm, a robust democracy requires (1) an expanding middle class with a commitment to liberal tolerance, (2) a viable press and responsible journalism to support open debate, (3) a universal notion of citizenship that will counteract the particularistic force of personal and communal ties, and (4) a large space of voluntary associations that will bind individuals to society and create effective patterns of social integration. Although the traditional literature on civil society presents a positive interpretation of voluntary associations and other intermediary groups, the role of voluntary or secondary associations is in fact far more problematic than this summary statement would suggest. Secondary associations can also have a negative impact on democratic processes precisely because they articulate sectional, specific, and particular interests. For example, lobby groups can often represent sectional interests and the attitude of so-called NIMBYism ("Not in my back yard"). This general problem of sectional interest is often referred to—following its discussion by James Madison in "Federalist No. 10"—as "The Mischief of Faction," in which a "minority faction" can determine the condition of the majority. As Max Beloff notes, Madison feared the negative consequences to the commonwealth of a "multiplicity of interests" and a "multiplicity of sects." An associative democracy can only work if there is considerable decentralization and devolution of powers and responsibilities, but given the threat of the mischief of faction, regulative devices and mechanisms are also needed to guarantee, for example, minimal and egalitarian standards of public services. In short, there must be

a framework of state regulation if the free play of associations is to have any benefit for civil society.

There is now considerable doubt about the level of involvement in voluntary associations in contemporary America. In his famous account, *Bowling Alone*, Robert Putnam argued that, with for example the development of television, people were less involved in community activities. Americans were more likely to do things alone—such as bowling as a leisure time activity—than they were to participate in collective sociable activities. The traditions of activism and participation were declining, and the result was a damaging decline in “social capital”—the social investments that individuals make in society through membership in clubs, churches, and other voluntary associations. A more optimistic vision of American civil society has been developed by Jeffrey Alexander in *The Civil Sphere*. He argues that one can identify many social movements—feminism or the Black civil rights movement—that have been successful in achieving what he calls “social repair.”

Two fundamental problems confront civil society in Stage 1 theories. The first was in fact illustrated in Putnam’s analysis of social capital, where he had to make a distinction between social binding and social bridging. For example, a radical Protestant sect might create a significant level of internal social solidarity as members commit themselves to congregational activities; this constitutes social binding. However, they may have very weak connections with the outside world, because their members find that their social investments are made exclusively within the congregation or the sect. They have very weak forms of social bridging because they are not only separated from but hostile to the outside secular world. It is difficult to see how social groups that are high on binding but low on bridging can contribute significantly to the general integration of civil society. The second problem is more damaging. In some societies, criminal gangs and deviant groups may be high on social capital but will have damaging consequences for civil society. One extreme example is the role of the mafia in southern Italy, where the state has historically been weak, providing few social services to citizens. Criminal gangs offer their members security and welfare services, but they are damaging to the overall social structure. One can think of less extreme but equally problematic voluntary

associations. Does the National Rifle Association make the same contribution to American civil society as the Mothers Union? Does a radical group such as Jamaat-e-Islami have equivalent social functions in terms of social capital theory as the Boy Scout movement? The major weakness of civil society theory has been to assume implicitly a distinction between deviant and nondeviant social groups, with the result that civil society is occupied by lawful associations, whose members are upright, law-abiding citizens who are members of mainstream denominations. As Simone Chambers and Jeffrey Kopstein point out, the role of criminal organizations, youth gangs, and radical political groups is quietly ignored, and as a result, there is no genuine understanding of “bad” civil society.

Civil Religion and Civil Society

So far this entry has argued that the theory of civil society was an aspect of secular political philosophy from Fergusson to Habermas. However, this view ignores the debate about religious conflict and tolerance in the emergence of the theory of civil society. One leading exposition was provided by Samuel Pufendorf in his *Of the Nature and Qualification of Religion in Reference to Civil Society* of 1687, which offered a theory of religious tolerance in the framework of natural law. In the context of bitter religious conflict, Pufendorf argued that the state is not founded for the protection of religion, which is part of natural human freedom. The objective of civil society is to provide security for its citizens, leaving religion to the individual; hence, the sovereign must respect religious freedom. On the basis of a contract theory of the state, Pufendorf condemned any attempt to extend secular rule over religion as had taken place with the Edict of Nantes. Any ruler who persecutes individuals because of their religion is acting tyrannically. Such transgressions can be resisted by citizens, by violent means if necessary. Tolerance can be regarded as simply one means of managing religious dissent. However, Pufendorf took a sanguine view of such measures. He believed that while a reunion of Calvinists and Lutherans was possible, no such outcome was likely between Catholics and Protestants. Churches were in this theory rather like private societies; they should be governed internally by the consent

of congregations, but they did not alter the responsibilities of the citizen in the public domain. Pufendorf provided, therefore, the classical statement of the division between the private and the public realm.

Although the 17th-century theorists paid close attention to religion, 20th-century sociology embraced the idea that modernization would inevitably result in secularization. Urbanization would contribute to the decline of the communal basis of religion; the growth of scientific worldviews would bring into question the foundations of theology; the welfare services of the church would be replaced by those of the state; the status and the authority of the clergy would decline; and finally, according to the sociologist Max Weber, there would be a general “disenchantment of reality.” The theory of secularization has in recent years been challenged by the eruption of so-called public religions into modern politics, such as the Iranian Revolution, the Polish Solidarity movement, Catholic Liberation Theology in South America, the rise of the so-called Moral Majority in the United States, the spread of radical Islam, and the general development globally of fundamentalism. There has been a more open evaluation of the importance of religion in modern societies resulting in a debate associated with a postsecular society, in which Habermas, following John Rawls, argues that in a modern society there must be an open, tolerant, and constructive debate between both secular and religious citizens. To a large extent, the problem of liberal tolerance has been created by the need of Western liberal states to come to terms with the creation of diasporic Muslim communities as a result of postwar labor migration. In this respect, we can say that the current problems of Stage 2 concern the management of religions in a liberal but post-Pufendorfian environment—that is, what policies should be adopted with respect to the presence of Muslim institutions in civil society?

One solution is to argue that religions in the plural could be accommodated in society but under the broad umbrella of a “civil religion.” Separate and different religious traditions must be tolerated in a liberal environment in the hope that these separate social groups might somehow merge within or contribute to a more general civil religion. This notion had its origin in Rousseau,

whose relationship to religion in general and to Christianity in particular remains ambiguous. In the *Social Contract*, he argued that the Christian belief in a supernatural world was inimical to social life on this earth. In “The creed of a priest of Savoy” in *Émile*, Rousseau rejected the Christian view of the sinful nature of humankind but insisted that all humans need religion as a bulwark against despair. It was a deism that gave full recognition to the emotions and the social role of religion in sustaining civil society.

This theme regarding the social role of religion was taken up by Émile Durkheim (2001) in *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, in which he claimed that religion functions to sustain society through common rituals and beliefs, thereby creating what he called a “moral community.” However, with the growing complexity of society through social differentiation, the hold of traditional religions was jeopardized, and he anticipated the rise of new religious beliefs and practices that could cement society together in an era of individualism. For Durkheim, no religions are false; all contribute to the creation of social solidarity. His own version of civil society was eventually developed in *Professional Ethics and Civic Morals*. His views on secularization, religion, and civil society were also dependent on August Comte’s idea of “a religion of humanity.” In the original evolutionary scheme, Comte had proposed that the historical sequence was from theology to metaphysics and finally to positivism, but by the late 1840s, Comte had concluded that the positive conclusion to this series was not occurring and that the modern age was more rather than less religious. He struggled therefore to provide a formulation of the theory of humanity, love, and altruism as the ideology of the new society.

In many respects, contemporary philosophical reflection on religion and modernity appears, if anything, to repeat the conclusions of Rousseau, Comte, and Durkheim that religion is essential to society but only when stripped of its metaphysical assumptions. Such appears to be the message of contemporary philosophers, who argue that in a postmetaphysical society we must abandon all grand narratives and accept the conclusion that there are no facts—only interpretations. Critical of the doctrinal absolutism of the Roman Catholic Church, Rorty and Vattimo claim that Catholicism

is unable to respond to many pressing social issues such as patriarchy and gender equality. However, once shorn of its metaphysics of truth, Christianity with its fundamental doctrine of solidarity, charity, and irony can serve vital functions in modernity. In short, a vibrant civil society requires a civil religion to overcome its internal social and cultural divisions, uniting its otherwise divided citizens behind a common worldview. The “elementary forms of religion” in modern civil society must therefore assume the character of a civil religion.

Globalization and Transnational Communities

These theories of civil society at Stage 1 pre-date the development of globalization. They refer essentially to the rise of civil society within the nation-state from the late 18th century onward. As it turns out, contemporary theories of civil society simply transfer these nation-state conceptions of civil society onto a global screen. What are these key features of globalization that allegedly create a global civil order? To simplify this discussion, let us consider three fundamental aspects of globalization: the Internet, migration, and human rights.

It is claimed that we live in a “network society” that has been created by the growth of the Internet. This theory is associated with Manuel Castells, who explored how the business, military, and intellectual elite have struggled for control of global communications through the technology of the Internet in his *The Rise of Network Society*. As a neo-Marxist sociologist, Castells adopted a critical view of such networks, arguing that they created new divisions of skill in the labor market, produced obsolescent workers, and continued the economic alienation of workers. Most commentators on the rise of the Internet have taken a decidedly more positive and optimistic view of its global development. Electronic communication is treated as yet another panacea for societies that are fragmented by individualism and consumerism, where many public utilities have been privatized during the decades of neoliberal deregulation. Daniel Drache, in *Defiant Publics*, claims that the Internet has provided new opportunities for citizens to organize and criticize governments for their many failings. Whereas traditional routes to criticism have been silenced with the monopolization of the multimedia industries and the decline of print

news, Internet and related technologies open up a worldwide space for the exchange of ideas, opinion, and knowledge. While traditional communities may be disappearing, a new global community is evolving as a network society.

The interconnectivity of the postnational world is also assumed to be an effect of global labor migrations starting with massive Chinese migration in the 19th century and the 20th-century migration to the United States. Migration has produced many profound changes. The majority of modern societies are multifaith and multiethnic societies, and consequently, they are deeply multicultural. The cultural coherence of the nation-state is fractured by migration, both legal and illegal. The majority of modern societies play host to a wide range of diasporic communities with transnational connections, giving rise to remittance economies, the transnational marriage, and a global bureaucracy regulating visas, green cards, birth certificates, work permits, and the paraphernalia of what Biao Xiang calls “global body shopping.” It is estimated that a third of all Muslims now live as minorities in predominantly secular host societies. The presence of migrant minorities has slowly transformed the traditional liberal solution for tolerance based on the separation of church and state, thereby recognizing what José Casanova (1994) has called the “depersonalization” of religion.

Economic globalization required the globalization of certain crucial legal arrangements to protect transnational investment and exchange starting with the law of the sea. Laws relating to the construction of transnational corporations were equally important, and as a result of the financial crisis of 2008 to 2009, we can expect to see a new raft of laws relating to the security of banking and financial transactions. We might also see the emergence of the International Labour Organization and international labor law as further examples of legal globalization. However, the critical examples of juridical globalism have been the evolution of the Declaration of Human Rights, the creation of internal courts of justice, and myriad internal nongovernmental agencies dealing with the rights of women and children, aboriginals, stateless people, and refugees.

These institutions are associated also with the rise of new forms of global consciousness that might well be labeled *cosmopolitanism*. Various commentators such as Anthony Appiah have

recently argued that a global world needs cosmopolitanism to create the framework for a conversation with strangers. Cosmopolitan virtues—care and respect for others—can be defined as the obligations side of human rights. Cosmopolitanism is occasionally criticized as an elite mentality, but this is to ignore the equally important examples of vernacular cosmopolitanism. The other criticism might be that cosmopolitanism is not only elitist but secular. It emerges out of the world of the Stoics, and it is associated in the modern world with frequent-flyer corporate executives. But this may also be an exaggeration because, as Humeira Iqtidar points out, it neglects the possibility of, for example, Islamic cosmopolitanism.

How does religion fit into this evolving global society? In the first place, one might argue that the evangel versions of the Abrahamic religions were committed to changing the world and, therefore, had a cosmopolitan and global vision. Furthermore, the modern development of human rights values has an important religious dimension. For example, the truth and reconciliation committees that started in the peace process in South Africa have become a widely used instrument of reconciliation. There is a close connection between secular human rights and the idea of reconciliation as it was developed by Archbishop Desmond Tutu. At a deeper level, as Thomas Brudholm and Thomas Cushman have noted, there are theological connections between genocide and the horror of atrocity.

These considerations support the view that we are moving toward a postnational environment in which new technologies are creating opportunities for the emergence of transnational communities. Global migration has produced large transnational minorities that are held together through the development of global networks. Alongside this complex and ever-changing global civil society, there is an emerging global consciousness of ethical cosmopolitanism that can function as the civil-religious consciousness of a world society, thereby to some extent realizing Kant's dream of a universal civil society.

Conclusion: Can Global Civil Society Succeed?

There are incontrovertible signs of an emerging global order. These include major international

organizations such as the Red Cross and UNESCO and the rapid development of NGOs and related associations. Human rights declarations have been almost universally endorsed by national governments. There are many sporting and cultural events such as the Olympic Games that demonstrate these commitments to internationalism. There are many forms of popular globalization in fashion, film, and music. Religious globalization in fundamentalism and spirituality has also been widely recognized.

The arguments against such a world civil society are, however, equally powerful. The arguments against civil society in Stage 1 also apply to Stage 2. There is, for example, now a world Islamic society or *umma* that is periodically revived by holy pilgrimage and activated by the Internet. Obviously this religious *umma* is very high in social-binding capital but relatively low on social-bridging features. The trend toward personal piety in world religions tends to create internal solidarity but may be unhelpful in terms of creating broader social networks. A pessimistic view of social capital suggests that modern societies are becoming “enclave societies” rather than highly integrated social systems. Second, there is the possibility of a criminal world society. Current theories of globalization are often overly optimistic, neglecting the development of modern slavery, people trafficking, and global drug cartels. A balanced view of the idea of a global civil society would have to take a skeptical view of the prospects of a Durkheimian outcome to global trends in the emergence of a moral society. Criticisms of globalization are just as likely to espouse an antiglobalization perspective, rejecting the prospects of standardization that appear to accompany contemporary economic globalization. An integrated global civil society will somehow have to incorporate new centers of power (China and India); also, the declining fortunes of the Third World are now confronted by rising commodity prices and declining investment. Cosmopolitanism offers us a powerful moral vision of a cooperative and coherent world, but there are many threats to a peaceful world society for which we appear to have few plausible answers.

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See also Bellah, Robert; Civil Religion; Global Religion; Politics and Religion; Religion and State

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CLASH OF CIVILIZATIONS THESIS

The essay outlining the thesis about whether global politics was entering a stage characterized by a “clash of civilizations” (originally posed with a question mark at the end of the title phrase) was first published in 1993 in the journal *Foreign Affairs* and later expanded into a book titled *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, which has since been translated into 39 languages. The controversial thesis was the contribution of Harvard University political scientist Samuel P. Huntington (1927–2008), whom Fareed Zakaria, the editor of *Newsweek* magazine, eulogized as “the greatest political scientist of the last

half-century” (*Newsweek*, January 3, 2009). Many scholars have suggested that the clash of civilizations thesis (although seen as polemical and ferociously criticized) has a significant influence on how American and Western policy makers have viewed the post-Cold War world.

Huntington’s seemingly prescient hypothesis stated that the forces of globalization and modernization notwithstanding, future violent conflict—clashes—in the “new world” would come from cultural, primarily religious, differences between “civilizations”—that is, the “great divisions among humankind” (Huntington, 1993, p. 22). “The fault lines between civilizations will be the battle lines of the future” (p. 25). The primary conflict would be between Islamic civilizations and the West, fueled by a conservative Islamic resurgence and the demographic explosion in Islamic nations, coupled with opposition to Western universalism and Western economic power. Many civilizations would seek to reify their religious and cultural characteristics in opposition to Western values. “Kin countries” that shared civilizational characteristics or shared interests would “rally” to each other’s aid, to oppose the West—the primary example being the creation of a Sino-Islamic axis counter to the Judeo-Christian West.

This intercivilizational conflict would manifest itself in two forms: *fault line conflicts* (local conflicts between neighboring states) and *core state conflicts* (between major states of different civilizations).

Huntington described seven “civilizations”: Western, Latin American, Confucian, Japanese, Islamic, Hindu, and Slavic-Orthodox. They are differentiated from each other by history, language, culture, tradition, and religion and determine fundamental relationships, including the following:

The relations between God and man, the individual and the group, the citizen and the state, parents and children, husband and wife, as well as differing views of the relative importance of rights and responsibilities, liberty and authority, equality and hierarchy. (Huntington, 1993, p. 27)

The focus on religion as a source of conflict triggered active debate about relations between the Western and Islamic worlds, in the wake of the September 11, 2001, attack on the United States. The clash of civilizations thesis has been broadly

criticized by scholars all over the world for being too simplistic, for not defining the concept of a civilization clearly, for not sufficiently distinguishing between religion as a distinct factor as opposed to civilization more broadly, and for ignoring indigenous civilizations completely.

Tulasi Srinivas

See also Global Religion; Globalization; Islam; Islamism (Political Islam); Modernization; Secularization; War on Terrorism

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CLOTHING

Religious clothing refers to any type of clothing that holds religious meaning or significance for devotees of a particular tradition. Religious clothing is multifarious, represented in a variety of articles, styles, variations, and meanings. Religious vesture can serve as a symbol of tradition, culture, political affiliation, or level of office. Such clothing can also function on a personal or practical level for religious individuals. Religious garb can be a contentious issue in civil society but can also induce greater religious commitment and understanding. Religious clothing becomes one of the most visual representations of a tradition within the current era of globalization.

For some, particular forms of head coverings are of significance, such as the Islamic veil, the Jewish *kippah*, the Sikh turban, or the Roman Catholic habit worn by nuns. Religious garb can also include various forms of coats, shirts, pants, and smaller articles or parts of clothing such as jewelry, belts, shoes, a particular shirt collar or sleeves of a shirt, and so forth. Religious vesture can even include distinct undergarments such as the Sikh *kachera* or the

temple garments worn by members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Mormons).

Religious clothing also varies in color, material, construction, the manner in which it is worn, and the level of extravagance or simplicity it seeks. Variation in style and composition usually holds symbolic significance. For example, white clothing often denotes purity, mourning, equality, or unity. The white *kittel*, or robe, worn by male Jews during holidays and as a burial shroud in death, signifies the equality of believers, humility before God, and purity of heart. The dhoti, a piece of cloth wrapped around the lower half of the body, is worn by a number of Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain groups and varies in style, color, and the manner in which it is wrapped and folded around the body based on those it adorns and the occasion that prompts its use. Members of the Hare Krishna sect typically wear white or saffron dhotis. Jains usually wear white dhotis since they represent purity and simplicity and are made of unstitched cloth. Thus, variation can indicate membership in a distinct denomination, sect, or movement. The adornment or lack of adornment can also hold considerable meaning. Plain, modest clothing is important for many Amish Mennonite groups as a submission of the self in reverence to God and a statement of equality among believers. Roman Catholic monastic clothing varies widely, often becoming more extravagant the higher the office, with papacy regalia being the most intricate and ornate among them. While lack of adornment in Amish communities suggests a lack of hierarchy within the religious community, the vesture of Roman Catholic clergy suggests a distinct hierarchy between the believers and God, mediated through the Roman Catholic Church. Variation can also signify political leanings. For instance, a larger yarmulke or *kippah* (Jewish skullcap) usually suggests more conservative political affiliation, while smaller *kippot* denote more liberal orientation. Variation of religious clothing can also serve as a fashion statement, as is the case with the rise of “hijab chic,” where young Muslim women cover their heads with brightly colored and patterned scarves, some even donning high-end designer scarves, in observance of Islamic modesty.

There are a variety of reasons why religious observers choose to wear particular forms of clothing. Many forms of clothing are required by religious

tradition, either for everyday use or for the performance of particular practices, such as during prayer or meditation; while attending a religious service, ritual, or festival; or while in a certain location. Modest clothing is often required while in temples, churches, or mosques. Clothing can also signify leadership and a level of religious responsibility. Christian clergy members are required to wear distinctive clothing in public—for example, priests wear the characteristic white collar—to be easily recognizable by their religious community. It is customary in some communities to give religious clothing as gifts during holidays, festivals, or rituals. The Jewish yarmulke is sometimes given as a present during a bar mitzvah or at a wedding celebration. A Sikh custom of the exchange of turbans creates lifetime friendship ties between those who exchange their head coverings and also between their respective families. When given during a particular religious ceremony, religious clothing can act as a reminder of oaths made or rites performed for the adherent. After young men have undergone the *Upanayana* ceremony, a Hindu rite-of-passage ritual, they wear the *Yajñopavitam* (“sacred thread”) usually draped over the left shoulder to signify an advanced stage of education and entry into a higher level of responsibility and maturity in everyday life. The *Yajñopavitam* continues to be worn, presumably over the lifetime of the ritual participant, to remind him of his everyday obligations and is repeatedly added to and replenished through ritual ceremonies over the course of his life. Some religious clothing is worn for protection. The red string (or *roite bindele*) is a bracelet worn by followers of Jewish mysticism (Kabbalah) and is used as a talisman, protecting the wearer from the misfortune and negative energy induced by the evil eye. Various forms of Islamic head coverings worn by female Muslims are said to protect women from unwanted male attention or sexual advances. Religious clothing is also worn in adherence to tradition, as a marker of culture, and as an indication of the level of piety or orthodoxy one subscribes to. Religious clothing can suggest a new or renewed commitment to a tradition. Religious clothing is often linked to modesty, piety, honor, self-respect, and spiritualism and can be used as a tool of body comportment to create and ingrain these religious dispositions in the religious adherent. Thus, religious

clothing should not only be viewed as a symbolic representation of particular religious sentiments but also as indicative of an active engagement in developing and sustaining those internal constitutions.

In the current era of globalization, religious clothing takes on even greater significance as a visible representation of growing religious diversity within national borders. Devotees donning religious garb become the visible symbol of their religion, especially within secular-liberal societies such as the United States and European nations, where everyday clothing rarely represents a religious disposition. Within these societies, religious clothing becomes a vehicle of communication, conveying a particular ideology of a religious tradition. However, stigmatization and discrimination can accompany this heightened visibility of religious affiliation. Islam has faced great opposition within these countries, perhaps because terrorism and overt patriarchal control have been closely linked to the religion within Western media and scholarship. Some European countries have restricted or banned the use of hijab or modest Islamic dress that usually requires women to cover their heads. These bans focus on types of head covering that include the concealment of the face, such as the burka or niqab, arguing that these forms of religious garb pose a threat to national security, subjugate women, and interfere with the social integration of Muslim communities into secular societies. Opponents argue that such a ban represents an erosion of human rights and blatant racism against Muslim immigrants living within European borders. Muslims face discrimination within the United States, a country pushing for religious pluralism, broadly defined as a project for the coexistence and inclusion of and mutual respect for all religions within its national borders. Many veiled Muslim women experience some type of opposition and are often faced with the task of defending their religious practices and dispelling misconceptions. Sikh men and women have also faced physical and verbal abuse in the United States and Europe, often being mistaken for Muslims.

Muslims are not the only religious community to face scrutiny within the shifting religious landscapes of the world, based on their outward appearance and the ideology propounded through that appearance. Religious clothing has led to increased surveillance, imprisonment, and punishment and erosion of civil

rights for many groups. Religious clothing not only leads to conflict between government and religious communities but also internally within communities, visibly dividing groups over issues of modesty, piety, spirituality, and approaches to the body. However, as a vehicle of communication, such vesture can also present an opportunity toward greater understanding and inclusion of religion in society. The public role created by such a visual expression allows for religious adherents to actively define and shape the social atmosphere in which they find themselves as well as maintain their religious commitment and community in a world increasingly defined by diversity.

Kendra Sarna

See also Burka; Global Religion; Hijab; Monasticism; Religious Identity; Turban; Yarmulke/Kippah

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COLOMBIA

With a population of approximately 43,500,000 people, the South American country of Colombia is home to a broad range of languages, religions, and cultural traditions. Colombian society is the result of complex historical processes that have combined native cultures with cultures from Europe, Africa, and Asia.

As a former Spanish colony, Colombia is preeminently a Catholic country. Most of its native traditions were destroyed by Christians through evangelization, carried out as a Westernization process. Spanish Christianity suppressed indigenous languages and religions in such a way that by the beginning of the 18th century, most of them had already disappeared. Some native groups survived; now, they represent just a little more than 3% of the population.

The tragedy of the rapid and massive destruction of the native population, forced to work under

hard conditions, led the Spaniards to introduce African people to work as slaves in gold mines and on sugarcane plantations. African religions mixed with Christianity, generating syncretic practices that were condemned and persecuted by the Inquisition of the Roman Catholic Church. In modern times, Blacks represent 10% of the population; most of them are Christian. They are located mainly in the Pacific and Caribbean regions.

During colonial times, some Jews arrived as newly converted Christians, but they were the object of cultural assimilation. At the end of the 19th century, some Sephardic Jews migrated to the Caribbean coast, forming the basis of the Jewish colony there. During the first decades of the 20th century, many European Sephardic and Ashkenazic Jews settled in Barranquilla, Bogotá, Medellín, and Cali. In 1939, the Colombian government introduced a law to halt the migration of Jewish people from Germany. Today, the Jewish population of Colombia is perhaps fewer than 6,000, of whom only some participate in religious practices.

As a result of Arabic migration at the end of the 19th century and the arrival of the people who left the Middle East in the second half of the 20th century, the Muslim population is important in the Caribbean region, especially in the city of Maicao, where the mosque of Omar Ibn Al-Jattab was built in 1997. Even as the size of the Jewish community is reducing, the Muslim presence is increasing daily in Colombia. Estimates of the number of Muslims in the country vary; some reports indicate that the population of Muslims is 10,000, whereas others indicate a larger population.

Nowadays, Catholics represent 80% of the Colombian population, even though many do not practice their faith. Other Christian churches represent just 10%; their members are actively involved in religious practices. This phenomenon is explained by the recognition of Catholicism as the national religion in the constitution of 1886, which also oriented public education according to the Catholic tradition. The 1991 constitution guaranteed freedom of religion, recognizing the importance of Protestant, evangelical, and Pentecostal churches. A small minority in Colombia adhere to other traditions: Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, Hindus, Buddhists, and Daoists, among others.

Edgar Antonio López

See also Islam in Latin America; Native Latin American Religion; New Religions in South America; Roman Catholicism; Spiritualism

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COLONIALISM (HISTORICAL)

See Postcolonialism

COMMUNIONE E LIBERAZIONE

Comunione e Liberazione (CL; “Communion and Liberation”) is one of the new religious movements that appeared within Italian Catholicism during the second half of the 20th century. Like most movements born in the same period, CL does not follow a particular Italian Church strategy and has developed at the margins of the ecclesiastical system.

The origins of the movement may be traced to the work of Luigi Giussani, a priest born in the province of Milan in 1922. His education was particularly influenced by the spirit of pastoral Catholicism, which was an active force in Brianza during the 1930s, and the tradition of spiritual renewal that came from social Catholicism and from the moderate modernist tradition that developed in the early 20th century.

During the 1950s, Don Giussani was professor of religion in the *lycées* of Milan. He was also in charge of the ministry to youth within the diocese. The main issue he faced concerned the confrontation with secularized lay culture. According to Don Giussani and his assertion about the reasonableness of believing, the whole religious dimension of life is rooted in one's experience and offers a definitive view of reality. For that reason, it does not have to do only with one's inner life but involves the wholeness of being and of all its social expressions. Thus, Catholics can not only

introduce themselves as being religious when approaching the dialectic debate with lay culture, but they can also qualify themselves as religious in every sphere of social and institutional life.

A movement developed in the *lycées* and the Catholic University that aimed to assert an operative and visible presence of Catholics outside parishes and inside civil society. Because of the importance its founder gave to educational commitment, the movement is characterized not only for its aid and work activities but also, and perhaps chiefly, for a remarkable presence within scholastic structures. From the 1970s to the 1990s, CL introduced itself in several fields of the cultural, political, and economic life of Italy. Don Giussani also gave birth to a real structure of ecclesiastic life, which was recognized in 1982 by the Pontifical Council for Lays: the Communion and Liberation Fraternity. This association aims to activate a real “education to faith” through the network of “schools of community,” spiritual retreats, and the realization of deeply spiritual moments on the occasion of the most important festivals of the liturgical year.

During John Paul II’s pontificate, the CL movement began to spread to other Catholic countries. The constant connection between initiatives concerning the active presence in civil and institutional life and the strong activity of spiritual animation has made the CL movement one of the most important presences of Catholic spirituality within Italian civil society as well as an untiring producer of associative commitment and communitarian sharing.

Salvatore Abbruzzese

See also Christianity; Italy; Liberation Theology; Roman Catholicism; Secularization; Social Justice

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COMMUNISM

Communism is the sociopolitical ideal that aims to create a society based on common ownership of goods and property. Throughout human history, from the influence of religious mysteries in Plato’s conception of society to the early modern vision of a utopia in Thomas Moore’s Christian conception, the ideal of a society without social and economic divisions has been a powerful political idea. During the 20th century, Marxist communism was the most global and ambitious sociopolitical project that attempted to implement a real egalitarian society.

Across the globe, Marxist communist parties were highly disciplined and committed to the cause of creating an earthly brotherhood. Communist followers created saints and sacred texts. Karl Marx, the ideological founder, did not propound a religious doctrine, but he believed in remarkable forces that operate in human history as engines of change and revolution. Those forces were related with the nature of human beings as transformers of nature.

In their work, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels assert that with the rise of capitalism, the sacred has changed irremediably as a consequence of a society that reduces everything to commodities. For Marx and Engels, the ideas of the ruling class are the dominant ideas of a given period of time; religion, law, and morality are only the superstructure of a society whose role is the maintenance of the status quo. For them, religion is the ideological tool of the dominant class. They thought that religion would be obsolete in the communist stage of society, since the need for an ideological justification of social injustice would be superfluous. Despite these conclusions, Engels did perceive the revolutionary power of some moral-religious concepts such as equality.

The notion of equality was not the mere product of economic considerations or the social interest of the ruling class. Nevertheless, neither Marx nor Engels was able to explain the nature of equality or their trust in the final emancipation of humanity in the communist stage from the bondage of traditional religion and capitalism. This was a hope and a religious narrative that had its roots in the early intellectual formation of Marxist communism.

Marx wanted to create a scientific framework to explain the past and predict the future of human societies. But he also wanted to criticize their current

social conditions. He had to sustain an ethical vision to explain the existence of an unjust world. Marx did not need the existence of a transcendental god to defend his moral vision. He created a new form of theodicy in which God was a mere reflection of human longings. Marx wanted to liberate human beings from their superfluous mythologies, along with their reified divinities.

Yuri Contreras-Véjar

See also Atheism; Equality; Marx and Religion; Marxism; Millenarian Movements

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COMOROS

The Union of the Comoros consists of a series of islands in the Comoro archipelago in the Indian Ocean; it lies off the coast of eastern Africa, north of Madagascar. With less than 1 million inhabitants, Comoros is one of the smallest nations in Africa, though it has one of the densest populations. Although most of the residents of the islands are Swahili-speaking settlers from Africa, the islands have been under Arab influence since the seventh century, when it and the island of Zanzibar north of the Comoros were populated by Arab traders and then came within the orbit of the Sultan of Oman.

The Portuguese were the first Europeans to explore and control the islands, arriving in 1505. In the 17th century, Malagasy pirates harbored in the islands and controlled some of the territory. In 1841, the Portuguese ceded control to the French, and the Comoros remained under French control until 1973, when the French agreed to give the islands independence if they requested it. Most did, and they formed an independent country in 1975. One island, Mayotte, preferred to remain under French control, and it continues to be a part of overseas French territory.

Almost all the residents of Comoros are Sunnī Muslims. The remaining 2% are Christian—primarily Roman Catholic because of the French colonial influence. There are also a small number of Indian immigrants, many of whom are Ismaeli, which is a branch of Shi'a Islam. Though the Comoros language is related to Swahili, Arabic is widely spoken as a second language, and there are strong cultural ties to the Arabian peninsula.

Religion has played a role in the mercurial political life of the Comoros since it has become independent. In the decades since it was liberated from French control in 1975, the country has experienced more than 20 attempted coups, many of them successful. For a time, from 1978 to 1989, the country was under Islamist political influence. President Ahmed Abdallah proclaimed the country to be under Muslim law, and the name was changed to the Federal Islamic Republic of Comoros. After Abdallah was assassinated in 1989, political turmoil ensued until the French military intervened to restore order. Later, a new political system was instituted that gave semiautonomy to each of the islands in the chain, and the name of the country was changed to the Union of the Comoros.

Islam continues to be a factor in the politics of the country. A Sunnī Muslim cleric, Ahmed Abdallah Mohamed Sambi, was elected president in the 2006 elections. Because he had studied Islam in Iran, Sambi was nicknamed “the Ayatullah.” There have been reports of Wahhabi and extremist Islamist views propagated in the country, and an alleged member of al Qaeda, Fazul Abdullah Mohammad, was born in Comoros. Though he lives in Kenya, he continues to maintain Comorian citizenship.

Mark Juergensmeyer

See also Africa; Middle East

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COMPOSTELA

The walking pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela in Galicia, Spain, is an ancient Catholic practice whose origins go back to the ninth century CE, the Spanish struggle against the Moors, and the political need for a national building project. According to legend, the destination is believed to be the final resting place of the Apostle James.

For this long journey, the bodily and emotional experience is central. The Spanish road El Camino Francés is presently the most frequented itinerary, lasting about 800 km and undergoing a noteworthy revival since the late 1980s. Four much longer pilgrimage roads also cross Europe, going to Compostela.

The participants certified by the Oficina de Sociología de Santiago de Compostela, the official statistical source, were about 100 in 1984; since then the number has grown considerably, and 114,026 pilgrims walked the road in 2007. Moreover, the Camino had particular success during recent holy years. For the jubilee of 1993, there were 99,436 pilgrims. In 1999, for the end of the millennium, there were 154,613 pilgrims, and in 2004, they surpassed 181,036. A relevant trait of this revival is the internationalization of this traditional European pilgrimage. Spain remains the principal country furnishing pilgrims—around 60% of the participants, and this increased significantly during holy years. European countries such as France, Italy, Germany, Belgium, and Portugal furnish a very significant number of walkers. However, since the second millennium, the Spanish presence has tended to decrease because of the presence of pilgrims coming from outside Europe and setting out on this journey from all over the world. Every year somewhere between 4,500 and 6,000 North or South Americans as well as Africans, Asians, and Oceanians walk the Camino.

The attraction of the road to Santiago bears witness to the successful encounter between a renewed effort of pastoralization, the interests of religious tourism agents, and the demand by an international and intergenerational public. Altogether, an astonishing growth in the number of elderly participants has been observed, especially of retired persons. In recent decades, young adults were the largest group. This kind of participation suggests a reason

for the contemporary global success of the pilgrimage to Compostela: This road, which especially attracts individuals who are in a suspended professional period—either not yet employed or else retired—represents a concrete metaphor of “going forth” in life. The desire for religious experience and the quest for identity are elements of the motivation for setting out on this journey. The Way of St. James as a voluntary, adaptable, individual ritual fits well in the spiritual demand of a large number of seekers, who were brought up as Catholics or Protestants but who have distanced themselves from the church’s institutional position. The same ritual walk embraces different kinds of religious participation. While some define themselves as Catholics, longing to embrace the Apostle James in the cathedral, others claim to be pilgrims according to their own way, looking for a spiritual experience based on the shift from external regulation of truths and rites to subjective emotions and beliefs.

Elena Zapponi

See also Lourdes; Pilgrimage; Spain

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CONFUCIANISM

Confucianism is commonly viewed as a major religion of China, although its religious nature is still being debated by scholars in both China and the West. Through a chronological narrative that traces the development of Confucianism from the time of Confucius to contemporary China and east Asia, this entry focuses on the following aspects of Confucianism: the origin of Confucianism and the Confucian canon, the influence of Confucianism in imperial China, the treatment of Confucianism by the Chinese socialist state in the 20th century, the

contemporary revival of Confucian ritual practices, and the global nature of Confucianism.

Clarification of Terms

To understand the complex history and diverse meanings of Confucianism, we need to first clarify the different usages of the term *Confucianism*. Although the word *Confucius*, the Latinized name of *Kong Fuzi*, was first used by Jesuit missionaries in China in the late 16th century, the English word *Confucianism* did not come into existence until 1862, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*. The real use of the word as referring to a religion was in James Legge's pamphlet *Confucianism in Relation to Christianity*, published in Shanghai in 1877. Today *Confucianism* in English refers to both the philosophical teaching of Confucius (551–479 BCE) and the religion associated with Confucius.

In Chinese, however, it is difficult to find the exact equivalent of the English word *Confucianism*. Today, scholars use the following convention to distinguish several related yet different concepts: *rujia* (the school of Confucian thought) and *ruxue* (Confucian learning) usually refer to Confucianism as a philosophy or school of thought, whereas *rujiao* (the Confucian religion) refers to Confucianism as a religion.

“The Master Said”: Confucius and His Disciples

According to the archaeologist Lothar von Falkenhausen, the “Age of Confucius” started 500 years before Confucius's birth and lasted till the end of China's great Late Bronze Age (ca. 1000–250 BCE). This coincided with the existence of the Zhou Dynasty (ca. 1046–256 BCE), the longest reigning dynasty in Chinese history. The lifetime of Confucius (ca. 551–479 BCE) was a tumultuous period of constant warfare between patrimonial states; Confucius and his followers always looked back to the founders of the Zhou, the Sage Kings, as moral and political exemplars, particularly as the dynasty was reaching its final stage of disorder, eventually to be replaced by the Qin Dynasty when the First Emperor united China in 221 BCE.

Von Falkenhausen states that it was during this Age of Confucius that the foundation of what we

today call Confucianism was established: The five classics were written during this period (the *Odes*, the *Documents*, the *Rites*, the *Changes*, and the *Spring and Autumn Annals*), which later became part of the Confucian canon, and the traditional rituals of China were instituted, which included the worship of ancestral spirits.

Confucius was born around 551 BCE in the state of Lu and was orphaned at a young age. D. C. Lau notes that little is known of Confucius's youth except that he was poor and fond of learning: “At fifteen I set my heart on learning” (*Analects*, 2.4). Confucius became known for his erudite mind, and at the age of 50 years, he was appointed to be the Minister of Crime of Lu. However, his advice was not followed, and he decided to leave the state of Lu in 497 BCE with some of his disciples. Confucius did not return to Lu for 13 years; during his exile he visited different states and offered advice to feudal rulers who cared to listen. He returned to Lu when he was 68 years old and devoted the remaining years of his life to teaching before dying at 72 years. According to the first century BCE text *Records of the Grand Historian*, Confucius had 3,000 disciples during his lifetime. Among the disciples, 12 are mentioned frequently in the *Analects*, which is a collection of sayings of Confucius as well as anecdotes about Confucius and some of his disciples, edited by his disciples and their students.

Confucius famously said that he was “a transmitter, not a creator” (Lau, 1979, 7.1). Von Falkenhausen points out that Confucius gave philosophical expressions to changes in society that had been ongoing for nearly a century, emphasizing living community rather than divine ancestors in ritual practices, stressing honest reverence rather than sanctimonious display, and most important, valuing virtue (which can be obtained through self-cultivation) over noble lineage. Indeed, for Confucius, a *junzi* (originally meaning “a prince”) was no longer a birthright but achieved nobility; because of Confucius's teaching, *junzi* came to mean a virtuous person, regardless of one's birth or social status.

Although Confucius clearly stated that he preferred not to address matters related to gods and spirits (Lau, 1979, 7.21), there were many discussions about the proper performance of rituals in the *Analects*, and the importance of ritual practice

to Confucius cannot be underestimated. Confucius spoke of *tian* (lit. “the sky” or “the heaven above”) frequently in the *Analects* (51 times); according to P. J. Ivanhoe, Confucius believed that Heaven had a concrete plan for human beings and that he had been chosen to play a special role in the realization of this plan for a peaceful, just, and harmonious society. The proper way to achieve this ideal world is the *Dao* (the way).

Ivanhoe also points out that Confucius has a dynamic view of worship, especially sacrifice and prayer. For Confucius, what is important is the reverence on the part of the ones participating in the worship; he expressed little interest in prayers for supplication, and he believed that he had been praying throughout his life by following the Dao (Lau, 1979, 7.35).

The so-called Cult of Confucius did not start until the Han Dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE). The first mention of a cult of Confucius was in the late Han Dynasty, when an emperor sent a surrogate to venerate the spirit of Confucius at Confucius’s grave. Several Han emperors followed by offering sacrifices at Confucius’s family ancestral temple in Qufu. Throughout imperial China, this ritual practice was carried out by emperors of different dynasties, and temples devoted to the veneration of Confucius also flourished in major cities and prosperous towns. In the imperial pantheon of gods and spirits that dominated Chinese temple life, the temples devoted to the veneration of Confucius occupied a notable place in the hierarchy, and it has been an important part of Chinese religious life.

The Confucian Canon and the Civil Service Examination System

The centrality of Confucianism in the social, cultural, and political life of China is closely related to the centrality of the civil examination system (*ke jiu*) in imperial China. Although the origin of the examinations can be traced back to the Han Dynasty, it was Emperor Yang of the Sui Dynasty (581–618) who established the first civil service examinations in 605, using tests of literary subjects to select officials for the court. Throughout the rule of the Tang and Song dynasties (650–1250), the examinations were expanded, standardized, and methodically institutionalized; exams were held

every 3 years nationally, and there were local-level as well as court-level exams overseen by the emperor.

According to Benjamin Elman, the civil service examination system in imperial China was the institutional link that connected three important aspects of Chinese political, social, and cultural life: (1) the imperial dynasties used the rigorous civil service examinations to select officials to fill the most important positions within the dynastic government; (2) the gentry-literati elites (selected members of the gentry who maintained their elite social and cultural status through classical scholarship as well as knowledge of lineage rituals) used the examinations to gain political positions and economic assets; and (3) classical studies, which formed the core content of the examinations, flourished because of the examinations, yet this category was also reconstructed through the complex interactions between the imperial bureaucracy and the elite gentry-literati.

Classical studies in China had traditionally been studies of the Confucian canon, yet the canon never stayed exactly the same. The classical Confucian curriculum was constantly adjusted and reinterpreted, especially in the late imperial period—namely, during the rule of the Ming (1368–1644) and Qing (1644–1911) dynasties. Elman argues that late imperial examinations made “Dao Learning,” which is translated as neo-Confucian learning, the orthodoxy in official life as well as in literati culture.

The Four Books: The Legitimation of the Neo-Confucian Orthodoxy

Beginning in the Han Dynasty and throughout the early years of the Song Dynasty, the Confucian canon consisted of 13 texts (the Thirteen Classics), including the Five Classics as well as later texts such as the *Analects*, the works of Mencius (Meng Zi), and the *Classics of Filial Piety*. Even as the canon was expanding, the Five Classics remained the essential texts about how to achieve an ideal society as well as how to become a virtuous person, and they were used as the foundation of the civil service examinations until they were replaced by the Four Books in the 14th century.

The shift of emphasis in the classical curriculum marked an important moment in the development of Confucianism in China: A new school of

Confucian thought and practice that started during the rule of the Song Dynasty (960–1279), which is what we now call Neo-Confucianism, was responsible for the transformation of the Confucian canon. It was Zhu Xi (1130–1200), a leading neo-Confucian philosopher, who started advancing the idea of the “Four Books,” which included the *Analects*, the *Mencius*, the *Great Learning*, and the *Doctrine of the Mean* (the latter two are chapters from the *Rites*, one of the Five Classics), which he viewed as the most significant parts of Confucian texts. Through the Four Books, Zhu Xi advocated the idea of self-cultivation through both philosophical and spiritual exercises, such as contemplation and reading, and de-emphasized the complex historical lessons put forth by the Five Classics.

As Daniel Gardner points out, this move away from the Five Classics points to an “inward” shift toward morality that is governed not by conventions, social norms, or rituals but by inner sources of personal morality. The civil examinations in effect instituted the Song moral philosophy as the orthodox version of Confucian thought in the 14th century, and as a result, the neo-Confucian interpretation of Confucianism became the orthodoxy throughout late imperial China, until the end of the Qing Dynasty in 1911.

Confucian Ritual Practices in Imperial China

According to Wilson, the regular worship of Confucius through rituals performed by the emperor or the emperor’s surrogates can be dated to the late sixth or seventh century. During the time of the Tang Dynasty (618–907), a liturgy for the worship of Confucius in temples was constructed based on canonical texts on rituals, and these codes for sacrifices were used throughout imperial China, with modifications along the way. Wilson notes that the Tang codes required that the first offering be presented by the crown prince and the second and the third by the two top officials of the Directorate of Education; during the rule of the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644), the ritual sacrifices were supervised by senior officials from the Court of Imperial Sacrifices, the Directorate of Education, and the Ministry of Rites.

Besides such public or state performances of rituals, another important component of Confucian ritual practices was the personal worship of ancestral

spirits. Although ancestor worship existed in China long before the rise of Confucianism, it has been appropriated by the disciples of Confucius as an essential ritual. When the Jesuit missionaries in China were forced to deal with the issue of Chinese rites in the 17th century, which became the so-called Chinese Rites and Term Controversy, the crux of the matter was that the Franciscan and Dominican missionaries (and later the Vatican) objected to the Chinese converts’ participation in Confucian ritual ceremonies as well as their practice of keeping ancestral shrines at home (with tablets inscribed with their ancestors’ names).

The “Confucianity Movement” in the Republic of China

Not long before the Chinese republican revolution in 1911, during which the last imperial dynasty was overthrown, many intellectuals felt that China needed a national religion to strengthen its cultural and political identity. In 1895, Kang You-wei, the most influential public intellectual at the time, campaigned for the establishment of *kongjiao* (*kong* being the surname of Confucius), meaning the “Confucian religion” or “Confucianity,” which was modeled after Christianity. A reform-minded thinker, Kang wanted to invent a national religion for China to facilitate its transition to modernity, and *kongjiao hui*, the “Association of Confucian Religion,” was set up by Kang and his supporters in 1912, right after the founding of the Republic of China.

However, their efforts proved to be unsuccessful, at least politically, and in the late 1920s, the government ordered the association to change its name to *kongxue hui*, the “Association of Confucian Learning.” This change of a single word is indeed a crucial one; *jiao* denotes “religion” in modern Chinese, whereas *xue* denotes “learning” or “education.” Although the movement of reinventing Confucianism as a religion faded quickly after that, some of the followers of Kang did continue to advance his ideas. For example, a Confucian Academy was established in Hong Kong in 1929 by Chen Huanzhang, who had been active in the Confucian religion movement, and there were also attempts to make Confucianism a national religion in Taiwan in the 1920s and 1930s when Taiwan was under Japanese rule. But such efforts had little impact on what was about to happen in

mainland China, when the People's Republic of China was founded in 1949.

The Ambivalent “Harmonious Society”: Confucianism in Socialist China

In an article published in 1892 titled “Development of Statistics of Religion,” M. Fournier De Flaix and Alice R. Jackson stated that the worship of ancestors is the true religion of China, and it is also the official religion; with at least 256,000,000 followers (roughly the estimated population of China), Confucianism and the worship of ancestors is in fact the second largest religion in the world, after Christianity. Indeed, since the turn of the 20th century, Confucianism is often portrayed as the official or national religion of China, both in academic studies and in introductory texts on world religions.

It might come as a surprise that Confucianism is in fact not included in the Chinese official classification of religions today. The “Five Major Religions” classification was established in the 1950s and includes Catholicism, Protestantism, Buddhism, Daoism, and Islam, but not Confucianism.

The notion of the five major religions was advanced because of concerns for national security and social stability in the newly formed socialist government; they needed to find an institutional structure to deal with China's religious population. The religious organizations, especially the Catholic Church and the Protestant churches, were large enough to pose potential threats to the socialist state. To gain control of these organizations, the State Administration for Religious Affairs was established solely for the management of such groups. In 1953, four religious associations were founded under the titles of “Patriotic Associations” of Chinese Catholics, Protestants, Muslims, and Buddhists. The Patriotic Association of Daoists did not come into existence until 1957, when a communist general intervened to make it an official religion.

Apparently no one spoke out for the Confucians. But who were the Confucians? It seems plausible that Confucianism was left out of the official classification because there was no Confucian population perceived to be posing political threats. And it was also because there was no self-identified Confucian population to speak of in the first place. Many Chinese intellectuals might consider

themselves living a way of life based on the Confucian virtues of self-cultivation, yet none of them, at least in the mid-20th century, would call themselves “a believer of the Confucian religion.” Without a recognizable or identifiable base of believers and organizations, Confucianism as a religion has primarily been a matter of academic and political concern in socialist China.

During the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976), there were several waves of political condemnations of Confucian thought as a result of ideological conflicts within the Party, and Confucius was demonized as a backward, feudal, and reactionary thinker in the process. The Cultural Revolution also engendered widespread oppression of any religious practice in China, and many rituals related to Confucianism disappeared from everyday life during this time.

Beginning in the 1980s, there has been an ongoing debate over the religious nature of Confucianism, the so-called *rujiao shijiao zhizheng*, which started as an intellectual discussion with potential political implications. The controversy reached its height in 2001 to 2004, with several dozens of people publishing books, articles, and web postings, arguing whether Confucianism has been a religion in China through philosophical or historical analysis.

Starting in 2004, some intellectuals ceased to take part in the academic debate; instead, they started engaging in a variety of activities with the goal of making Confucianism a religion. The “Reading of the Classics” movement has been mobilized by scholars endorsing Confucianism as a religion; it started in the 1990s as a grassroots movement that taught children Confucian classics through reading and memorization. The scholars Jiang Qing and Kang Xiaoguang and their associates have become the leading voices in the so-called Mainland-China New Confucianism (to be differentiated from New Confucianism, an intellectual movement aiming at a reinterpretation of Confucian thought that is the most influential in Hong Kong and Taiwan, originated by scholars such as Xiong Shili and Mou Zongsan).

The Contemporary Revival of Confucian Ritual Practice

In the first decade of the 21st century, there has been a noticeable revival of rituals traditionally

associated with Confucianism in China. The revival has taken both a personal form (the worship of ancestral spirits as well as the personal worship of Confucius in Confucius temples) and an official form (state-sponsored ritual performances in Confucius temples).

Based on a recent survey (*Horizon*, 2007), there has been a great increase in the number of people making annual trips to their ancestral hometowns to perform rituals at the graveside of their deceased family members. The rituals are sometimes called *saomu* (“tomb sweeping”), since the main rituals involve the cleaning of graves and the displaying of sacrifices (e.g., food, drinks, or paper goods that are made to resemble luxury products such as cars or houses). It is believed that the ancestors’ blessings could guarantee good fortune in one’s personal affairs. This annual trip usually takes place in early April, on the day of the Qing Ming Festival; it has become so pervasive that the Chinese government declared the Qing Ming Festival to be an official national holiday in 2008, so that people can officially take the day off from work for the sake of observing the rituals.

The revival of ritual practices of worshipping the spirit of Confucius in Confucius temples has to do with a general deregulation of religious life in China since the 1980s. The state has taken the position of treating religions as possible sources of morality and social stability as long as there is no political dimension to them. Unlike in the cases of what the state terms “evil cults,” the practices associated with Confucianism seem benign and even beneficial to the state’s goal of maintaining social order.

Most people who worship in Confucius temples these days are young men and women about to take an important examination, such as the annual national college entrance exam or a graduate school entrance exam; they burn incense in the temples and pray to Confucius for blessings. Although there are also people who pray for blessings for success in job interviews or promotions, the general purpose of worshipping in Confucius temples is for blessings in one’s educational life.

The increasingly elaborate public veneration of Confucius in the Confucius temple in Qufu, often organized by government agencies, also point to a new phase in the changing status of Confucianism in China. The state has been tolerant, even supportive,

of many activities that promote the religious aspects of Confucianism, since its endorsement of Confucianism and Confucian traditions is in line with its current political goal of maintaining a “harmonious society” through promoting traditional—one might even say Confucian—culture and values. Indeed, the state has been emphasizing the importance of trustworthiness in public life and private conduct, cultivation of civic virtues, and the fulfillment of filial piety, all of which can be traced back to Confucian teachings. But it remains to be seen whether the state would go as far as to elevate Confucianism to the status of one of the major religions in China.

The Global Nature of Confucianism

Social scientists have long been interested in the role of Confucianism in the development of modern Asia. Following the publication of Weber’s *Religion of China: Confucianism and Taoism*, especially its English translation in 1951, many have connected Confucian values with the so-called modernization process in Asian countries, such as China, Taiwan, Japan, South Korea, and Singapore. For instance, Tu Weiming edited a volume titled *Confucian Traditions in East Asian Modernity: Moral Education and Economic Culture in Japan and the Four Mini- Dragons*, which addresses the very issue of the connection between modern economic development in east Asia and its Confucian legacy; in *Modernization, Globalization, and Confucianism in Chinese Societies*, the sociologists Joseph B. Tamney and Linda Hsueh-Ling Chiang examine the impact of modernization and globalization on Confucianism in mainland China, Taiwan, and Singapore.

Indeed, Confucianism has been flourishing for hundreds of years outside mainland China, especially in Korea, Japan, Taiwan, and Vietnam. Benjamin Elman, John Duncan, and Herman Ooms speak of Confucianism as a repertoire of common techniques (*rushu*) that link different social groups together: the literati elites in China, the warriors and merchants in Japan, the *yangban* aristocrats in Korea, and the rural literati in Vietnam. The Confucian techniques include civil service bureaucracy, Confucian academies, and rituals as a balance to the legal system; these techniques are always modified or transformed by the local histories, rituals, and customs, which leads to

very different manifestations of Confucian life in these countries.

It is often acknowledged that ritual practices associated with Confucianism are better preserved in Korea than in mainland China. The National Confucian Shrine in Seoul was founded in 1397, and ritual worship of Confucius has been conducted twice a year there. Hongkyung Kim speaks of Korean Confucian ritual practice as having three components: formal institutionalized practices (including rituals for Confucius), practices within the household (including rites for worshipping the ancestors), and practices to inform one's personal conduct (following the 16th-century text "Behavioral Rules of the National Confucian Academy").

Scholars who are interested in the so-called Asian Values versus Human Rights debate of the 1990s or the political and social issues in contemporary China in general, including issues dealing with democracy, human rights, family, and gender, often treat Confucianism more as a social and political philosophy than religion. The Asian Values versus Human Rights debate has been an international event; politicians and heads of states made declarations, with many academics joining in the discussion. One of the key scholars in the debate is Daniel A. Bell, who views Confucianism largely as a communitarian philosophy of self, family, community, and the state; in his book *China's New Confucianism: Politics and Everyday Life in a Changing Society*, he argues that China is promoting Confucianism as an alternative to Western liberalism.

Tu Weiming, Robert Neville, and John Berthrong represent what is called the "Boston Confucianism" in the West. They have been very influential in advocating the relevance of Confucianism to Western philosophy as well as Western spiritual practice, and they are the ones who have made the valuable contribution to the ongoing Confucian-Christian dialogue. As Neville puts it, from the beginning, the central question facing the Boston Confucians has been the following: Is it possible for one to be a Confucian if one is not from China, Japan, or Korea—the so-called Confucian east Asia? Tu Weiming, Neville, and Berthrong have all argued that the answer is a resounding "Yes." They believe that one can be a Confucian in any part of our global society, and one can draw from different religious and spiritual traditions to form multiple religious identities.

The position held by the Boston Confucians is distinctly different from popular views such as "the clash of civilizations," the idea that different religions and civilizations are bound to be in conflict with one another in our contemporary world. Instead, the Boston Confucians have been supporting an ongoing dialogue between Confucians and Christians. For instance, Neville believes that it is possible to live an active spiritual life through two or more spiritual traditions. The Boston Confucians have made Confucianism relevant to Christians or anyone from different cultural or religious traditions; their efforts have resulted in an open, creative, and forward-looking conversation about Confucianism and Christianity—and the possibility of being Confucian and Christian at the same time—in the multicultural and global world that we are all part of.

Anna Sun

See also China; Hong Kong; Korea, Republic of (South Korea); Mahayana Buddhism; Singapore; Taiwan

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CONSPIRACY THEORIES

Conspiracy theories are a form of intricate reasoning characterized by elaborate conclusions about secret plots, cover-ups, and schemes often believed to be designed and crafted by public entities such as governments, economic growth and management agencies, multinational corporations, and religious organizations. In recent years, conspiracy theories have become more pronounced within global pop culture, largely due to the proliferation of popular literature and film with foci on secrecy. At least one function of this form of reasoning serves to provide a discourse for the extraordinary and ultimately gives rise to an antithesis of reenchantment in the face of what may appear to be secularizing society.

The term *conspiracy* originates from the Latin term *conspirare*, referring to something agreed on or united in plot. The literal translation is “to breathe together,” derived from the prefix *com* (“together”) and the suffix *spirare* (“to breathe”). Although common law would define conspiracy as an agreement between two or more individuals to break the law, its more popular reference connotes an exploration of trivial events, the individuals that are allegedly involved, the perceived covert agreements and activities that conceal truths, and the perceived suppression of inquiry into such truths.

With the onset of the information age, the reach of conspiracy theories has grown beyond national,

cultural, and social boundaries, becoming yet another global phenomenon. The content of at least seven general conspiracy theories has extended onto a transnational scale, including the extraterrestrial debate embodied within the ancient astronaut thesis; the government-concealed truth behind UFO/alien encounters; the propaganda production of the moon-landing hoax; corporate takeovers, globalization, and the emergence of the new world order; U.S. government involvement in the events of September 11, 2001; the revisionist discourse of an official Holocaust narrative; and the cover-up of Jesus Christ’s bloodline. The two latter conspiracy theories are particularly germane to the context of global religion.

The conspiracy theories surrounding the official Holocaust narrative emerged shortly after World War II when defeated Nazi officers and soldiers began to destroy evidence of gas chambers and records of executions in an attempt to deny and/or conceal their organized effort to exterminate Jews and others they considered “less desirable.” In general, the main tenets of this conspiracy hold that (1) the Nazis never actually had an official policy for exterminating Jews, (2) stories of the use of gas chambers were fabricated, and (3) the total number of Jews killed in the Holocaust was an exaggeration, as the actual figures were much smaller. According to these conspiracy theorists, the Jewish people created the “Holocaust myth” to garner international sympathy and support for justifying the creation of the state of Israel.

The origins of this type conspiracy theory may lie within the late-19th-century text titled *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. The text was actually a propaganda tool first published in full in 1905 by the Tsarist mystic Sergei Nilus that portrayed the Jews as a tightly organized cabal conspiring to take over the world. Although this piece was debunked several times as a hoax, it nonetheless circulated well beyond Paris where it was first distributed. Today, the text can be readily found translated in a variety of countries including Australia, Brazil, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, New Zealand, Malaysia, Mexico, Pakistan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Turkey, the United States, and the United Kingdom.

Other anti-Semitic and racist groups such as the Ku Klux Klan in the United States began to support such conspiracy theories while crafting and

distributing revisionist literary materials. More recently on December 11, 2006, the Iranian Institute for Political and International Studies held an event titled “Conference to Review the Global Vision of the Holocaust.” The two-day gathering was dubbed by many as the “Holocaust Deniers Conference,” where nearly 70 guests from 30 different countries attended to reexamine the atrocities of the Nazi concentration camps. According to the head of the Iranian Foreign Ministry, Rasoul Mousavi, the conference was “an opportunity for scholars to discuss the subject away from Western taboos and the restriction imposed on them in Europe.” Although the event was widely seen as a political stunt typical of the hubristic Ahmadinejad administration, it nonetheless sparked international outrage as to how such horrors of the 20th century could actually be held in question despite the validity of the official story largely considered the tragic truth during the 21st century.

The conference went on to be condemned by notable heads of state and public figures such as German Chancellor Angela Merkel; Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert; British Prime Minister Tony Blair; United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon; spokespersons for Belgium, Canada, France, Mexico, Poland, Russia, Switzerland, and the United States; and officials from the Vatican and the Archbishop of Canterbury. In addition to this criticism, several shadow conferences were held in reaction to Holocaust denial, including one held in Berlin, another in Israel, and yet another in Indonesia.

The cover-up of Jesus Christ’s bloodline is a conspiracy theory that postulates a lineage that contradicts the traditionally accepted narrative in the textual form of the New Testament. The implication of a lineage would indicate that Jesus Christ would have had a partner with whom to procreate and thus would have held a mortal existence. According to conspiracy theorists, Christ’s alleged partner may have been Mary Magdalene, and their descendants would be traceable to the Merovingian Dynasty of Europe. Conspiracy theorists also allege that the Roman Catholic Church has gone to great lengths to cover up this bloodline and preserve the integrity of Christian history.

The tale of a secret bloodline leading to Jesus Christ’s descendents may have received its first

impetus in the 1970s, when the British filmmaker Henry Lincoln directed a series of three documentaries that cultivated speculation about the curious French village of Rennes-le-Chateau. Lincoln based much of his investigation of this village on a book titled *Le Trésor Maudit de Rennes-le-Château*, written by the French author Gérard de Sède. Lincoln, along with Michael Baigent and Richard Leigh, went on to create a 1982 best-selling book titled *Holy Blood, Holy Grail*, where the tales of a secret society named the Priory of Sion were largely perpetuated.

More than two decades later, in 2003, Dan Brown published *The Da Vinci Code*, which rekindled international interest in Jesus Christ’s bloodline. By 2010, the book had sold some 80 million copies and was translated into 44 different languages. The book’s popularity gave way to major motion pictures, documentaries examining the truth behind Brown’s claims, several spin-off books, and even “Da Vinci Code Tours” for millions of tourists and conspiracy theorists alike to enjoy. The medium itself had transnationalized Christ’s hidden bloodline conspiracy theory through creating accessibility for millions of readers.

Scholars of conspiracy theories often frame such phenomena as a reaction to larger global and international fears of an uncertain future combined with the democratization of information and ideas as disseminated via the Internet. More specifically, conspiracy theories may be viewed as a form of dealing with what Ulrich Beck called the “risk society,” in which human-manufactured theories produce disorder and anxiety about futurist possibilities. Where conspiracy theorists believed that information-providing institutions have repeatedly failed to present the truth to everyone inclusively, conspiracy theorizing provided a sense of agency in pursuing an alternative view of official narratives.

Salvador Jiménez Murguía

See also Apocalypticism; Christian Identity; Holocaust; September 11, 2001

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CONSTANTINE (CA. 272–337 CE)

Constantine I, also known as Constantine the Great, ruled the Roman Empire in the early fourth century CE. He served as Roman emperor from 306 until his death in 337 and was sole emperor from 324 to 337 CE. Constantine is best known for ending the persecution of Christians in the Roman Empire, legalizing the Christian religion, and converting to Christianity himself, becoming the first Christian Roman emperor.

Constantine was born around 272 CE in the city of Naissus (Niš, Serbia). His father, Constantius, was the governor of Dalmatia under Emperor Diocletian. In 285, Diocletian split the Roman Empire in two; although it was still considered one political entity, Diocletian ruled in the east, from Nicomedia (Izmit, Turkey), and Maximian became co-emperor in the west, from Mediolanum (Milan, Italy) and Augusta Treverorum (Trier, Germany). In 293, Diocletian and Maximian appointed subordinate rulers, or Caesars, for each of their two subdivisions: Constantius in the west and Galerius in the east. This system of four rulers was called the Tetrarchy. In 305, both Diocletian and Maximian resigned and were

succeeded as coemperors by Constantius and Galerius, with Severus and Maximian taking over as Caesars. When Constantius died in 306, Severus was promoted to emperor in the West and Constantine took over as Caesar, ruling over Britain, Gaul, and Spain. By 324, he was the sole emperor of the vast Roman Empire.

One of the most significant accomplishments of Constantine's rule was the reversal of the Christian persecutions that had gone on previously, including Diocletian's Great Persecution of 303. While he never declared Christianity the official religion of the realm, Constantine did legalize the religion with the Edict of Milan in 313. Although a similar edict was issued by Galerius in 311, the Edict of Milan went further because it not only ordered the removal of penalties for confessing to Christianity but also ordered confiscated property to be returned to the Christians.

Apart from legalizing Christianity, Constantine was influential in the development of the religion in a number of ways. Constantine's mother Helena was a Christian, and at some point, he converted to Christianity as well, becoming the first Christian emperor. The date of his conversion is debated but most likely occurred following the Battle of Milvian Bridge in 312. In 325, he convened the first ecumenical council, the Council of Nicea, the purpose of which was to establish unified doctrines for the religion. He also moved the empire's capital to Byzantium in Asia Minor, rebuilding the city and renaming it Constantinople (Istanbul, Turkey). Constantinople served as the cultural and political center of the Roman Empire from 330 to 395 and as the seat of the Byzantine Church and capital of the Byzantine/Eastern Roman Empire from 395 to 1204.

Victoria J. Ballmes

See also Christianity; Constantinople; Council of Nicea; Rome; Turkey

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CONSTANTINOPLE

Constantinople was the capital of the East Roman/Byzantine Empire for more than 1,000 years and is one of the most important cities in world and religious history. Now known as Istanbul, it is located on the Bosphorus Strait in Anatolia on the site of the ancient city of Byzantium. The city was founded by the Roman Emperor Constantine I as “New Rome” in 330 CE to move his imperial capital closer to the frontiers of the empire. For much of its history, Constantinople was the largest and most affluent city in Europe, and its location allowed it to control major trade routes to Asia. It also provided western Europe with a significant defense from both barbarian and Islamic invasions for several centuries. A prime example of the city’s opulence is the jewel of Byzantine architecture, the Hagia Sophia, which was the largest church structure in the world for more than a 1,000 years. Constantinople’s capture in 1453 by the Ottoman Empire is considered by many historians to mark the end of the Middle Ages, as refugees from the city contributed to the Renaissance by bringing an influx of Greco-Roman culture to the rest of Europe.

Constantinople’s role in the history of Christianity cannot be overstated. Its bishop, the Patriarch of Constantinople, was recognized as second in honor only to the pope of Rome in 381, and the tradition that the apostle Andrew had evangelized Byzantium allowed the city to bolster its claim to such prestige. Because the Byzantine emperors desired to ensure that imperial unity was not threatened by Christian division, they summoned seven ecumenical councils during the first millennium to solve major theological disputes; four of these councils were held either in Constantinople or its suburb Chalcedon. In 1054, tensions between the bishops of Rome and Constantinople led to the “Great Schism” between what are known today as the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches, which remain the two largest Christian communions. Due to the schism, the patriarchate of Constantinople became the pre-eminent see in the Eastern Orthodox Church, a position that it still holds.

After Sultan Mehmed II captured the city, he made it the capital of the Ottoman Empire, thus transforming the city from a Christian stronghold

into one of the most important Islamic cities in the world. Constantinople’s fall was a major blow to Christendom and its popular belief that the city was protected by God and therefore unconquerable. Conversely, many Muslims interpreted their victory as divine affirmation of Islam’s superiority over Christianity. It remains one of the world’s largest predominantly Muslim cities; however, in the 20th century, the secularization of the city together with the rise of anti-Turkish Arab nationalism, considerably weakened its reputation in the Islamic world. The Republic of Turkey officially renamed the city Istanbul in 1930.

Rico Gabriel Monge

See also Christianity; Constantine; Eastern Orthodox Christianity; Islam; Ottoman Empire; Rome; Turkey

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CONSUMER CULTURE

One prominent feature of globalization is embodied within the pursuit of goods, a social phenomenon often referred to as the “consumer culture.” Broadly defined, consumer culture refers to an actual culture within a society that is actively invested in purchasing and/or venerating material possessions. As networks of transnational commerce have maintained and strengthened this culture of consumption, religious beliefs and practices within the global community have adjusted to accommodate for this type of commodity-centered activity. Although this vast web of commodity production and acquisition has certainly been seen as a threat to religious principles geared toward the attenuation of personal pleasures, individuation, and vice, the marketing of religious events and products has complemented consumer culture. Where Émile Durkheim’s conceptual theory of religion advanced the notion of the distinctions

between the sacred and profane, the world of commodity production has provided ample material for the sacralizing of any product as well as its process of consumption.

Classical theories of consumer culture stem from the works of the economist Karl Marx. Marx delineated consumption by demonstrating how consumers within the parameters of capitalism become alienated or detached from the use value of a given commodity, while curiously privileging its exchange value. As the exchange value gradually erases any traces of the use value, marketing strategies become free to create myths about the qualities of a given product.

Thorstein Veblen's late-19th-century book *The Theory of the Leisure Class* advances some of Marx's themes about privileging exchange value over use value by illustrating how certain classes enact processes of consumption in an attempt to display financial superiority over others. Veblen denounced this form of consumption as a type of irrational economic behavior, emphasizing a political tenor that runs through what he termed "conspicuous consumption," whereby the leisure class was capable of maintaining and improving its status based on the accumulation of goods.

In this critical tradition, more contemporary works by Stuart Ewen have drawn on the admiration for and acquisition of goods believed to embody attributes indicative of certain status-building characteristics. This *commodity fetishism*, as it is known, refers to a process of pursuing goods that will signify a certain ideal status for the consumer. Where the motivation for acquiring goods can be linked to an affinity with unnecessary consumption, the method by which one acquires such goods may also be driven by a symbolic adoration of the goods themselves.

Perhaps the most popular example of this type of consumer culture and religion is found within the celebration of Christmas. This event demonstrates how the economy of consumption and gift giving undermines the principles of this symbolic celebration. Although consumer culture appears to challenge sacred religious principles, it also provides publicity, serving to institutionalize Christmas as a widely recognized celebration regardless of one's religious conviction.

Salvador Jiménez Murguía

See also Christmas; Clothing; Marxism; Material Culture; Popular Religion

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CONVERSION

Conversion is the process of an individual or a group changing religious allegiance from one faith or community to another or from no particular religious affiliation to one with an identifiable name and organization. It is the major way in which religious traditions around the world have expanded beyond their initial communities of origin, though the forms of conversion and its effectiveness are often contested subjects. This entry begins with some background statistics of global world religions competing for converts. Next, it presents an analysis of conversion models and relates these to globalization, the nation-state, the religious organization, and the converting subject, ending with some general conclusions.

Global World Religions Competing for Converts

The 15 main global religions competing for converts worldwide are presented in Table 1. The data from the Internet source of statistics on religious communities, www.adherents.com, also address the internal cohesion and doctrinal standardization of the global world religions. Baha'i and Islam show much greater internal cohesion than Christianity, Buddhism, and especially Hinduism. The large group of people with no religion (16%) is made up mostly of unaffiliated believers with only a tiny portion of atheists included (2.5%). This 16% is the population targeted for conversion by all global world religions.

Table I Global World Religion Memberships, 2008

<i>Religion</i>	<i>Estimated No. Adherents</i>	<i>Population Percentage</i>
Christianity	2.1 billion	33
Islam	1.5 billion	24
Secular, nonreligious	1.1 billion	16
Hinduism	900 million	14
Chinese traditional religion	394 million	6
Buddhism	376 million	6
Indigenous religions	300 million	5
Sikhism	23 million	0.36
Juche (North Korea)	19 million	0.30
Spiritism	15 million	0.24
Judaism	14 million	0.22
Latter-Day Saints (Mormons)	12 million	0.19
Baha'i	7 million	0.11
Jehovah's Witnesses	6 million	0.10
Shintoism (Japan)	4 million	0.06

Source: http://www.adherents.com/Religions_By_Adherents.html (accessed October 30, 2008).

Although Islam is growing strongly, by almost 3% a year, Christians still form the largest group, constituting one third of the world's population. Christianity is growing on average by 2.3% a year, but this percentage obscures some big differences. Roman Catholicism is growing by only 1.3% a year, because it continues to lose many adherents to Pentecostalism in its main continent, Latin America. Protestantism is growing by 3.3% worldwide, but the real growth explosion is taking place in the "born-again" Christian churches. Pentecostal and evangelical churches are growing by 7% annually. How can conversion models explain these statistics?

Conversion Models

Conversion has been an important theme in the anthropology, sociology, and psychology of religion for many decades. In the sociology and psychology of religion, the crisis or deprivation approach was dominant since the research on "brainwashing" in the 1950s. Later research became increasingly critical of this perspective and moved toward a more actor-oriented approach. This second approach stressed

converts as active agents, weighing different religious alternatives and negotiating the requirements for conversion with the religious organization. Structural constraints on actors were included as, for example, socialization, personality, lifestyle, culture, economics, and politics.

The standard conversion model in sociology was developed by John Lofland and Rodney Stark. It was presented as an ever-narrowing funnel. For conversion to occur, three predisposing characteristics (acutely felt tensions, a religious problem-solving perspective, and self-definition as a "religious seeker") had to combine with four situational factors: reaching a turning point when old solutions no longer worked, formation of affective bonds with one or more members, weakening affective ties with nonmembers, and intensive social interaction with members of the religious organization.

The Lofland-Stark model has been criticized as too static and too individualistic. The role of prior socialization was mostly ignored. Alienation and frustration were measured only after people had already become members. Variability in social availability of potential recruits was ignored, and there was a tendency to attribute affiliation with marginal groups to irrationality or emotional instability.

Many later social science approaches to religious conversion confused recruitment to a church with having a conversion experience. Less attention was given to the worldview of the subject prior to conversion (preaffiliation) or to regular visitors becoming formal church members without ever reporting a conversion experience (affiliation in the typology below).

Almost all social scientific research on conversion until the 1990s was based on research in Christian churches or in new religious movements. The scope of these studies was also severely limited by the fact that they were all conducted in the United States or in Europe. A few of these models were being applied to 85% of the world population living in other continents.

The conversion career approach addresses most of these criticisms. The conversion career is defined as the member's passage, within his or her social and cultural context, through levels of church participation. An essential element of the conversion career approach is to develop a typology of religious activity that includes more levels than disaffiliation and conversion. Preaffiliation describes the

worldview and social context of potential members of a religious organization. Affiliation refers to formal church membership, which does not necessarily form a central aspect of one's identity. Conversion, used here in the limited sense, refers to a personal change of worldview and identity. Confession is core membership, describing a high level of participation inside the new religious organization and a strong missionary attitude toward nonmembers. Finally, disaffiliation refers to a lack of involvement in a religious organization.

The conversion career approach also distinguishes five main groups of factors influencing conversion: individual factors; social factors; institutional factors, dealing with the religious organization; cultural factors, including political and economic factors; and contingency factors. Contingency factors involve random meetings with missionaries, acutely felt crises, stressful situations, and other contingencies that bring individuals into the orbit of religious organizations. The conversion career is a systematic approach to analyzing shifts in levels of individual religious participation that can be applied comparatively worldwide. It is important to recognize, however, that trends in religious growth and decline are affected not just by rates of conversion but by factors such as varying birth rates within religious groups.

Conversion and Globalization

Religious conversion seems to thrive under the influence of the globalization process. The defining characteristic of contemporary globalization is its speed, aided by technology (mass media and computers) and massive migration from the South to the North. Television brings the reality of life in the North much more intensely into the homes of poor people in the South, stimulating migration. Economic interdependence and mass media create a global society, which provides an excellent breeding ground for religious change and religious mobility. Migrants introduce their religions in other parts of the world. Some cling to their parental religions under new and uncertain circumstances; others become more open to experimentation with new religions. Moreover, some religions, such as Pentecostalism, seem particularly "made to travel."

The increased speed and efficiency of global communication have also led to increased conflicts.

Political, economic, ethnic, and religious struggles are intensified, and often even fueled, by modern mass media and the use of computer technology for mobilization ends. Interreligious competition for members between religions also becomes fiercer because it now happens on a global scale. Most religions nowadays have transnational networks, and all use mass media to spread their message. Because the religious perspective is both powerful and empowering, its adherents are continually tempted to use religion to solve the many problems they face in their daily lives: at home, at work, at school, in their local community, in society as a whole, and finally even in the global collectivity of fellow believers. Under certain circumstances, religious or political leaders try to appeal to all believers of the same faith. Doing this, they support a worldview that distinguishes primarily between "us" and "them," risking conflict on the outside by stimulating cohesion on the inside.

Because religion is such an efficient source for mobilization, it is rarely free from state intervention. Missionaries are subject to strict state controls in most parts of the world. Nations that leave their citizens free to roam the Internet and watch religious programs on television run the risk that many of them will find a new religion that they like. Easy access to abundant information often leads to increased curiosity. Curiosity, in turn, often provides the initial stimulus to seek out new alternatives that eventually may lead to conversion. Hence, the contemporary globalization process clearly also stimulates the forces that want to counteract its effects on national society by putting limits on religious freedom. It has been argued, plausibly, that it is exactly because of the intensified globalization process that many national governments want to curb or even prohibit the activities of (foreign) religious organizations and missionaries. Hence, globalization is a prime factor in the current explosion of religious conflicts and religiously inspired violence in nation-states all over the world.

Conversion and the Nation-State

What does conversion mean for the nation-state? In cultural anthropological and mission studies typical of the 1950s, conversion was considered an element of cultural change. The supposed transition

to modernity in non-Western countries was thought to lead to instability and crises in those cultures. Conversion to a (Western) world religion was seen as a response to that crisis—a solution that was at the same time intellectual, psychological, sociological, cultural, and of course religious.

It is not just that culture change leads to a rise in conversions, but the process also works vice versa: An increase in conversions has the potential to change a local culture. Hence, many societies and many nations fear religious change in general and conversion in particular. Their main aim is to protect their own long-established religious traditions, which are often interwoven with the nation-state. In many parts of the world, religion and society are intimately connected. In Indonesia, only five religions are officially allowed. In India, Hindu nationalists claim that conversion to Islam or Christianity is equivalent to robbing the nation of its citizens. Similar accusations are directed against people wanting to convert from Orthodox Christianity to other religions in Russia.

In Latin America, at least until the 1970s, it was also common to hear that to be a Mexican, Chilean, and so on was to be a Catholic—if only a nominal Catholic. The religious monopoly of the Roman Catholic Church in most Latin American countries started eroding in the late 19th century. Protestant missionaries, mostly from the United States, were persecuted violently in some countries in Latin America until the 1950s and 1960s. This has been challenged increasingly with the massive growth of Pentecostalism since then. Although the literature shows that the majority of target populations generally reject new religious options, clearly, under some circumstances, new religions can gain a massive following. In areas with strong Pentecostal presences (all of Central America, Brazil, and the Southern Cone), the concepts of national identity and even citizenship are gradually changing under the influence of this religious change. In these countries, a “Pentecostalization” of religion and society is becoming visible. This illustrates the influence that massive conversions to a new religion can have on their host societies.

Fear for the cultural changes that accompany conversion motivates most countries in the Middle East to allow no religious freedom at all. Islam forms a religious monopoly, protected by the nation-state, leaving Muslims in Middle Eastern

countries with three religious options that are all internal to Islam: inactivity, nominal activity, or radicalism.

Religious mobility is currently close to zero in the Middle East, low in western Europe and India, somewhat higher in eastern Europe, much higher in the United States, and probably highest in many African and Latin American countries (especially Brazil and Central America). The Pentecostalization of Latin America illustrates the increasing influence of the globalization process, which in turn is tied to the characteristics of the religious organization.

Conversion and the Religious Organization

No matter how people make choices concerning the religion they profess, religious organizations will typically be competing for members. The quintessential condition is not the “rational” actor or even the implicit or explicit cost-benefit analyses people make of the religious organizations they visit. The essence is religious liberty: the freedom to choose one’s religion and the freedom to express that choice by publicly participating in, or perhaps just visiting, a particular religious organization.

Religious freedom leads to religious pluralism, which in turn leads to interreligious competition for members. Religious organizations can compete against each other by using their unique histories, their core beliefs and doctrines, their codes of conduct, their morality, their special rituals, their unique forms of empowerment (e.g., the Holy Spirit in Pentecostalism), their theologies, their organizations, their leadership, their characteristic religious experiences (e.g., speaking in tongues in Pentecostalism), their prayers, their miraculous healings, their access to prosperity, their music and worship styles, and their special missionary programs and agents.

However, religious organizations require religious freedom and religious pluralism, which exist in differing degrees all over the world. In the United States, religious freedom is essential and constitutes an important cultural factor in conversion. But even here, some religions receive more (tax) benefits than others and some religious organizations are subject to more state harassment than others. In western Europe, mainstream churches are often favored and even subsidized by the state.

The religious market in western European countries tends to be more regulated, and declining religious groups may merge or form a cartel. The demand for organized religion seems to be lower in western Europe than in the United States or Latin America, although the demand for spirituality and other free-flowing forms of religion remains stable among western Europeans.

The religious organization by itself constitutes a major factor in the conversion process. This institutional factor includes not only the appeal of the religious organization—its practices, rituals, doctrines, and so forth—but also how it defines and shapes the conversion process. What are the religious organization's requisites for membership, conversion, and commitment? And how are these enforced? In other words, how much negotiation is possible between the religious organization and the converting subject?

The Converting Subject

Contemporary conversions in areas with religious freedom—the United States, Europe, Latin America, and most of sub-Saharan Africa—still occur typically during adolescence and young adulthood, much as it was in the West around 1900, according to William James. Most conversions still happen between the ages of 15 and 25. However, the literature is also biased in selecting informants overwhelmingly from this age category.

Age is highly relevant in influencing the subject's "structural availability": How much freedom and time do people have to seek out religious organizations and visit them? The converting subject nowadays has many ways to make first contact with the religious groups, but the main avenues are those based on one's social networks, on contacts with the mass media, and on chance encounters with missionary agents from religious organizations. The informant's social network includes not only spouses and children but also friends, family members in the broadest sense (ranging from siblings and cousins to grandparents), and ties to neighbors, colleagues at work, neighborhood dwellers, and acquaintances. Although one would expect to encounter gender differences in the conversion process, starting with the primary socialization in one's parental religion, the literature is mostly silent on this.

Mass media typically bring people in contact with religious organizations: radio and television, the Internet, and occasionally newspapers or weekly magazines. Usually, the program or article explicitly deals with the theme of religion, but occasionally, it is sufficient just to hear compelling conversion stories on the radio or to see people's testimonies delivered on television. This makes people curious about the group, which provides the impetus to visit them, especially if one is accompanied by an acquaintance.

People tend to make implicit or explicit cost-benefit analyses of the religious organizations they visit (although the concept of "rational choice" has been seen as problematic in religion). People typically stay in the religious organizations where they feel at home. For this to happen, various requirements have to coincide: feeling accepted and supported by core members, obeying the religion's code of conduct, understanding core doctrines, and getting involved as a church volunteer. If one or more of these fail to occur, disaffiliation is a likely outcome.

Conclusions

The following are general conclusions with respect to the phenomenon of religious conversion:

- Childhood and adolescence continue to be important stages of the life cycle influencing people's religious commitment later in life.
- Conversion in the limited sense of the conversion career approach always requires a change in religious worldview and identity. Empirical indicators of conversion as a rupture with a former identity and the ubiquitous utilization of the convert identity in all areas of life are still relevant in contemporary studies of religious change worldwide.
- Researchers should be careful to distinguish recruitment (joining a church) from conversion. This distinction provides more insights into the high religious mobility of individuals worldwide.
- The contemporary importance of religious seeking and especially religious shopping is directly related to the increased availability of options on the religious market and the increased accessibility of these options through modern mass media (radio, television, and the Internet).

First contact with new religious groups is nowadays more often established through modern mass media rather than through personal agents.

- The conversion process is primarily influenced by significant others (relatives, friends, and acquaintances) through the social networks the individual belongs to. It is clear from the literature that almost all people, men and women, are recruited to religious organizations through their own social networks. While studying the role of networks in religious recruitment, it is important to identify who are the first in a network to convert to a new religion. These typically are the core members—people at the confession level of the conversion career.
- As these people consider the pros and cons of membership in a religious organization, they always make an implicit or explicit cost-benefit analysis.
- Recruitment to religious organizations is therefore influenced heavily by the competition for members taking place between various religious organizations all over the world. This means that a global religious market is already in operation, although people seem to base their religious choice on the available local options in their neighborhood, city, or country.

Henri Gooren

See also Baha'i; Hinduism; Internet; Islam; Judaism; Liberation Theology; Mahayana Buddhism; Mormons; Pentecostal Movements; Protestant Buddhism; Protestant Christianity; Roman Catholicism; Television; Theravada Buddhism; Vajrayana, Tibetan

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COOK ISLANDS

The Cook Islands, named in 1888 in honor of Captain James Cook, who “discovered” them during his second voyage (1772–1775), are 15 islands in the southwest Pacific Ocean, grouped in two archipelagos: The northern group comprises coral atolls, and the southern group includes Rarotonga, the main island where 68% of the population is concentrated. The Cook Islands became a British protectorate in 1888 and were transferred to New Zealand in 1901. In 1964, Cook Islanders obtained self-governance, which gives them a political autonomy and New Zealand citizenship while certain domains (money and defense) remain within New Zealand’s competence. Christianity was brought to these islands between 1821 (Aitutaki Island) and 1857 (Pukapuka Island) jointly by British missionaries of the London Missionary Society (Williams, Pitman, and Buzacott) and Tahitian evangelists or teachers—Papehia being the most famous. From the opening in 1839 of the Takamo College in Rarotonga, Cook Islanders have been trained and in their turn became pastors and missionaries in Samoa, New Caledonia, and Loyalty Islands, in New Hebrides and, after 1872, in Papua New Guinea.

In the 2001 census, the distribution of religious membership was as follows: The Cook Islands Christian Church (CICC), which is the heir of the London Missionary Society, included 55.9% of

the population; the Roman Catholic Church, established in 1894, 16.8%; the Seventh-Day Adventists, 7.8%; Pentecostal churches, 4.1%; the Mormon Church (LDS), 3.8%; and Jehovah's Witnesses, 1.7% (Others, 4.1%; No religion or objection to the question, 5.6%).

Since the 1970s, strong migratory movements toward New Zealand and Australia has led to a population decrease and aging in the Cook Islands, with a direct impact on religious practices. In 2006, 19,569 people lived on the Cook Islands, while 58,008 Cook Islanders lived in New Zealand and approximately 30,000 in Australia.

In this context, the CICC exemplifies a three-fold dynamic of transnationalization, cultural reaffirmation, and internal diversification. In 2005, the church had 26 parishes on Cook Islands, 20 in New Zealand (established since the 1980s), and 12 in Australia. These parishes are under the direct supervision of the Mother Church and led by pastors trained at the Takamoa College in Rarotonga. The majority of the college applications come from New Zealand and Australia. This trend throws light on the link between pastoral calling and reappropriation of culture and language and shows how the church can be a place of identity reaffirmation in migratory and multicultural contexts.

In 2005, a debate raised within the church about the recognition of baptism by immersion—which was eventually refused—underlined the influence of an evangelical stream in the church and a functioning inspired by congregationalism that copes with internal diversity.

These three features of the church—transnationalization, cultural reaffirmation, and internal diversification—explain, along with its strong historical legitimacy, the relative dynamism of the CICC, which has demonstrated an ability to face both religious globalization and individualization.

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See also Cargo Cults; Immigration; Missions and Missionaries; New Zealand; Pacific Islands/Oceania; Transnational

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COPTIC CHRISTIANITY

The term *Coptic Christianity* refers to the various forms of Egyptian Christianity, in particular the Coptic Orthodox Church. Originally, the word *Coptic*, from the Greek *Aigyptos* ("Egyptian"), referred to Egyptians in general. However, as Islam became the dominant religion in Egypt, the term evolved to refer specifically to Egyptian Christians. Coptic is also the name of their liturgical language, a form of Egyptian written with Greek and Demotic characters. Of the 10–15 million Coptic Orthodox Christians in the world, the majority are still located in Egypt, with only 2 million spread out among various other countries.

The Coptic Orthodox Church traces itself back to the first century CE. According to the fourth-century church historian Eusebius, St. Mark traveled to Egypt following Jesus' death to preach the gospel and founded the Apostolic See of Alexandria. Over the following centuries, Alexandria became one of the most important centers of Christianity, producing key figures such as Athanasius, Cyril, Clement, and Origen. The Egyptian church also played an important role during the fourth century in determining which texts would be included in the Christian Old and New Testaments. Even Christian monasticism had its roots in Egypt, later spreading to other lands within the realm of Christianity.

Theological controversies within Christianity during the fourth and fifth centuries eventually led to a schism between the Egyptian Coptic Church and the Roman Catholic Church and even to a divide within Coptic Christianity itself. The Church of Alexandria split itself into two groups in 451 after a disagreement over Jesus' human and divine nature. The majority of Egyptians followed the beliefs of what is now known as the Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria, under the Coptic Pope of Alexandria and Patriarch of All Africa on the Holy Apostolic See of St. Mark, while others agreed doctrinally with the Roman and Byzantine Churches and formed what is now the Oriental

Orthodox Church under the Greek Orthodox Pope of Alexandria and Patriarch of All Africa. Neither group recognized the other's authority, and both tried aggressively to gain the upper hand until Arabs invaded Egypt in 639 and brought the new Islamic faith with them. As Islam gained in popularity, Coptic Christianity waned, becoming the minority religion in Egypt by the ninth century.

Under Muslim rule, Coptic Christians in Egypt faced targeted taxation and fluctuating periods of toleration and persecution, including the confiscation of church property, the destruction of churches and monasteries, and the removal of Coptic civil servants from office. Their situation began to improve in the 19th century under Muhammad Ali's dynasty but deteriorated again following political upheaval in the 1950s, and in many ways, Coptic Christians in Egypt continue to face marginalization in the second decade of the 21st century.

Victoria J. Ballmes

See also Christianity; Eastern Orthodox Christianity; Egypt; Islam; Islamism (Political Islam); Roman Catholicism

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COSMIC WAR AND COSMIC CONFLICT

The enduring image of cosmic war is evidence that the religious imagination is steeped in violence. Biblical bans, Christian Crusades, Islamic jihads, and the warfare of Hindu epics all attest to it. Religiously sanctioned battles may be discerned even in the Buddhist epics of Sri Lanka. The evidence is not only ancient but contemporary. At the turn of the 21st century, it seems as if violence in the name of religion is appearing everywhere. What motivates this? Competing claims to proper conduct or to sacred places drive some of this violence. In other cases,

conflict is seen as etched into a turbulent universe, as if the very powers of righteousness were under siege.

Images of great warfare—sometimes conceived in moral terms as the forces of good versus evil, sometimes in metaphysical terms as the power of social order versus the chaos of disorder—have been part of religious thinking since antiquity. The image of *Chaoskampf*, “the war against chaos,” is an ancient mytheme rooted in narratives of divine combat, wherein a supreme god defeats chaos-monsters such as Leviathan, Bohemoth, Tiamat, Yam, and Mot. Its seeds have been traced to a variety of contexts but mainly to Ugaritic, Mesopotamian, and biblical literatures. As summarized by the historian Norman Cohn (1993), the *Chaoskampf* conveys a sense of cosmic war: “a conviction that a mighty spiritual power intent on maintaining and furthering life in an ordered world is locked in struggle with a spiritual power, scarcely less mighty, intent on destroying life and reducing the ordered world to chaos” (p. 105).

In the last decades of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century, dramatic incidents of terrorist acts have been carried out in the name of religion, most spectacularly the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001. Though some of these incidents might be attributed to ideologically manipulated battles for land, authority, or opportunity, many of them were seeped in the rhetoric of ultimate warfare between the forces of light and darkness. It was as if the ancient *Chaoskampf* motif had returned in the guise of contemporary acts of terrorism. The first scholar to make this connection and to describe these images as “cosmic war” was the sociologist Mark Juergensmeyer in an article in 1987, later elaborated in books published in 1993, 2003, and 2008. Other social analysts also took up the phrase to describe this compelling religious articulation of situations of contemporary conflict. Not only scholars of religion but also national security experts have used the concept in trying to grasp, for instance, the ritualized dimensions of suicide. Cosmic conflict is thus not just a term for ancient mythic themes but an emerging rubric for understanding religious terrorism.

Identifying Motifs

However contemporary in expression, cosmic conflict has primordial features. Telltale motifs

may include the following: (1) a perceived rupture between the divinely established social order and the current one; (2) acclaim for glorious heroes, gods, and legends associated with the establishment of a righteous order; and (3) the ritualization of battle, seen in prebattle initiations, oaths, and divinely authorized rules of engagement.

Rupture

A perceived rupture between the heaven-ordained social order and the current one is nowhere more evident than in laments for a world gone awry—surely one of the oldest poetic themes in religious literature. The theme is conspicuous in the writings of the biblical prophets but is implicit also in the story of Adam and Eve, the increasingly destructive cycle of Hindu world ages, the *mappo* thinking of Japanese Buddhism, and countless quests to recover lost virtue. A sense of rupture lies unmistakably behind notions such as *maya*—the Eastern sense of everyday life as illusion—and original sin—seen by some Christians to infect the whole of human experience. The sense of rupture has inspired some of the most moving allegories in world religions.

Yet the same notion may inspire remedial and violent religious activism. Acute expressions of such activism may be found in millennial movements over much of the world. Radical examples today include the Christian Reconstructionist movement and Islamist movements fashioned around the thinking of Sayyid Qutb and Abd al-Salam Faraj. Such groups shun what they perceive to be a decadent moral relativism and ardently embrace a return to pure fundamentals, seen as original to the founding moments of their respective faiths—the teachings of the Bible, on the one hand, and of Mohammad and the Qur'an, on the other. They envision, too, calamitous consequences should a return to that founding order fail to occur, which gives their movements apocalyptic urgency. The clash between the world they foresee and the world of their immediate experience is often intense, requiring extraordinary and curative measures. Hence, the Reconstructionists see the establishment of a biblical code of law in the United States as essential to secure Christ's imminent return, and Qutb and al-Salam Faraj saw the return of the Islamic caliphate and Shari'a law as essential to the restoration of justice on earth. Both movements

idolize soldiers for their respective causes, whether it is John Calvin, with his promotion of the authority of God in matters of state, or the early companions of the prophet Mohammed, who spent much of their time in holy struggle against polytheists and hypocrites. Seeking to restore a world gone awry, such groups promote violence and intolerance under the mantle of cosmic war.

Warring Deities and Heroes

A related motif is the emulation of legendary divinities and heroes from primordial battles associated with the establishment of a righteous order. Ancient battle narratives are rife with this motif. Just as ancient deities Poseidon, Ares, Athena, Ishtar, Ashur, and Yahweh march in front, leading troops in battle, perpetrating vengeance and divine slaughter, so too do ancient heroes Odysseus, Hector, Achilles, Mursilis, Assurbanipal and biblical figures Joshua and Barak, basically as divine mirrors. Just as ancient battle narratives make gods radiate extraordinary power (destructive fire, cacophonous shrieks, earthly tremors, and paralyzing fear), legendary human warriors exude much the same (e.g., the *melammu* of kings in Mesopotamia and the *mēnis* of Achilles in the Iliad) and with equally dire consequences. Miracles are especially savored. Angels descended to fight alongside warriors in early Islamic battles, an angel led the Israelites through the enemy lands from Sinai to Canaan, and the Virgin Mary led the crusading Christian troops against the Saracens in Syria. Ancient deities not only sanction but actually guide holy wars.

That warlike deities and legendary heroes continue to resonate with today's religious warriors is indisputable. Rabbi Meir Kahane, Israeli Kach party founder, explicitly looked to the biblical deity as a role model for militant activism: Just as Yahweh once defeated the Egyptians to return the Israelites to Canaan, so should the chosen people defeat the Palestinians for dominion of the nation-state of Israel. Kahane proclaimed war against Palestinians a *mitzvah*, a holy duty. The Reverend Michael Bray, promoting lethal attacks on U.S. women's clinics, proclaimed, "The Lord God is a man of war," relying on military metaphors from Exodus, the prophets, Psalms, and St. Paul (i.e., 2 Thessalonians 2; Romans 16:20). The 9/11 terrorists took on pseudonyms of

the early associates of Prophet Mohammad, and their last instructions urge, "Remember the battle of the Prophet against the infidels . . . as he went on building the Islamic state." In India, the god Rama once defeated evil forces in Sri Lanka, and centuries of heroic resistance against Muslims and the British incited Indian warriors to defend Rama's birthplace. Legendary heroes provide mythic prototypes for warriors today.

Legendary heroes in cosmic wars tend to be represented not only as victors but also as victims. When battles are lost, it is victims who provide mythic prototypes, usually in the form of martyrs. Imam Huseyn's martyrdom in the 7th-century battle at Karbala is for Shi'ite Muslims today no less redemptive than is the martyrdom of Jesus for Christians and is mimicked during yearly passion plays. Prince Lazar's beheading at the Field of Blackbirds in Kosovo remains an open wound for some Serbian Christians; the 14th-century battle is still declaimed in song and art. Black Tiger Day in Sri Lanka symbolically resurrects scores of Hindu martyrs for the Tamil Tigers fighting Buddhists in Sri Lanka, and Sikhs embrace four centuries of militant martyrs who fought Mughals and the British over land in the Punjab. As the Greek root word attests, martyrs "witness" (μαρτυρ-) to the righteousness of a religious quest. They also die for it. From the age when Christians became martyrs at the hands of the Romans, the promise of a glorious and redemptive death continues to lure religious witnesses of all kinds.

The power of these heroic archetypes to motivate violence is tied to religion's capacity to hallow memories of triumph and to inflame memories of anguish. Yes, Joshua's victory at Jericho was divinely ordained, but it is the horror of the Holocaust and two millennia of pogroms that vividly incite Zionist struggles today. The myth of divine deliverance of Israelites from slavery in Egypt is still appealing to oppressed peoples on three continents; not forgotten too is the deity's habit of hardening the enemy's heart. The martyrdom of the prophet Mohammad's grandson is for Shi'a Islam a source of redemption through the Mahdi, who will return at the end of time. Yet his beheading by fellow Muslims remains a piercing memory, illustrative of many other betrayals. The Roman crucifixion of Jesus is understood to symbolize triumph over death and Satan. Yet it remains

an agonizing spectacle for many Christians. By rooting rituals and liturgies in these poignant memories, religion keeps both hope and misery alive.

Ritualization of Battle

The ritualization of battle, and especially of the steps that initiate battle, is apparent in holy wars from ancient times to the 9/11 attacks on the United States. Prebattle consecration of warriors is evident in Joshua 3:5, which mandates that warriors "hallow themselves" before taking Jericho. Constantine had X and R inscribed on the shields of his army to invite divine blessing before the battle at Milvian Bridge, and Frankish priests blessed the swords of Charlemagne's Christian army before it fought the pagans. The Qur'an reports that Allah sent rain to purify warriors before battle (Qur'an 8:11), and the last communications to the 9/11 bombers promise that angels shall pray for the bombers as long as they are in a state of ablution. Purifying rituals help intensify commitments and transform ordinary religious activists into holy warriors for God.

Oaths made before battle hold a similar power. Loyalty oaths to Yahweh are conspicuous in the Bible, and the phenomenon predates Israel in near-eastern oaths of fidelity between heads of state and vassals to be summoned in case of war. Christian Crusaders "took the cross" before setting out to fight "infidels," and failure in that quest was taken as a betrayal of an oath before God. Suicide pledges are famous in the cases of the Jewish Zealots at Masada and the Shinto-informed kamikaze of World War II. The final instructions to the 9/11 suicide bombers urge them to swear an oath to die, even though suicide is expressly forbidden by Islam. Prebattle oaths can catapult the warrior into a sacred sphere, wherein normally proscribed acts are exalted.

Just rules of war (*jus ad bellum*) often fall under the umbrella of religion. Usually, they are geared toward humane ends. Virtually every religious tradition advocates mercy to suppliants and the sparing of noncombatants in war. The Bible professes strictures about marriage with war captives, and Islamic Hadith expressly prohibit battlefield rape and also the beheading and mutilation of captives. In the East, Sun Tzu warned that wartime excesses

will thwart eventual control of civilian populations, and the most popular of Japanese war tales, the Heike Monogatari, laments the suffering of peasants. Nonetheless, mandates for wartime slaughter in exceptional circumstances are provided in the Bible, in the Qur'an, and in religious history. Religious principles may be made to undergird theories of total war as much as of *jus ad bellum*.

Another facet of *jus ad bellum* is of course the cultivating of a mental attitude toward combat. Typically, we look to Buddhism and the bushido code of Japan for the ritualized inducement of a pristine mind during actual combat, but the Indian *Mahabharata* too advocates individual transformation through fighting meditation, in the *karma yoga* described by Krishna to Arjuna. Sun Tzu espouses a fullness of rapport between leader and fighting forces, and virtually every successful general since Ashurbanipal has known the martial value of religious rhetoric in fanning as well as in checking battlefield excesses. Even the last instructions of the 9/11 bombers promise that the mission is for God and exhort the bombers to strike not for personal pleasure but in pursuit of God's justice only. This might be compared with Augustine's admonition to soldiers that Moses fought for duty only and never for personal quest. Cultivating a sublime mental state is key to training the religious warrior.

On the other hand, religious texts eloquently describe the battlefield frenzy of cosmic enemies, warriors, and gods alike. In the *Mahabharata's* Battle at Night, supernatural avengers wreak havoc and carnage on the Pandava camp, tearing up and devouring the entrails of corpses as does God Ares to the Achaians slain in the Iliad. Goddess Tiamat of the Babylonian creation epic is depicted as a chaos dragon, whom God Marduk must slay with mighty ferocity, then cut in two to create the earth and heavens. Similarly, the god Yahweh splits open the head of the monster of the sea to open up springs and streams and bring salvation to the earth (i.e., Psalm 74). Zoroastrian texts see the earth and world history as nothing short of a cosmic stage for the battle between Ahura Mazda and all the enemy gods. The entire cosmos is rearranged in Isaiah 24, where Yahweh's vengeance makes the world reel like a drunkard and "terror and pit and snare await the people of

the earth." The glamorization of cosmic force and destruction is thus an inescapable motif in religious literature.

Conclusion

Cosmic conflict is a prominent theme in religious literature, encompassing a range of motifs. A rupture between the way things once were and now are is one such motif, often remembered in poetry and also acting as a spur for curative violence. Etiological myths commemorate heroic triumph and defeat, which ritual, myth, and liturgy may inflame into violent activism. Prewar rituals, rules for battle, and special states of mind for warriors are also circumscribed by religion. A preoccupation with extraordinary and redemptive violence may be discerned in religious myths, songs, art, and memories. As the foregoing illustrations show, the notion of cosmic conflict saturates world religions and has done so for a long time.

Margo Kitts

See also Christian Identity; Christian Reconstructionism; Islamism (Political Islam); Jihad; September 11, 2001; Violence; War on Terrorism

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COSTA RICA

Costa Rica is a country in Central America located between Nicaragua and Panama. It is a confessional state of the Roman Catholic Apostolic religion; however, professing other religions is not prohibited, and among the other predominant ones are Protestant, Orthodox, Mormon, Jehovah's Witnesses, Judaism, Islam, and Buddhism.

In 1519 and 1522, the Spanish conquistadors arrived and thus began the Catholic evangelization of aboriginals, whose traditions were animist. The first church was built in 1544.

The creation of the diocese in 1850 (archdiocese in 1921) and the *Concordato* of 1851 gave the Bishop control over education to the detriment of liberal policies. Bishop Bernardo Thiel and the

Jesuits were expelled in 1884 because of their opposition to secularization laws, which had been passed by the National Assembly. The church became institutionalized as a political party: *Unión Católica* (Catholic Union). Hence, the liberals authorized the return of Bishop Thiel, catechism to be taught in public schools, and the creation of a Catholic newspaper. The Bishop defended social justice and achieved the support of the rural proletariat.

Between 1870 and 1890, the railroad that would join the Central Valley with the Caribbean was built. Workers from the Antilles entered the country, bringing their beliefs in Myalism, Obeah, and Protestantism.

The following also settled in Costa Rica: the British and Foreign Biblical Society (1845), the Baptist Missionary Society of Jamaica (1887), the American Biblical Society (1890), the Seventh-Day Adventists (1903), the Episcopal Methodist Church (1917), Assemblies of God (1944), and the American Baptist Association (1946).

In the 1940s, Social Guarantees, the Labor Code, and Social Security were approved due to an agreement among the Archbishop Victor Manuel Sanabria; the Secretary of the Communist Party, Manuel Mora; and the President, Rafael A. Calderón Guardia. Also, *Vanguardia Popular* was born, a communist party that is a strong promoter of the Church's social doctrine, and a Catholic union—*Rerum Novarum*. After the civil war in 1948, *Vanguardia Popular* was proscribed, and the Church ended its period of social Catholicism.

The influence of Liberation Theology can be seen in the establishment of the Department of Ecumenical Research and the Ecumenical School of Religious Sciences at the National University.

In the 1990s, a neoconservative tendency emerged in the church, which along with the Catholic organization Opus Dei opposed sexual and reproductive freedom. The consequences were withdrawal of the government-provided sexual education guides, the discontinuation of the government program "Young Love," and an agreement with the ministry of education to maintain subsidies to Catholic schools.

According to a 2007 survey by the University of Costa Rica, among the population of 3,921,108, estimated in 2000, 68.6% declared themselves Catholic, 16.8% Protestant, and 5.6% as belonging

to other religions; 9.1% said that they had no religion or did not answer.

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See also Latin America; Liberation Theology; Opus Dei; Politics and Religion; Religion and State; Roman Catholicism

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COUNCIL OF NICEA

The Council of Nicea (or Nicaea; Greek *Nikaia*) was Christianity's first ecumenical council. It was called by Emperor Constantine in 325 CE to secure for the first time theological cohesion among the churches, especially regarding Christology and ritual practice. There were approximately 250 ranking attendees to debate and decide the future direction of Christianity.

A creed of faith was determined, imposing a single theology on all Christians. The main debate in the council centered on the Christological Arian controversy. The Arians believed that because Christ was the "only begotten" Son of the Father (see the Gospel of John 1:14, 16; 3:16, 18), he was not coeternal with the Father and must necessarily be inferior to Him. They were staunch monotheists and strictly opposed attributing any multiplicity to God. Those holding what is now anachronistically called the "orthodox" view argued that Christ must in all ways be equal to the Father because only God could offer salvation to man. Christ therefore could not be a creature of God but must be God himself incarnate, which would entail Christ's coeternality with the Father. With Constantine's support of the orthodox contingent, the Creed of Nicea was written using the Greek word *homoousion*, a word found in the philosopher Origen's work, meaning "of the same substance." It states that Christ is "true God

from true God" and affirms God's unity in the face of multiplicity. The Creed also asserted the belief in the Holy Spirit and set the Trinity forever in orthodoxy. All clerics in attendance were required to sign the Creed and all but four did so; two were excommunicated, and two would eventually retract. This signed document of faith made Christianity uniform, at least officially, and became the foundation for all orthodoxy to follow.

Twenty canons were also issued by the Council. These deal with issues of church governance, new and return membership, promotion within church hierarchy, and proper behavior of church governors, as well as determining the preferential status of the Metropolitan sees (Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch, with special mention of Jerusalem). Two canons also provided direction concerning cases of apostasy, mainly involving Novatianists (or Cathars) and Paulinists.

Also at issue at Nicea was the date of Easter. While 14 Nisan in the Jewish calendar had been traditional for the East, Constantine convinced the council not only that all Christians should celebrate the most important day in their calendar at the same time, but that the Jewish calculations should be forsaken in preference of the Roman calendar and calculation. From the close of the council, Easter would be determined by all in the manner of the Roman and Egyptian churches.

John Soboslai

See also Christianity; Constantine; Easter; Heresy; Holidays; Monotheism; Rome; Scripture

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CREATIONISM

Broadly speaking, creationism is the belief that the universe was created in its current form by an all-powerful

God. In a narrower sense, it refers to the taking of creation narratives as true guides to the history of the emergence of life on earth. As such, it is at variance with the evolutionary theory of Darwinism, which argues that species evolved over long periods of time through the mechanism of natural selection and that divergent groups of plants and animals arose from the same ancestors.

Beyond a shared conviction that evolutionism threatens the underpinnings of society by challenging the cardinal doctrine that man was made in the image of God, creationists agree on precious little. Since the publication of Charles Darwin's *Origin of Species* in 1859, three competing schools have emerged. "Young-earth creationists" assert that the earth is about 6,000 years old and maintain that radical geological changes occurred because of the Noachian flood. "Old-earth creationists" also reject evolution but argue that the "days" of creation actually refer to long epochs of time and that the earth might therefore be as old as the scientists say it is (4.5 billion years old). Yet another group promotes the theory of "intelligent design," claiming that some biological systems are "irreducibly complex" and are therefore best explained by an intelligent cause, not an undirected process such as natural selection.

Until the 1990s, creationist ideas seemed confined to North America, an offshoot of conservative Protestant movements based in the United States. The first legal battle over evolution and creation (the famous "Scopes Monkey trial") took place in Tennessee in 1925. The concept of "creation science," which aimed to grant evolution and creation equal scientific standing, was born during the 1960s in the works of two Californian advocates of flood geology: Henry Morris and John Whitcomb. The "intelligent design" movement, though inspired by British 18th-century natural theology, was born in a Seattle-based think tank at the end of the 1980s.

The first decade of the 21st century, however, witnessed the spreading of antievolutionism throughout the world and from evangelical Protestantism to Catholicism, Islam, Judaism, and even Hinduism. Despite the efforts of national academies of science in Europe, Latin America, and Asia, it has now become a global phenomenon, indifferent to geographical or theological barriers.

Other than a profound distrust of the explanatory power of science, this phenomenon betrays a

general insecurity about the moral health of nations. For most creationists, the rejection of evolution is indeed an entrance point to talk about other things, such as the role of government, the financing of public schools, or the values that children should be taught. This political dimension of the conflict ensures that the creation–evolution controversy will endure long into the next half century.

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See also Flood Myth; Fundamentalism; Globalization; Politics and Religion

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CROATIA

The Republic of Croatia is a country in southeastern Europe that was once a part of the communist state of Yugoslavia and has had a diverse history of religion, culture, and ethnic conflict. Its eastern coast covers the Balkan Peninsula and faces the Adriatic Sea. Zagreb is Croatia's capital. The earliest Croats were a community of Slavs who, leading a nomadic existence, eventually settled in their present homeland around the late sixth or early seventh century. Croatia's conversion to Christianity, on its greatest scale, took place in the ninth century, when Christian missionaries from Italy, Byzantium, and the Frankish state arrived on Croatian land. Christianization of the Croats developed from two cultural directions. Church rites in the Slavic language and script, which later developed into the Glagolitic script, were used by disciples of St. Cyril and St. Methodius of Salonika to convert the Croats. Also, the Latin language and liturgy were used, and spread, throughout Croatian territory by missionaries. Henceforth, Roman Catholicism would always play a major part in Croatian culture.

In 925 CE, Tomislav I was crowned the first King of Croatia, making Croatia an official kingdom. However, Croatia would not remain autonomous. In 1102, Coloman Arpad, of the Hungarian Arpad Dynasty, was crowned King of Dalmatia and Croatia, thus establishing a union between Croatia and Hungary. During the late Middle Ages, Catholicism continued to play an important role in cultivating Croatian culture. The mendicant orders of the Franciscans and Dominicans entered Croatia during this period, building monasteries and bringing Gothic styles to Croatian art and architecture, which was also promulgated by the formation of cathedrals in major cities such as Split and Dubrovnik.

The Protestant Reformation did not gain strong influence in Croatia, being swiftly subdued by the Counter-Reformation and, particularly, by the eclectic work of the Jesuits. The Jesuits came to Croatia in the mid-16th century, prominently utilizing education to revive Catholic thought and faith in Croatian society. In addition to establishing elementary schools in several Croatian cities, the Jesuits introduced the study of theology and philosophy by founding the Jesuit Academy in Zagreb in 1669, from which the University of Zagreb emerged, becoming the oldest and largest university of southeastern Europe. Many Jesuits played important roles in advancing science and culture in Croatia, thus also attracting support from Croatia's government. Consequently, in the early 17th century, the *Sabor* (the legislative body of Croatia) proclaimed Catholicism to be the only permitted faith in the country, thus rooting out Protestantism.

In 1526, Austrian Archduke Ferdinand Habsburg was elected king by the Croatian nobility. Ferdinand's election was especially important in aligning Croatia with the Austrian Empire against the invading Ottoman Empire. More than two centuries of wars with the Ottomans had a monumental influence on European culture, leaving Croatia with a particularly iconic geographical position. After Austria and Russia went to war against the Ottomans in 1787, a peace treaty was reached in 1791 separating the Austrian and Ottoman empires through a marked boundary, which today constitutes the line between Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, symbolizing the boundary where the Catholic West meets the Orthodox and Muslim East. Jewish immigration also spread to Croatia, beginning in the late 18th century and

continuing to the early 20th, further diversifying the population.

After World War I in 1918, Croatia declared independence from Austria-Hungary and formed the Kingdom of Yugoslavia with Slovenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, and Montenegro. During World War II, Nazi Germany established a puppet government in Croatia led by Ante Pavelic's Ustasha regime, which was responsible for the mass killings of thousands of Serbs, Jews, gypsies, and even Croats. It was Josip Broz Tito's role as a leading revolutionary with the Partisans, a Yugoslavian resistance movement against fascism, that elevated him to power after the Yugoslav People's Liberation War of 1941 to 1945. Tito's centralized communist rule of the Second Yugoslavia met with ambivalent reaction. Many Croats saw Tito's presidency as a dictatorship replicating the Soviet model, while other Croats considered him a national hero—Tito came from the Croatian village of Kumrovec.

After Tito's death in 1980, Yugoslavia entered an economic depression. However, as communist rule deteriorated, Croatia experienced a spiritual revival led by the Catholic Church, which organized a Eucharistic Congress in Zagreb in 1984 attended by more than 400,000 people. A significant occurrence fueling the Catholic renewal transpired in Medjugorje, a small mountain village in Bosnia-Herzegovina populated by Croats. In June 1981, six Croatian children from the village reported experiencing daily apparitions of the Virgin Mary. The apparitions in Medjugorje are noteworthy for both their longevity, apparently continuing to this day (nearly 30 years later), and for the fact that they have been subjected to more medical and scientific examination than any other purported supernatural event in history, attracting global attention and mass pilgrimage.

In the 1990s, Croatia faced war as Serbian leader Slobodan Milosevic used strong nationalist language, calling attention to Serbian suffering during World War II, and advocated for a hegemonic Greater Serbia to dominate Yugoslavia. The Yugoslav wars lasted from 1991 to 1995, leading to a final dissolution of Yugoslavia and resulting in an independent republic of Croatia. The Vatican and Iceland were the first to recognize Croatia as an independent republic in 1992, even before the European Union and the United Nations did so. Additionally, Pope John Paul II visited Zagreb in

1994, advocating a spirit of ecumenism and reconciliation, attempting to ease the strife-torn atmosphere that poisoned relations between the diverse religions and ethnicities of the region. The wars, originally provoked by the Serbs as aggressors, led to multiethnic and religious confrontation. As Serbia invaded Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1992, Croatian forces helped Bosnian Croats and Muslims battle the Serbs. However, Croats and Muslims also turned against each other, leading to the Croatian-Muslim war of 1993 to 1994, which resulted in the deaths of more than 10,000 Croats and even more Muslims, including massacres of hundreds of Muslims and the desecration of numerous mosques and schools. The wars drove more than 0.5 million Croats from their homes, devastating the economy after the violence ended.

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See also Bosnia and Herzegovina; Christianity; Communism; Ethnic Nationalism; Hungary; Islam; Slovakia; Yugoslavia

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CRUSADES

Crusades were Christian military expeditions in the Middle Ages organized in Europe and promoted by the papacy, initially to recover formerly Christian territories under Muslim occupation in the eastern Mediterranean. They were soon directed to other regions. Crusading built on a tradition of pilgrimage to Christ's sepulcher in Jerusalem and the evolution of just war into biblically inspired holy war against the enemies of Christendom.

Pope Urban II launched the First Crusade in 1095 in response to a Byzantine appeal for mercenaries to fight the Seljuk Turks who had recently occupied Christian Asia Minor. The Crusaders' initial victims were European Jews, but in 1099, they captured Jerusalem, ultimately establishing four Latin states. The second (1147–1149) and subsequent crusades

sought to defend, recapture, or extend these territories, but none repeated the success of the first (1096–1102). Local Muslim warlords increasingly sought legitimacy through waging jihad against "the Franks" until Saladin (Salah al-Din) overcame them in 1187 at Hattin, near Tiberias, subsequently recovering Jerusalem. Christian rule there was restored by negotiation in 1229 but ended by conquest in 1244. The Third Crusade (1189–1192) had seized Byzantine Cyprus and retaken Acre, which was not finally lost until 1291. From the 14th to the 17th century, the Crusaders sought to fend off the Ottoman invasion of Europe.

Expeditions in Iberia and against the popes' European opponents reflected the movement's origins, but Orthodox Christians, too, became the object of crusading, especially after the Fourth Crusade (1202–1204) captured Constantinople. Crusades were launched against Cathar Languedoc (1209–1229), Hussite Bohemia (1420–1431), and Protestant England (the Armada of 1588). To the north, Crusaders and Teutonic Knights fought pagan Wends, Balts, and Lithuanians from 1147.

For six centuries, crusades were promoted by popes, church councils, and other Christian leaders. Most Crusaders to the east incurred huge debts, seeking treasure only in heaven through a life-threatening form of penance. Christian warriors could now use their skills serving God rather than renounce them for the monastery, but these vocations were combined when military orders such as the Templars and Hospitallers conducted holy war instead of manual labor. As pilgrims, the Crusaders had a special symbol (a cloth cross), took a vow, and were promised remission of their sins (and even martyrdom) as well as ecclesiastical protection for their persons, families, and property.

Pope Urban had sought to liberate Eastern Christians from Islamic rule and bring them under papal jurisdiction. By stages, the Maronites and some Armenians entered into communion with Rome, but other Eastern Christians were deeply alienated. Among Muslims, crusading heightened appreciation for the sacredness of Jerusalem, but its impact was far less significant than that of the Mongol invasion. Only in modern times did Muslims learn to regard the crusades anachronistically as an early form of European imperialism. On July 22, 2011, a Norwegian terrorist, Anders Breivik, evoked the image of the Crusades by claiming to be a part of the Knights Templar, a

Christian militia devoted to ridding Europe of Muslim immigrants. For both Muslims and Westerners, crusading became a powerful but ambivalent source of myth and symbolism.

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See also Christianity; Cosmic War and Cosmic Conflict; Israel; Jihad; Just War; Sacred Places; Violence

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CUBA

The largest and most populous island in the Caribbean (about 43,000 square miles and 11 million inhabitants), Cuba is a former Spanish colony, originally populated by Taino Indians. The Taino were either killed or assimilated throughout the centuries, hence there is no ethnic group claiming to be native Cubans. However, many traces of Tainos can be found in the Cuban culture, whether in some place names, such as Guanabacoa or Baracoa, some meals (red pepper soup or *ajiaco*) or the use of cigar (*tabaco*) in some African American cults such as Santería.

Roman Catholic Church

Owing to its Spanish legacy, the largest religious institution in Cuba remains the Roman Catholic Church. It is difficult to assess the actual number of regular churchgoers, but the church claims that around 7,000,000 Cubans are baptized Catholics, among which 10% may go to church. There are 11 dioceses in Cuba. The relationship between the Catholic Church and the government regime were tense as the Castro-led guerillas took over from the Batista government in January 1959. More than 400 Catholic schools were closed in the following years, and many priests fled from the island. In 1961, Cuba was officially proclaimed an atheist country. In a 1965 speech, Ernesto “Che” Guevara, a major figure in the Cuban revolution, spoke about the

emergence of “the New Man,” and the necessity to “get rid of the past”—hence, “superstitious beliefs” such as religious belief. Even though the 1976 constitution guaranteed the freedom of religion, all believers were barred access to the Communist Party. After the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989, the former USSR stopped supplying Cuba with oil and various commodities, leading to a major economic crisis in the country; the period of economic disarray that followed—and still continues—was called *periodo especial* by Fidel Castro. Faced with mounting everyday difficulties, many Cubans turned to religion (Catholicism or African American cults). Since 1991, Catholics and followers of other religions have been allowed admittance into the Communist Party. In 1998, Pope John Paul II was given an official welcome by Fidel Castro. In the wake of his visit, Christmas was again recognized as a national holiday, and many people started to attend Mass in church, although in recent years, their number has leveled off.

Other Christian churches are also present on the island. Evangelical and Baptist churches can be found in some big city centers, while there are Pentecostal churches in some poor districts such as Párraga (Havana). There are also a number (probably fewer than 100,000) of Jehovah’s Witnesses.

Judaism

Cuba used to have an important Jewish community, which came to Cuba in two waves: first, Spanish Sephardic Jews who fled from Spain during the Inquisition and then a wave of Ashkenazi Jews coming from the United States in the early 20th century. The district of Guanabacoa still has two Jewish cemeteries, the old one for Sephardic Jews and the new one for Ashkenazi Jews. The majority of Jews left Cuba after the revolution; however, there is still a small community that continues to hold services in Havana and other parts of the island.

Buddhism

Although a considerable number of Chinese people (estimated at nearly 200,000) migrated to Cuba in the late 20th century, there is today no trace of Buddhism in Cuba. Most Chinese immigrants either mixed with the local population by marriage (there were almost no women among the Asian immigrants) or left the island after the revolution.

Spiritism

The 19th-century French spiritist Allan Kardec had a great influence in the Americas. Today, Spiritism is thriving, especially in Havana and the eastern portion of Cuba. Basically, Spiritists follow Kardec's *Gospel of Spiritism* for their services, which are usually led by a *madrina* ("a spiritual godmother") who is possessed by the spirit of one or many dead people. These so-called *muertos* are often stereotypes (the Indian, the Chinese, the Gypsy Woman, Francisco the Slave, etc.). When possessed, the *madrina's* personality changes, and she may even speak in what is thought by witnesses to be a foreign language. During the service, attendants have to wash their hands and clean themselves with perfumes in front of an altar decorated with flowers, photographs of dear relatives, and glasses of water. In Havana, this cult is strongly associated with Palo (Palo Monte), discussed in the following section.

African American Religions

The diversity of African American religions is one of the most striking aspects of Cuban culture. Spaniards started to settle in the island in the early 16th century. As with other Caribbean islands, the slave trade boomed with the intensification of the sugarcane culture, in the early 18th century. Slaves were brought from various parts of the west coast of Africa, but many of them spoke Yoruba, as the fall of the Yoruba-speaking kingdom of Oyo more or less coincided with the start of the slave trade.

Spain had inherited from the Muslims a legal system that provided the slaves with a legal status. They could buy back their freedom at a set price, earn money, and were allowed a period of rest. In Cuba, slave associations were created as early as the 18th century, where Africans coming from the same area could gather and practice their religious ceremonies. These so-called *cabildos de nación* helped maintain the African culture throughout the period of slavery and became, as a new Creole society emerged, the cradles of African American religions: Santería or Regla de Ocha, Palo Monte, and Abakuá. The three religions correspond grossly to three geographic areas in Africa where slaves came from: Santería to the vast Yoruba-speaking area (today Benin and Nigeria), Abakuá to the Cross River region in Nigeria, and Palo Monte to the Bantu ethnic groups (from Cameroon to Congo).

Santería is the cult of *Orishas*, goddesses and gods originally worshipped in Africa. It is the most important African American religion in terms of number of believers. Among these, one must distinguish between the *santos*, who make the Ocha initiation and the simple believers. Santos have a godmother/father (*padrina/o*) and a guardian angel (*angel de la guarda*)—one specific Orisha that looks after her or him. In Spanish, the word *Santería* is a disparaging term, which refers to the popular worship of the saints. Indeed, each Orisha is associated with one specific Catholic saint. Orishas are also associated to a specific color and to a few props (a rod, an axe), as well as to certain habits (the food they eat, their personality). The main Orishas are Ochún, the goddess of love (dressed in white and yellow); Changó, god of thunder and drums (red and white); Yemayá, goddess of the sea (white and blue); Obbatalá, a major Orisha representing knowledge (white); Elegguá, the Orisha who "opens the way" (black and red); and Babalu Ayé, who cures all diseases (purple). In the first year that follows his or her initiation, the *Iyawo* ("recent initiate") is required to dress only in white and must carry necklaces (*collares*) of his or her Orisha. Santos will celebrate the day of their initiation every year (*cumpleaño de santo*), which is more important to them than their actual birthday. During a ceremony, male musicians play the sacred *bata* drums, three double-headed drums of different sizes, playing for each Orisha, one after the other, in a special order (always starting with Elegguá). Offerings are laid in front of the altar, usually foods the Orisha is known to relish (honey for Ochún, sweets for Elegguá, etc.). The sacred language in the ceremony is Yoruba.

One branch of Santería is the Regla de Ifa, a system of divination using a table and 16 cowrie shells. The table belongs to Orunmila (the Orisha of divination). Only (heterosexual) men can make the Ifa initiation and then become *babalawo*.

Palo Monte is a religion worshipping the spirits of the dead. It is often considered as a form of witchcraft, as people resort to it for good as well as bad purposes. As in the case of Santería, *Palero* or *Ngangulero* are initiated during a ceremony. The body is cut (*rayado*) with a knife or a razor blade. Their practice focuses on a vessel called *ganga* (or *prenda*), usually a sort of cauldron filled

with sticks of wood (*palos*) and human remains (a skull is preferable) of a powerful man whose spirit (*nkisi*) will give strength to the *nganga*, as well as animal remains (dogs, cats, etc.). Palo Monte is divided into two major branches: Mayombe or Kimbisa (created in Cuba in the mid-19th century). The sacred language is Spanish, although people greet each other by saying *salaam aleykoun*, an Arabic greeting. Palo Monte is said to be more “efficient” than Santería to solve everyday problems. The *Tata*, the owner of the *ganga*, may use *bilongo* (spells) or resort to a *ndoki* (bad spirit) to neutralize or harm a person.

The Abakuá brotherhood is a men-only initiation society, which is strictly localized in Havana, Matanzas, and Cardenas. About 15,000 men are members of this society, each belonging to any of 110 different *tierras*. A *tierra* (also called *juego* or *potencia*) is a kind of symbolic territory with a king (*eyamba*), a priest (*isue*), an army general (*mokongo*), a hangman (*ekuenyon*), and a doorman or bouncer (*famba*). The simple “soldiers” are called *obonekue*. A man is usually initiated very young (around 16 years old), after a 1- to 2-year trial period. There is no possession during an Abakuá ceremony (called *plante* or *baroko* if there is a sacrifice), although they worship a spirit called *ekue*, who dwells in a drum hidden from the sight of the noninitiated. *Ekue* is considered as “the mother” of the Abakuás.

It must be specified that African American religions are in no way exclusive: one may be a *Santero* (*Santeros* have to be baptized in a Catholic church before making the *Ocha*), a *Palero*, a *babalawo*, a Spiritist, and an Abakuá at the same time—as well as a baptized Catholic. The Catholic Church, since the revolution, has adopted (at least at the local level) a rather lenient attitude toward African American cults, unlike evangelical or Baptist churches, which consider these practices as “devilish.”

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See also Caribbean; Latin America; Postcolonialism; Santería; Spain; Vodou

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CULTURAL REVOLUTION (CHINA)

The term *Cultural Revolution* was first used in the Soviet Union to describe a revolution in knowledge, culture, the arts, and education during the First Five-Year Plan (1928–1932) launched by Joseph Stalin. In the context of Stalin’s new state command economy, forced collectivization of agriculture, and rapid industrialization, calls for youths and new workers to challenge established knowledge, control thought and the arts, and attack the old intellectual elites all found a conducive environment in the equation of education with technical skills training. The Cultural Revolution saw the expansion of the mass volunteer organization, the League of the Militant Godless (1925–1947), whose mission was to promote atheism and to educate the people on the harms of religion and benefits of modern science, through the media, demonstrations and parades, lectures, and film screenings.

Historians have yet to trace the exact connection between the Soviet Cultural Revolution and the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (1966–1976) that occurred in China. This mass mobilization campaign was launched by Chairman Mao Zedong in his struggle for dominance within the Communist Party and represented the most intense antireligious period in China’s 20th-century history of state secularization. By appealing to the revolutionary enthusiasm and unquestioning loyalty of the youth across China, Mao emerged from disgrace after the terrible famine that resulted from his Great Leap Forward campaign (1958–1961). He also sought to forestall a Khrushchevian revisionism from spreading to China, threatening his vision for continuous revolution and class struggle. Mao encouraged the formation of the Red Guards as the shock troops of his renewed revolution.

They were roving bands of local youths who swore loyalty to him and the revolution, yet their activities spun out of even *his* control. They terrorized local party and government officials, intellectuals, schoolteachers, class enemies (former landlords and capitalists), Rightists (those accused of political unreliability in the Anti-Rightist Movement of 1957), and anyone associated with the old feudal culture of China's past. During this decade of terror, it is generally estimated that 10 million people across China were beaten or tortured to death, hounded to suicide, denied medical care or starved to death, or were simply executed.

There were several fronts in the Cultural Revolution attacks on culture. There was the anti-establishment challenge to party authorities who were seen to have become entrenched and complacent. There were the anti-intellectual attacks on scholars, writers, schoolteachers, professionals, and even scientists. Xenophobia also opened up another front against foreign imperialism, whether against the United States, Japan, the Soviet Union, or any Chinese with overseas connections or relatives. Finally, there was the "Smash the Four Olds" campaign against "old customs, old culture, old habits, and old ideas" during the first 3 years of the Cultural Revolution (1966–1968). Anything dating to before 1949 had the taint of feudalism and backwardness. Antiques, family heirlooms, old books and paintings, and lineage genealogies in people's possessions were all to be turned in and destroyed. Religious rituals and superstitious practices such as divination, geomancy, shamanism, and burning spirit money for ancestors, gods, and ghosts were all banned. Sacred sites across the country such as ancient graves and tombs, archaeological sites, Buddhist and Daoist temples, deity temples, Christian churches, mosques, and historical monuments were often desecrated, the deity statuary defaced or smashed, or the buildings locked up, dismantled, or turned into schools, warehouses, or government offices. Religious clergy were forced out of monasteries into lay life or terrorized and beaten and forced to undergo "thought reform"; many nuns and monks were forced to marry.

Tibet came in for perhaps the most extensive religious destruction during the Cultural Revolution, mainly because the highly religious Tibetan culture had missed out on the waves of

secularization that had swept across China proper throughout the 20th century. Thus, Tibetans were regarded as especially backward, and there was much more in Tibet for Red Guard youth to destroy. The Cultural Revolution was so antireligious that even the state's own religious bureaucracies set up in the 1950s to monitor and control religious activities, such as the Buddhist Association, the Daoist Association, the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association, the Three-Self Patriotic Protestant Association, and the China Islamic Association, were all closed down and their journals suspended from publication during this period. It is historically ironic that the cult of Mao, which attained its zenith during this period, contained strong religious dimensions: the sacredness of the leader's body; the interiority of guilt; faith, submission, and obedience; the Manicheanism of revolutionary virtue and counterrevolutionary evil; moral-political righteousness and violence; self-sacrifice and revolutionary martyrdom; public rituals of loyalty, confession, and recitation of sacred text; and apocalyptic teleology.

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See also China; Communism; Marxism; Violence

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CURAÇAO

Heavily Roman Catholic, the Caribbean island of Curaçao was a part of the Netherland Antilles until its dissolution on the 10th of October, 2010. Curaçao is self-governing, though the Dutch government provides support in areas of defense, foreign policy, and the island's finances. A total of 85% of the populace is Roman Catholic, with the next largest religious body adhering to the Dutch Reformed Protestant faith, accounting for approximately 3% of the population. Other significant faiths include Judaism, which represents less than 1%, and smaller communities of Seventh-Day Adventists and Methodists. Some Curaçaoans practice Montamentu, an African Caribbean ecstatic religion introduced in the 1950s by immigrants from Santo Domingo. Most of the religious communities engage in some degree of syncretism, blending Christianity with traditional African religions. Pentecostalism was on the rise at the beginning of the 21st century, alongside a shift toward the Charismatic movement ongoing since the 1970s.

Later used to breed goats, horses, and cattle, Curaçao was first discovered by Europeans in 1499, when Christopher Columbus spotted the island and claimed it for Spain. A good number of islanders were deported to Hispaniola to work in mines in the early 16th century, and the Dutch West India Company took possession of the island in 1634. While plantations were never highly developed due to the climate of the island, it became a center for smuggling, privateering, and the slave trade in the 17th century. Dutch and Sephardic Jewish merchants sold trade goods and slaves from Africa to the American colonies as well as the Spanish mainland. Slave rebellions on the island occurred in the 18th century but were quashed with help from the Roman Catholic Church, which played an important role in the repression of African culture as well as the legitimization of slavery. Protestants and Sephardim continued their commercial dominance when the first oil refineries were opened on Curaçao, which resulted in the importation of numerous workers from other islands and marked the beginning of the industrialization of the island as well as traditional colonial race relations. The importance of the Roman Catholic Church in the politics of the

island was depleted with the introduction of universal suffrage in 1949, which resulted in the formation of nonreligious political parties.

Though Roman Catholicism was (and is) the main religion on the island, Curaçao was also historically important for the Jewish faith and is home to the oldest active Jewish congregation in the Americas. Dating back to 1651, the Curaçaoan Jewish community played a key role in supporting early congregations in the United States, including those in New York City. The synagogue on Curaçao is the oldest in the Americas, built in 1732 on the site of an even older synagogue, the dates related to which have been lost. Although the Jewish population is largely Sephardic owing to the Spanish colonization, many Ashkenazi Jews arrived during the time of World War II, and some of those communities continue to call Curaçao home.

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See also Caribbean; Catholic Charismatic Renewal; Netherlands; Pentecostal Movements; Postcolonialism; Roman Catholicism; Syncretism

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CYBERSPACE

See Internet

CYCLE OF REBIRTH

The cycle of rebirth or reincarnation is a concept that is central to Buddhism, Hinduism, Sikhism,

and other Indian religions. The Sanskrit term for this process is *samsara*, which means “wandering.” Other cognate phrases include the “transmigration of the soul” and “the cycle of successive existence”; it is also called “the karmic cycle.” The notion of the cycle of rebirth was fundamental to ancient Greek philosophy, such as the philosophy of Plato and Pythagoras. It is premised on the understanding that death is not the final end—it signals the end of that particular life—but the end of one life leads to the beginning of another life. Death is a moment in the cycle of change. Life is construed as a series of rebirths that occur cyclically.

There are a number of overlapping ideas in Buddhism and Hinduism but also some notable differences. There are two fundamental differences that separate orthodox Hinduism and Buddhism. First, Hinduism believes in the idea of a single divine eternal reality, which is termed *Brahman*. Gods and goddesses in the Hindu tradition are manifestations of this eternal Brahman. Buddhism rejects the idea of an eternal God. It is a God-less religion and believes only in the eternal flow and flux of life in which everything is connected. The second main difference is that Hindus believe in the notion of an immortal soul, which leaves the body on physical death only to enter a new body in a new life. This soul, known as the *atman*, defines the self of the person. The cycle of rebirth then consists of the continuity of the soul migrating from body to body in each new life. Buddhism rejects the notion of the soul and with it the duality of a soul entering a body. Nothing is real or permanent in Buddhism except the endless cycle of existence.

Hinduism

The process of rebirth or reincarnation in Hinduism involves every living being undergoing an indefinite or an indeterminate series of existences that cease when the individual *atman* becomes indistinguishable from Brahman (eternal reality). The factor that determines the course of the next life is *karma*, which means “deeds or actions.” According to the law of karma, one’s actions in this life will have future consequences in the next life. This is one of the justifications for the caste system: Social status is determined by karmic deeds carried forward. The pain and suffering that one endures in one’s life is not regarded as divinely ordained but is the result

of one’s karma in a previous life. Karma is used to explain the inequalities that exist between people’s lives. It is a form of cosmic justice.

Reincarnation in Hinduism concerns the journey of the soul. When a person dies, it is just the physical body that perishes. The soul is immortal and indestructible and separates itself from the body. The Rig Veda describes how after death the soul of the dead is carried up to Agni, the God of fire, where it joins the souls of the ancestors. The amount of time that the soul spends with the other souls varies, and the soul continues its journey by entering a womb, ready to start a new life in the earthly realm. The following extract from the Bhagavad Gita conveys this idea: “Worn-out garments are shed by the body; worn-out bodies are shed by the dweller within the body. New bodies are donned by the dweller, like garments” (2.22). One continues in different lives until the attainment of *moksha*, which means “liberation.” This happens when one overcomes ignorance (*avidya*), which is the state of those who cannot make a distinction between the limitations of earthly life and the ultimate reality. On achieving *moksha*, one experiences an identification of the individual self or soul with eternal reality. Hinduism offers many paths that you can take to break *samsara*. You can adhere to the duties of your caste, devote your life to your god or goddess, or renounce life and choose the path of the hermit. Moksha is the union of the individual soul with eternal reality, *Brahman-Atman*, and is the state of bliss.

Buddhism

The main point of overlap between the understanding of the cycle of rebirth in Hinduism and Buddhism is the goal, which is that of the liberation from the cycle of existence and, by extension, of suffering. In Buddhism, the state of bliss is known as *nirvana*. Although these two religions concur on this final stage as the desired outcome, the processes to attain this goal are markedly different. The Buddha rejected the Hindu notion of the *atman* in the sense of an individual soul or self. He believed that nothing within a person is actually real and that humans are made up of five components or *skandhas*—namely, the form, perceptions, dispositions, will, and consciousness. The *skandhas* create the (illusory) sense of identity and persistence through time and relate to what the Buddha

describes as the law of dependent origination. The law of dependent origination explains how we build up attachments to the world, including the self, and hence of how we believe in the illusion of the self. There are 12 components that make up dependent origination. These are ignorance, mental formation, consciousness, name and form, the six senses, contact, feeling, craving, clinging, becoming, birth, and old age and death. Each component is linked to its predecessor and its successor in a chain of cause and effect, and so ignorance is the cause for mental formation and so on.

There are two main ways of linking the 12 components—one is to group them according to past, present, and future, where certain components such as ignorance are tied to our past, while the components conveying sentience, such as contact, feeling, and craving, are aspects of this life. The other way is to divide the components into the following three groups. The first group is defilement (*klesha*), which includes ignorance, craving, and clinging. Ignorance is the main cause for suffering. It leads to craving pleasure and relying on the senses. The second group is action (karma), which comprises mental formation and becoming. The final group is suffering (*dukkha*). All three groups bring about suffering by causing us to become attached to earthly life. The Buddha believed that life is characterized by *dukkha*, *anicca* (impermanence), and *anatta* (“no self”). This was in contrast with the Hindu view of the self vis-à-vis social class being a measure of past karma. For Buddhists, there is the endless flow of becoming where everything in the universe is in a perpetual process of change and decay. Life is transitory and all forms are ever changing. There is no permanent self or an immortal soul. Karma is a valid concept in Buddhism but it is not attached to an atman, which is the bearer of consciousness. There is also the underpinning idea that all life involves suffering and that this is so irrespective of whether the karma is good or bad—any form of existence entails suffering of some kind. The rejection of the notion of self in Buddhism, which is described as *anatta*, demonstrates the contrastive and even mutually contradictory outlooks in both religions. The identification of atman is fundamental to the understanding of the human predicament and how to overcome it in Hinduism. Karma provides a self-regulating system whereby individuals can shape their lives

accordingly to reduce suffering in the next life. It is precisely the opposite virtues that are required in Buddhism to overcome suffering—thinking about the self aggrandizes desires and attachment. The motivation in Buddhism then is to release the self.

The Four Noble Truths are central teachings in Buddhism that explain how to overcome samsara. The first noble truth acknowledges the presence of *dukkha*; the second identifies the cause of suffering, which is craving (*tanha*). The third states that it is possible to end suffering and identifies this state as *nirvana*. The Eightfold Path is the guide (i.e., the fourth Noble Truth) that leads to the cessation of suffering by breaking the desires and attachments to life. Once freed from *tanha*, one is liberated from the cycle of rebirth and also from *dukkha*. This is the ultimate goal for individuals: to be liberated into a state of nirvana. There are six realms of rebirth: the gods (*deva*); humans and demons (*asura*) and animals, which are regarded as favorable destinies; hungry ghosts (*pretas*) and hell (*naraka*), which are undesirable. These modes of existence can be conceived of as actual modes of existence, but there are some schools of Buddhism, for example Mahayana, that stress that these are symbolic states of mind.

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See also Gautama, Siddhartha; Hinduism; Mahayana Buddhism; Theravada Buddhism; Vajrayana, Tibetan

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CYPRUS

Cyprus is an island divided; the northern third of the island is Turkish in ethnicity and Islamic in

religion, while the larger Greek south is dominated by the Church of Cyprus, an autocephalous institution based on Greek Orthodoxy. The two regions are governed separately and generally treated separately by sociologists. Greeks account for 77% of the Mediterranean island's entire population, with Turks constituting 18%, and both groups residing almost entirely in their respective territories. The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus is 98% Sunnī Muslim, while allegiance to the Church of Cyprus characterizes 95% of the Republic of Cyprus (the only ruling party officially recognized by many foreign nations). While maintaining its relationship with the Greek Orthodox Church, the Church of Cyprus has played a significant role in the history of the island, supplying the first president of the republic and providing a focal point of unification for Greek Cypriots seeking enosis.

With settlements on Cyprus from around 5800 BCE, the island's substantial copper reserves and position as a crossroads of trade between three continents led to its prominence in early history. Home of the cult of Aphrodite and ruled by the Roman statesman Cicero for a time, Cyprus was visited by the Apostle Paul and Barnabas, who were successful in Christianizing much of the island. That visit had profound ramifications for the history of Cyprus as well as the Christian faith; Paul and Barnabas converted the Proconsul of Paphos, the first Christian of noble birth, and the discovery of the Tomb of Barnabas in the fifth century resulted in the autocephalous status of the Church of Cyprus. Cypriots became part of the Byzantine Empire under Constantine and remained thus until Muawiyah, then emir of Syria and later caliph, attacked in the middle of the seventh century, beginning 300 years of turmoil and the destruction of Cyprus's Christian churches. Richard the Lionheart freed the island during the Third Crusade and used it as a strategic base before selling it to the Knights Templar, who in turn sold the island to Guy de Lusignan in 1192. Under Lusignan's brother, the Roman Catholic Church was awarded Cyprian lands, and Pope Alexander IV signed a bull declaring Cyprus to be under the Roman Catholic Church, a fact largely ignored by the island's inhabitants.

Again becoming a strategic base against the Islamic empire and under Venetian control after

mismanagement in the 15th century, Cyprus fell to the Ottoman Empire in 1571 and remained a part of that empire until the British claimed it in 1878 out of fears of Russian occupation. The British advocated for the existence of an independent Cypriot nation amid outcries for union with Greece, which had echoed for centuries prior to their arrival. Cyprus was offered to the Greek nation in exchange for their assistance during World War I, but this offer was declined in favor of Greece's continuing neutrality. The constitution during British rule required three Muslims to be installed on the 12-person legislative council, but the Church of Cyprus was able to regain control of the Greek-speaking Cypriots during British reign. Cyprus gained independence as a unified nation in 1960, though daily life was still de facto segregated. In 1974, a military coup in Greece attempted to overthrow the first president of the Republic, Archbishop Makarios III. Turkey responded to the threat to its people with military invasion and, when the junta was overthrown, used their presence on the island to negotiate for control of the part of Cyprus now known as the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. In spite of the island's difficult past, as of the 21st century, their economy has recovered and the societies have stabilized, though the border is still rigorously patrolled on both sides.

During the 19th and 20th centuries, some significant syncretic cultural traits developed on Cyprus, including the so-called Cotton Liners (*Linopambakoi*) who practiced both Greek Orthodox Christianity and Sunnī Islam simultaneously. The region's government is generally friendly to religions: All forms of religious expression (including the wearing of head scarves) are accepted, and the government provides financial support for the building and preservation of mosques on both sides of the island.

John Soboslai

See also Eastern Orthodox Christianity; Greece; Mediterranean World; Ottoman Empire; Turkey

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CZECH REPUBLIC

The Czech Republic is a postcommunist country located in central Europe (population 10.2 million, 2001), formed in 1993 after the split of Czechoslovakia; it is a member state of the European Union. The country is widely known for its high level of secularity. In the 2001 census, 59% of Czechs declared themselves as having no religion, 27% as Catholics, 2% as Protestants of various denominations, and 1% as members of the Czechoslovak Hussite Church (established in 1921); non-Christian religions had a marginal presence. According to International Social Survey Program (ISSP) 2005 data, of all the countries who participated in the survey, the Czech Republic had the highest proportion of the population who declared that they had no religious affiliation, although more in-depth sociological surveys usually show a higher level of religiosity.

Although the decline in church affiliation was dramatic during the communist period (1948–1989), falling from 94% in 1950 to 44% in 1991, it only strengthened the previously not-so-noticeable process of falling church attendance. The Czech nationalist movement of the late 19th and early 20th centuries

identified itself with both secular (or rather non-church) “progress” and the somewhat idealized legacy of the Czech Reformation (Hussitism, Czech Brethren) and thus weakened the affiliation of the majority to the Catholic Church. Formal church membership and the search for alternative spirituality were quite common, but a civic (i.e., nonreligious) education system and rituals had become well established even before the communist takeover.

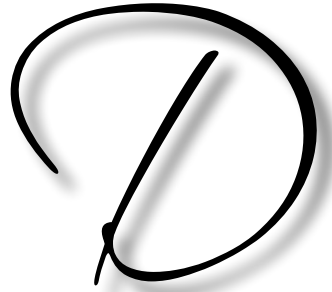
Some desecularization occurred after the fall of communism, but it did not significantly weaken the out-of-church movement. Funerals and other personal rituals are still heavily influenced by the legacy of anticlericalism; 79% of the population opts for cremation, possibly the highest proportion of any post-Christian country, and approximately one third of funerals have no ceremony at all (half of the rest are secular funerals). However, if a broader view of religion is taken, modern Czechs are not so irreligious. In 2006, for example, more than a half of the population agreed that some fortune tellers can foresee the future and that some form of supernatural power exists, and nearly half believed that star signs can influence the course of life. Although Czechs have a low church affiliation rate and fewer than 10% attend church at least once monthly, many believe in the existence of supernatural phenomena and/or in some form of transcendence.

Zdeněk R. Nešpor

See also Communism; Europe; Roman Catholicism; Slovakia

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DA VINCI CODE, THE

Dan Brown's *The Da Vinci Code* had an enormous worldwide success following its publication in 2003, implanting many misconceptions in the public consciousness. Brown and his publishers announced that the book is a work of fiction, yet they immediately went on to claim that it is based on fact. The first page of the book declares as fact (written in bold capitals) that something called the Priory of Sion is a real, secret organization founded by the European Crusaders in 1099. It goes on to state that in 1975, parchments known as *Les Dossiers Secrets* (Secret Files) were discovered in the *Bibliothèque Nationale* (the French national library). These "parchments" identified numerous famous figures of history as members of the Priory of Sion. These "facts" are an almost total falsehood.

In reality, the Priory of Sion is the name of a tiny extremist group founded in the 1950s. It had no existence whatsoever before then. The *Dossiers Secrets* were not "discovered" in the *Bibliothèque Nationale* at all. Instead, they were deposited there in 1967 by a 20th-century French fantasist and fanatic named Pierre Plantard, who claimed to be the rightful king of France, a descendant of the Merovingian kings and ultimately of Jesus Christ. These *Dossiers* include newspaper clippings, imaginary genealogies, and "parchments" forged in the 20th century. None of the documents is ancient or medieval. Plantard himself quit the organization in 1984. Nothing that Brown alleges of the Priory is true, and all the elements deriving from it are false.

Brown's Sion myth is only the first falsehood on which the novel's pretensions to fact rest.

Brown's plot is ingenious, and there are some real facts (as there are in most novels). But fantasies dominate, linking Freemasonry, witchcraft, the Gnostic Nag Hammadi scrolls, Mithraism, Leonardo da Vinci, Botticelli, Newton, Tarot cards, the Opus Dei, the Crusades, the Merovingian kings, the Templars, the Louvre, the Grail, Victor Hugo, Rosslyn Chapel, Jean Cocteau, and other unrelated subjects. Historical evidence contradicts, among other things, the idea that Jesus and Mary Magdalene had children, that Leonardo had painted Mary (instead of the apostle John) in his "Last Supper," that the Grail is the cup used by Jesus at the Last Supper, that the Merovingian kings of the Franks were descendants of Jesus, that Godfrey of Bouillon was a French king descended from the Merovingians, and so on. Fantasy has a legitimate place in civilization, but when presented as fact, it corrodes truth and understanding.

The social importance of Brown's novel lies in its astounding popularity. Plantard's documents are among a long list of forgeries and fantasies about ancient secrets from the 17th-century Rosicrucians, through the anti-Semitic *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, through Gerald Gardner's *Witchcraft Today*, to the present. Many scholars attribute the success of the novel to the tendency of society to cynicism, lack of trust in the use of reason and evidence (whether political, scholarly, or religious), belief in cover-ups and vast conspiracies, relativism, eagerness to believe that "secret

truths” are more likely to be true than overt truths, faith in tabloids and uncritical Internet entries, and reliance on intuition and feelings instead of facts.

Jeffrey Burton Russell

See also Roman Catholicism; Vatican City State and the Holy See

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DALAI LAMA

The Dalai Lama is the spiritual and political leader of the Tibetan people. Most Tibetan Buddhists regard him as an incarnation of the bodhisattva of compassion, Avalokiteśvara, and so he is sometimes referred to in Western literature as a “god king.” Even though the Dalai Lama has not always been unanimously accepted as the supreme sovereign by all Tibetans across the vast plateau of the region, most Tibetans accept the Dalai Lama as a symbol of Tibetan identity. Especially since the Chinese Communist invasion of Tibet, he has become the person Tibetans look to for hope, inspiration, and both religious and secular guidance.

Who Is the Dalai Lama?

The first man to be designated Dalai Lama was a monk named Sonam Gyatso. Sonam Gyatso was a well-known and respected Buddhist teacher of the Gelug school, and in 1578, the Mongolian leader Altan Khan invited him to teach in Mongolia. In Mongolia, he was called *dalai* lama, meaning “ocean-like” lama: a teacher whose good qualities are as vast as the ocean. According to the current Dalai Lama, however, the word *dalai* was not intended as a term of admiration but was the Mongol’s translation of the name Gyatso, which means “ocean” in Tibetan. Tibetans, in fact, do

not themselves use the title “Dalai Lama” when speaking of their leader but prefer the epithets Gyalwa Rinpoche (“Precious Victor”), Kundun (“Presence”), and Yishin Norbu (“Wish-Fulfilling Jewel”).

While the Dalai Lama is the most well-known lineage of Tibetan reincarnate lamas, the tradition of recognizing reincarnations of important lamas, or *tulkus*, was already well established by Sonam Gyatso’s time. The lineage of the reincarnate head of the Karma Kargyu school of Tibetan Buddhism, the Karmapa, is traced back to the 12th century and represents the oldest such lineage.

Process of Recognition

It is up to the leading Gelug lamas to interpret various clues and to determine the identity of the next Dalai Lama. The process sometimes begins while the previous Dalai Lama is still alive. Before a Dalai Lama dies, he may give hints as to where he will take rebirth. The 13th Dalai Lama, for example, turned his head toward the northeast as he passed away, and it is said that rainbows and auspicious clouds appeared in the northeastern part of the sky. In correspondence with this, the 14th Dalai Lama was discovered in the northeastern part of Tibet. Lamas consult oracles for advice on where to search for the new Dalai Lama and note any dreams they have about his rebirth. Some go to Lhamo Lhatso, a sacred lake, to look for signs on the surface of the water. When they hear of a promising candidate, a search committee goes to interview the child.

In the case of the present Dalai Lama, he recognized a member of the search committee as his previous incarnation’s teacher and begged to be taken back to Lhasa. When the search committee presented him with a variety of objects, he correctly pointed to the rosary, drum, and walking stick that had been his in his previous life as the 13th Dalai Lama. The search committee also looks for physical signs on the body of the boy, such as birthmarks. When the lamas and oracles have agreed on the identity of the reincarnation, the boy is taken to Lhasa to begin his education.

History

The first person to be named Dalai Lama was not the first but the third Dalai Lama. When Sonam

Gyatso (1543–1588) was declared the Dalai Lama by the Mongols and Tibetans, his prior two incarnations, as Gedundrup (1391–1475), the founder of Tashilhunpo Monastery, and as Gedun Gyatso (1475–1542), were then posthumously named the first and second Dalai Lamas, respectively. Perhaps owing to Monogol influence, after Sonam Gyatso's death, the fourth Dalai Lama was found in Yonten Gyatso (1589–1617)—a member of the Mongol Khan family.

It was the fifth Dalai Lama who made the office of the Dalai Lama the position of religious and political leadership that it is today. The fifth Dalai Lama, Ngawang Lobsang Gyatso (1617–1682), is popularly known as the Great Fifth. With Mongol support, he defeated the King of Tsang in 1642, thereby unifying the various Tibetan kingdoms under a centralized government seated in Lhasa. He began construction of the Potala Palace, which became the official residence for all future Dalai Lamas. The Great Fifth was also a prolific writer and was such a powerful and important leader that when he died, the regent, Sangye Gyatso, kept his death a secret for more than a decade.

The sixth Dalai Lama, Tsangyang Gyatso (1683–1706), was quite unlike the Great Fifth and refused to accept leadership roles in either the religious or the political sphere. He returned his novice monk's vows and lived as a lay person. He is best remembered by Tibetans for his love of poetry. When the Mongol chief Lhabzang Khan attacked Lhasa, the sixth Dalai Lama was banished and was never heard of again. Rumors circulated that he was poisoned; some Tibetans believe that he did not really die but escaped to spend the rest of his life in retreat. In any case, Lhabzang Khan installed a member of his own family, Ngawang Yeshe Gyatso, in his place and claimed that the recognition of Tsangyang Gyatso had been an error and that Ngawang Yeshe Gyatso was the actual sixth Dalai Lama.

Meanwhile, in northeastern Tibet, another boy had been recognized as the seventh Dalai Lama, Kalzang Gyatso (1708–1757). He was brought up in Amdo, where he stayed until it was deemed safe for him to travel to Lhasa. During the reign of the eighth Dalai Lama, Jampel Gyatso (1758–1804), after China sent troops into Tibet to help repel the invading Nepali Gorkhas, the Chinese attempted

to insinuate themselves into Tibetan political affairs by, for example, instituting a new custom for choosing the next Dalai Lama. According to this method, the names of candidates were placed in a "Golden Urn," and the name drawn from the pot was to be enthroned as the next Dalai Lama. After the death of the eighth Dalai Lama, Tibetans quickly named Lungtok Gyatso (1806–1815) as his reincarnation before the Chinese had the opportunity to choose someone themselves using the Golden Urn.

The 8th through 12th Dalai Lamas all died at young ages and so did not greatly influence Tibetan history. During periods when a Dalai Lama was too young to rule, a regent would rule in his place, and this was the case for most of the 18th and 19th centuries, including during the lifetimes of the 10th Dalai Lama, Tsultrim Gyatso (1816–1837); the 11th, Keydrup Gyatso (1838–1856); and the 12th, Trinley Gyatso (1857–1875).

The 13th Dalai Lama, Thubten Gyatso (1876–1933), was a strong leader and lived a long and full life. When the British arrived in central Tibet, he absconded to Mongolia and China. Later, when the Chinese invaded Lhasa, he fled to India. During his travels, he witnessed the changes that were taking place in the modernizing world, and on his return, he attempted to reform Tibet's education and military systems. In this, he was opposed by the conservative monastic leaders of the Gelug school, who were concerned with maintaining the power and wealth of their monasteries and feared influence from the West. But the 13th Dalai Lama perceived the need for Tibet to assert its independence on the international stage. He designed the Tibetan national flag and expelled all Chinese residents from Tibet.

Tenzin Gyatso, the 14th Dalai Lama (b. 1935)

Due to historical happenstance and to his remarkable personal qualities, the 14th Dalai Lama has become an internationally recognized figure. In 1950, as Chinese Communist forces invaded Tibet, he was given full political power. After 9 years of failed attempts at negotiation, he fled to India, where he has since established the Tibetan Government in Exile. He continues to spearhead the exiled Tibetans' negotiations with China, and

in recognition of his ongoing insistence on non-violence, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1989. The Chinese government, however, continues to vilify him, characterizing him as a “splittist” and a “wolf in sheep’s clothing.”

Like his predecessor, the 14th Dalai Lama is intent on keeping up with the times. He has stated that on his death, he would return as the Dalai Lama only if there is a need for this, adding that he will not take rebirth in Tibet so long as it is controlled by the Chinese government. In 2011, he renounced the political aspects of his leadership, preferring a democratically elected government to represent the people of Tibet while he retained spiritual authority.

M. Alyson Prude

See also Monasticism; Politics and Religion; Religion and State; Religious Nationalism; Tibet; Vajrayana, Tibetan

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DAN FODIO, OSMAN (1754–1817)

Osman dan Fodio, also known as Shaykh Uthman (or Usuman) dan Fodio, is known for his roles as leader of the Fulani in their jihad (1804–1812), reformer of Islam in West Africa, a leader of the

Sufi Qadiriyya order, and a major Muslim educator and writer (in both Arabic and Hausa). Dan Fodio was the descendant of a long line of prominent Fulani, the nomadic cattle herders of West Africa, who through the final decades of the 18th century gathered a large number of followers in his effort to reform the syncretistic Islam of the region of northern Nigeria. His opponents were the Hausa kings and elites, whose more relaxed interpretation of Islam had allowed a wide range of practices not sanctioned by the Shari’a (the divine law). These included veneration of pre-Islamic deities and rites of initiation, marriage rites, and many other practices (see his book *Ihya’u as-Sunna wa Ikhmad al-bid’a* [The Revival of the Sunna and Destruction of Innovations]). At first, dan Fodio (usually referred to as Shehu) lived in the town of Degel, where he wrote and preached. For the most part, his relations with the Hausa kings were good during this period, and his followers included both Fulani and Hausa.

However, from 1802, his relations with the Hausa kings became more and more acrimonious as his following increased. Starting in 1804, he proclaimed a jihad (divinely sanctioned war) against the Hausa. The jihad commenced with Shehu making a Hejira (emigration) to Gudu and using this remoter location as a base. He deputized a number of Fulani leaders, including his brother Abdullahi and his son Muhammad Bello, to fight and usually had a number of different fighting detachments in the field. While most of the battles of the Fulani jihad lasting until 1812 were successful, culminating in a decisive battle at Alkalawa in 1809, the Fulani overreached themselves by continual fighting. After 1809, Shehu gradually disengaged himself from direct control of the Fulani state and apportioned it out among his relatives and chief amirs (commanders). The descendants of these people still form the Fulani-dominant elite in northern Nigeria and parts of Niger.

Shehu made his major contribution to posterity by his extensive writings, approximately 115 in number. Most of these are comparatively minor tracts, but several of them are major theological works, discussions of harmful innovations, a commentary on the Qur’an, a manual of warfare, and tracts stating the legal reasoning behind the declaration of the jihad. These works, together with the many writings of his close relatives, form an

authoritative textual basis for West African Islam to this day, and as most of them are in Arabic, they promote the Arabization of northern Nigeria.

The effects of the Fulani jihad were significant. It established an aggressive Muslim state in the area of northern Nigeria, Niger, and parts of Benin and Burkina Faso that worked to convert pagans and normify Islamic practice in the area. The jihad also closely linked the Sufism of the *Qadiriyya* order with a tradition of reform that has served as a useful bulwark against contemporary radicalism.

David Cook

See also Benin; Burkina Faso; Fulani Jihad; Islamic Modernism; Islamic Reform; Niger; Nigeria; Sufism

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DAOISM

In a modern international context, the Western category of Daoism (also spelled Taoism) may refer to two distinct religious and cultural phenomena: (1) an indigenous Chinese religious tradition that is intricately connected with traditional Chinese culture and is now present throughout the modern world and (2) a new religious movement (NRM) with only loose connections with the earlier Chinese religious tradition. Historically speaking, and beyond dominant Western constructs, only the former is Daoism per se. Nonetheless, both movements are diverse, and both continue to undergo complex transformations within contexts of globalization, multiculturalism, and religious pluralism.

In the West, the matter is complicated by a number of other factors, including Orientalist and popular misrepresentations of the Chinese religious tradition, the complex history of American

forms of alternative spirituality, and the use of a “rhetoric of tradition” among self-identified Western Daoists (or, perhaps more in keeping with their own presentation, Dao-ists). The present entry accepts the validity and importance of studying each phenomenon on its own terms while at the same time advancing a critical analysis of “popular Western Taoism” (PWT). (The word *Tao* is often used in the West; the word *Dao* is more accurate and is derived from the Pinyin Romanization system.) The reader should not make the mistake of assuming an artificial bifurcation: Real Daoism only exists in China, and transnational forms of Daoism are often fabrications, though there are, in fact, ordained and lineage-based Daoists, Chinese immigrants, and “non-Chinese” converts in the West. The present entry examines each phenomenon—the one Chinese, and now global, and the other Western, having become institutionalized in the United States and disseminated throughout the “developed world.” The entry discusses the history of Chinese Daoism, the emergence of Daoism as a global religious and cultural phenomenon, and the challenges that Daoists and Daoist communities face in the modern world.

Chinese Daoism: History and Interpretation

On the most basic level, “Daoism” refers to an indigenous Chinese religious tradition(s) in which reverence for and veneration of the Dao, translatable as both the Way and a way, is a matter of ultimate concern. From a Daoist perspective, the Dao is understood in four distinct but complementary ways: (1) the source of all that exists, (2) an unnamable mystery, (3) an all-pervading numinosity, and (4) the universe as a cosmological process. There are various indigenous Chinese terms that are encompassed by the Western category of Daoism, almost all of which contain *dao* in them. However, rather than a reified entity existing in the world, “Daoism” may be taken as shorthand for Daoist adherents, communities, and their religious expressions. At the same time, Daoists have and continue to view their tradition *as a tradition*, as something larger than personal identity and isolated religious movements. The Daoist tendency to include and synthesize previous expressions of Chinese religiosity into a more encompassing tradition began at

least as early as the fifth century CE with Lu Xiuqing (406–477) of the *Lingbao* (Numinous Treasure) movement. In modern contexts, Daoists often discuss their tradition in terms of the external Three Treasures, namely, the Dao, the scriptures, and the teachers.

One of the principal debates in contemporary Daoist studies centers on when Daoism begins and what should be included. Some would date its origins to the Warring States period (480–222 BCE), while others locate its commencement in the Later Han dynasty (202 BCE–9 CE). More radical interpretations suggest the fifth century CE as a seminal moment, while others go so far as to say that Daoism is *simply* a modern Western construct. Each interpretation has not only its own evidential support but also its own deficiencies and assumptions, especially with respect to conceptions (constructions) of religion and identity. One of the more challenging issues in these competing interpretative accounts is the fact that Daoist religious movements frequently trace their origins to specific revelations and mystical experiences (e.g., the *Tianshi*, *Shangqing*, and *Quanzhen* movements, as seen in the following paragraphs).

The present entry relies on the most recent revisionist scholarship and adopts an inclusive, historically informed perspective. Daoism is an indigenous Chinese religious tradition whose roots go back to the Warring States period, becoming an organized religion in the second century CE. The history of Daoism may thus be divided into the following periods: (a) Classical Daoism, corresponding to the Warring States (480–222 BCE), Qin (221–207 BCE), and Early Han (202 BCE–9 CE) periods; (b) Early Daoism, corresponding to the Later Han (25–221 CE) period; (c) Early-Medieval Daoism, corresponding to the Period of Disunion (221–581 CE) and Sui (581–618 CE) period; (d) Late-Medieval Daoism, corresponding to the Tang (618–906 CE), Song (northern: 960–1126 CE; southern: 1127–1279 CE), and Yuan (1260–1368 CE) periods; (e) Late-Imperial Daoism, corresponding to the Ming (1368–1644 CE) and Qing (1644–1911 CE) periods; (f) Modern Daoism, corresponding to the Republican (1912–1949 CE) and Communist (1949–) periods; and (g) Contemporary Daoism, roughly from 1980 to the present. Classical Daoism includes what Harold Roth of Brown University has referred to as the

“inner cultivation lineages,” associated with the well-known texts of the *Dao De Jing* (道德經; *Tao Te Ching*; scripture on the Dao and inner power) and *Zhuangzi* (莊子; Book of Master Zhuang), as well as lesser known works. Many of these texts provided the foundational cosmologies, principles, practices, and models of attainment for later forms of organized Daoism. Early Daoism includes the *Taiqing* (太平; Great Peace) and Tianshi (天師; Celestial Masters) movements, with the latter usually identified as the beginning of organized Daoism. The early-medieval period saw the emergence of four major Daoist movements, namely, (1) *Taiqing* (太清; Great Clarity), (2) *Shangqing* (上清; Highest Clarity), (3) *Lingbao* (靈寶; Numinous Treasure), and (4) *Sanhuang* (三皇; Three Sovereigns). These movements were eventually placed in an all-encompassing textual and ordination system. In the late-medieval period, the Celestial Masters, Highest Clarity, and Numinous Treasure continued to be the dominant schools, but during the Tang, new lineages of Internal Alchemy (*Neidan*; 內丹) emerged. Internal Alchemy became more systematized during the Song-Jin period, with *Quanzhen* (全真; Complete Perfection) eventually becoming the dominant form of Daoist monasticism. The late-medieval period also witnessed the creation of new deity cults (e.g., to *Lü Dongbin*) and new ritual lineages. Late-imperial Daoism principally consisted of the Celestial Masters, also known as *Zhengyi* (正一; Orthodox Unity), as the householder tradition and Complete Perfection as the monastic tradition. In addition to the new sub-lineages of Internal Alchemy, formal lineages of Complete Perfection were created during the Qing dynasty. Of these, *Longmen* (龍門; Dragon Gate), associated with Wang Changyue (王常月) (*Kunyang*, 崑陽; 1622–1680), was the most influential. The modern and contemporary periods were times of immense social and political upheavals in mainland China. During this time, Chinese Daoist adherents and communities, like the representatives of traditional Chinese culture more generally, struggled to survive. The introduction and adoption of modern, secular sociopolitical ideologies, including the dissolution of the dynastic system and imperial patronage, resulted in a global Chinese diaspora and the emergence of Daoism as a transnational religious movement (see below). The history of Daoism includes not only major personages

and movements but also significant sacred sites, scriptures, changing pantheons, and various forms of material culture (art, architecture, clothing, etc.). An individual entry could be written on each of the major periods and dimensions of Daoism.

In the modern world, the Daoist landscape in mainland China and the larger Pacific Rim is dominated by the Orthodox Unity and Complete Perfection communities. Members of the former are householders and tend to be village based. Principal religious activities include elaborate rituals carried out by ordained priests, who are often part of family lineages. In mainland China, members of Complete Perfection are primarily monastics and live in temples and monasteries throughout China. However, Complete Perfection Daoists, especially the self-identified members of the Dragon Gate lineage, also reside in Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan, and so on, where they are usually householders.

Daoism as a Global Religious and Cultural Phenomenon

Under the leadership of Mao Zedong (1893–1976), the Chinese Communists took over China in 1949. They defeated the nationalists, who along with many members of the Chinese cultural elite fled to Taiwan. In the early years of Communist rule and the subsequent Cultural Revolution (1966–1976), traditional Chinese culture, including Daoism, was designated as “feudal superstition” and severely suppressed in mainland China. It was not until the socioeconomic reforms of Deng Xiaoping (1904–1997) in 1978 that “religious freedom” became more of an actuality and Chinese Daoism began a slow process of revitalization. Today, institutionalized Daoism is part of the Chinese communist bureaucracy, with the Chinese Daoist Association (*Zhongguo daojiao xiehui*) at Baiyun Guan (White Cloud Temple, Beijing) being the most powerful. Major Complete Perfection monastic communities exist throughout mainland China; some of the more prominent include those in Hubei, Shaanxi, and Sichuan provinces. The principal sacred site of Orthodox Unity is Longhu shan (Dragon-Tiger Mountain) in Jiangxi province.

While in earlier moments of Chinese history, Daoism was transmitted, at least to some extent,

to Japan and Korea, during the modern period of Chinese history, Daoists began transmitting and adapting their religious tradition to new cultural contexts. Daoism began a transition from solely an indigenous Chinese religious tradition to a global and transnational religious and cultural phenomenon. Today, there are lineage-based and ordained Daoists and Daoist religious communities throughout the world, including in Australia, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, England, France, Holland, Italy, Malaysia, Russia, Singapore, Thailand, and the United States. These communities are most often associated with Orthodox Unity, Complete Perfection (especially Dragon Gate), or relatively recent family lineages. The latter usually emerged from southern Chinese deity cults and charitable societies. In a global context, such communities tend to be composed of either Chinese immigrants and ethnic, birthright adherents or Chinese immigrant teachers and local converts. For example, in the United States, one often encounters a community composed of a Chinese immigrant teacher and primarily European American converts. However, there are now ordained and lineage-based “non-Chinese” Daoist priests throughout the world. Their communities usually consist of members of the same ethnicity. Few lay Chinese adherents study with non-Chinese teachers. Part of the explanation for this involves dominant forms of religiosity: Chinese immigrants tend to emphasize ritualistic models, while non-Chinese converts, especially in the West, lean toward self-cultivation models. There are also guiding beliefs about the “Chineseness” of Daoism, including its intimate relationship with the Chinese language and traditional Chinese culture.

One of the major challenges in understanding contemporary Daoism in a global context involves “family resemblances.” In addition to ordained priests and tradition-based communities, there are now self-identified Daoists throughout the world who have very little connection with the Chinese religious tradition and who even deny the validity or relevance of that tradition. Contemporary Daoism may thus be charted along a spectrum ranging from “close relations” (Daoist priests, lineage holders) to “distant relations.” While the latter have borrowed some dimensions of their beliefs and practices from the Daoist tradition, their affiliations and characteristics are most often expressions of contemporary forms of hybrid spirituality, with

greater influence coming from modern cultural traditions than from Daoism per se. The endeavor to provide an accurate and viable interpretation is complicated by the fact that popular misconceptions and misrepresentations (i.e., historically uninformed views) are ubiquitous.

At the farthest reaches of this spectrum are adherents who are best understood as members of an NRM or, following their own self-representations, an ancient but new and perennially relevant form of “spirituality.” That NRM may be labeled “popular Western Taoism.” In the case of the United States, PWT adherents and communities are the most publicly visible self-identified Daoists. They are most likely to construct Daoism as an “ancient philosophy” and (trans-religious) “spirituality,” wherein the Dao (*Tao*) is identified as an abstract first principle or “energy field” and wherein Daoists just “go with the flow.” Such accounts of Daoism are characterized by ahistorical, acultural, and antireligious views. Here, the Dao De Jing is read, most often in inaccurate popular translations (e.g., by Ursula LeGuin, Stephen Mitchell), as the “Daoist bible,” as a source of “universal wisdom,” and as a guidebook for alternative spirituality. When people read such translations, they are not reading a Daoist text but rather a contemporary American cultural production.

While its roots extend back to the first moments of the “Western encounter with the Orient,” including received legacies of colonialism, missionization, and Orientalism, PWT as an emerging form of alternative spirituality first emerged in the mid- to late 1970s. Major early players in the formation of PWT included James Legge (1815–1987), John Blofeld (1913–1987), Alan Watts (1915–1973), Gia-fu Feng (1919–1985; Stillpoint Foundation), Al Chung-Liang Huang (b. ca. 1930; Living Tao Foundation), Stephen Chang (b. ca. 1940; Foundation of Tao), Bruce Lee (1940–1973), and Kwai Chang Caine (David Carradine; 1972–1975). While PWT appropriates certain elements from Daoism (e.g., the Dao [Way] and Dao De Jing), its primary informing worldview is derived from modern cultural influences. In the case of the United States, these include Protestant Christianity, American Transcendentalism, the 1960s counterculture, the human potential movement, New Age spirituality, Perennial Philosophy, alternative health care, health and fitness movements, self-help and

popular psychology, and so forth. Contemporary PWT adherents are most likely to conflate Daoism with other Chinese cultural traditions, including Traditional Chinese Medicine, feng shui, Chinese martial arts (e.g., *Taijiquan*), and Qigong, which have only tenuous connections with the Daoist religious tradition. Almost everything found on the Internet is one form or another of PWT. It, along with its representatives’ ubiquitous influence on the popular understanding of Daoism, has now become institutionalized in groups, physically existing and virtual, such as the Reform Taoist Congregation, Tao Bums, Wandering Daoists, and various other Tao groups. The PWT construction of Daoism is found in the whole gamut of New Age capitalism and alternative spirituality, from feng shui consultations and *Yijing* divination to yin yoga and the “Tao of” genre of literature. There are also various popular appropriations of the Dao De Jing by individuals like Wayne Dyers, Benjamin Hoff, Ursula LeGuin, and Stephen Mitchell, among others.

There are major differences between the historical contours and defining characteristics of Daoism as a religious tradition and the construction of Daoism within PWT. In addition to the obvious connection with Chinese culture, members of the Daoist religious tradition have placed and continue to place a strong emphasis on revelation, lineage, community, material culture, and place. Throughout Chinese history, Daoists have tended to believe that “tradition” was larger than “self.” In addition, although the primary form of Daoist “theology” is monistic, Daoists have recognized the immanent presence of the Dao in all things, including in immortals and gods. Traditionally speaking, Daoists are polytheists. In contrast, PWT, following the cultural traditions mentioned above, tends to reject all of these defining characteristics of Daoism. The matter is complicated by the frequent emphasis on “essences” and the use of a “rhetoric of tradition” by PWT adherents.

Appropriation, Adaptation, and Transmission

In a modern global and transnational context, Daoists and Daoist communities find themselves in societies characterized by multiculturalism and religious pluralism. Such situations prove challenging to the formation, growth, and flourishing of forms

of religiosity that maintain a connection with the religious tradition that is Chinese Daoism. Daoists witness the appropriation and commodification of various dimensions of their tradition into easily marketable and consumable products in modern global economies, including the denial of their voices and perspectives in the interpretation of Daoism. One clear trend in international contexts is appropriation. As the popular bumper sticker says, "That was Zen; this is Dao." While popular misinterpretations of Zen Buddhism fulfilled Western desires for a trans-religious philosophy and spirituality during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, those desires were subverted by revisionist historiography on the part of Buddhologists and Zen Buddhist monastics. Today, Daoism has become Zen's surrogate, and the contemporary Western misunderstanding of the Daoist tradition parallels earlier inaccuracies concerning Zen. Such appropriations and misrepresentations are rooted in legacies of colonialism, missionization, and Orientalism and involve participants in ethical dilemmas that are most often ignored. At the same time, religious adherents are always responding to changing historical and cultural contexts. Viewed historically, Daoists have constantly transformed their tradition in conversation with other influences, challenges, and experiences. Daoism is a highly adaptable, and therefore diverse, religious tradition. Change necessarily occurs when a religious tradition enters a new cultural context and when religious practitioners have different concerns and motivations. However, without a connection and collective memory, such "innovations" become meaningless names. The matter is complicated by the fact that many self-identified "Daoists" have no connection with the Daoist religious tradition and are most likely to reject its history, self-representations, and defining characteristics while simultaneously and paradoxically relying on it for cultural capital and legitimacy. The transmission of Daoism to the modern world is being carried out, quietly and often invisibly, by Daoist priests, lineage holders, and tradition-based communities in various local contexts. Daoist priests and lineage holders are most often either Chinese immigrants or Caucasian converts who received initiation/ordination from the former or in mainland China, Hong Kong, or Taiwan. The demographics of their communities are diverse in

terms of ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic background, and former religious affiliation. Such communities, rarely inhabiting distinctively Daoist places or maintaining formal temples, are a minority voice in the global conversation concerning Daoism. The viability of their religious tradition in an international context remains an open question.

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See also China; Chinese Popular Religion; New Age Movements; New Religions

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DEATH RITUAL

All religious communities have rituals to honor the body and the spiritual presence of the departed and to facilitate the ascendance of their souls to the world beyond. In this essay, the focus will be on the rituals of Hindus in India and in Hindu diaspora communities around the world, since they illustrate the changing nature of death rituals in a global, multicultural context.

Hindus have elaborate rituals at death and mark the date periodically in later months and years. Most Hindus cremate the dead; however, young children and ascetics are interred, as are members of some communities such as the *Lingayats*. The ashes after cremation are frequently immersed in nearby rivers or oceans. Immersion of the ashes in the river *Ganga* is especially recommended. Death

rituals for Hindus who reside outside the subcontinent have to be adapted to local laws and customs and modified to local surroundings.

Bodies are cremated soon after death in India, often within 24 hours, and seldom kept longer. In India, the body is washed by the women in the house, and the forehead is anointed with sacred marks. The family priest begins the rituals at home and concludes it at the cremation grounds. Family and friends garland the body and frequently bow down respectfully, facing south—the direction of death. At the cremation ground, the pyre is lit; the ashes are collected the next day and eventually immersed in the ocean or, later on, in the river Ganga.

Rituals overseas, especially in Europe and the Americas, have been adapted to local surroundings. The most important difference is that the dead body cannot be kept at home for the rituals to take place and has to be handed over to a funeral home. Coffins are generally not used by Hindus in India; the body is taken in a bier quickly to the cremation grounds. While family members carried the body in the past, vans are used today in urban areas in India. In most European and American countries, however, the funeral home keeps the body in a coffin and handles all the arrangements. Laws in many countries require that a body cannot be cremated until a certain number of days have passed, in part to ascertain that there will be no further inquiry into the case; thus, in America, the body is not disposed of for several days after the person has died. This is at variance with both text and custom in India.

Since the death rituals are done in the chambers of funeral homes in Western countries, they are minimal and done with family and friends sitting in the pews in front of the dead body. Unlike in India, eulogies have become common during the funeral rituals in the Americas. Soon after the quick rituals—lasting not more than an hour in most countries outside India—the body is taken to an electric crematorium. This is not very different from India; while firewood was traditionally used in the subcontinent, and still is in many parts, electric crematoria are becoming increasingly popular there. While most Hindus and Sikhs who die in the United Kingdom are cremated in gas crematoria, there are occasional legal cases pleading for open-air cremations so that one can adhere to the

traditional practices of India. Open-air cremations are not allowed in most countries because they are considered to be a hazard to public health. After cremation, the ashes are sometimes taken for immersion in a body of water, but local laws may have strict rules preventing such rituals outside the subcontinent. Many people take the ashes back to India for immersion in the rivers there.

Death rituals in India continue leisurely for several days, the shortest being 13 days in some communities, after which the monthly anniversary, calculated according to the Hindu calendar, is marked by more rituals. For several days after the death, balls of rice (*pinda*) and other food items are cooked and offered to the dead. This is supposed to be for the temporary body of the dead person. In Brahman families, on the 10th day after death, a long memorial service is held with the recitation of sacred texts. On the 12th day, the dead person is supposed to join the ancestors, and a small rice ball is merged with a larger lump. The number of days after which such rituals are performed is different for each community. Annual rituals for the dead are also observed by sons and grandsons in India. Almost all these rituals are either jettisoned or abbreviated by Hindus in the diaspora. Most Hindus outside India substitute group singing of popular devotional songs (*bhajan*) for the traditional rituals.

Death is considered to be inauspicious and ritually defiling, and the family is supposed to be in a state of ritual pollution for several days. The calculation of the number of days of impurity for each person depends on both the closeness of the relationship—the strongest being associated with male connections and patrilineal ties—as well as caste. While in this state of impurity, one does not participate in religious rituals at home or go to the temple, but other than these restrictions, life goes on as usual. The end of a period of ritual pollution is frequently marked by ceremonial bathing, suggesting that the conceptualization of the pollution, at least to some extent, is physical.

The death rituals done immediately after a person passes away and those done through the course of the next year may not philosophically be congruent with notions of immortality and karma. These concepts and practices have evolved over the centuries, and there is no close fit between the philosophies and the rituals. As is the case with many

other aspects of the Hindu traditions, many practices are continued or recycled, and these may or may not keep pace with theological changes.

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See also Diaspora; Hinduism; Rites of Passage

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DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is located in west-central Africa. Its first inhabitants were Pygmies, who moved into the forests in large migrations when the Bantu came into the region from the north (2000 BCE–500 CE). It is a vast area of 905,568 square miles, with around 70 million inhabitants. In the contemporary era, the majority of the residents are Christian—50% are Roman Catholic and 20% are Protestant—while 10% are Muslim and another 10% are Kimbanguist, with the remaining 10% belonging to other syncretic and indigenous faiths. Until colonial times, the area that came to be known as the Congo Free State (1885) and as the Belgian Congo (1908–1960) was a land of indigenous religions and shamanism. Christianity, a part of the colonial mission, was imposed on the local inhabitants, as described by the historian Isidore Ndaywel è Nziem.

Since Christianity came to the region, many believers have shifted from one religious group to another. They easily intermingle with other creeds whenever they face different social situations.

Within the changes of religious affiliation and movement from one church to another and from one religion to another, shamanism seems a constant in spite of some modifications in its practices over time. Other forms of religious adaptation include syncretism and the mix of differing religious practices.

Survival of Ancient Shamanism

During colonial times, attempts were made to suppress traditional religious practices that were regarded by the colonialists as uncivilized, primitive, and unworthy. In many places, this resulted in Congolese converting to the religious traditions of the colonial masters. However, despite these conversions, shamanistic practices endured. Some of them persisted as part of the new religious practices, especially when the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches authorized prayer groups that were able to incorporate shamanism.

These prayer groups were organized similar to traditional shamanistic consultations and, like traditional practices, contributed to healing divisions between individuals and dealing with social issues. In traditional customs, the community gathered around the shamans to communicate with ancestors and face social challenges. The shaman was the center for the reinforcement of the Vital Force and for ending the negative impact of witchcraft on the community. The shaman channeled blessings and protection, ensuring that the community members had decent lives, with enough protection and power to face possible enemies.

The ritual was organized following a public invitation that would gather the village around one or more shamans. A popular and highly rhythmic spiritual song was usually performed with the participation of all. Well-trained drum beaters would move from very simple rhythms to complex ones that would reach a climax, leaving many in a trance. The *Mukishi*, the shaman leader, was often the first to go into a trance and change his identity by bearing the name of the spirit present in him. This spirit took charge of social issues and provided the community with answers to questions regarding pharmacopeia, spiritual assistance, dream interpretation, and exorcism.

This traditional social dynamic was challenged by the introduction of Christian churches, in

which the congregation listened to the priest or the pastor reciting prayers and reciting biblical verses. The pastor or the priest was regarded as the only one who could deal with social issues, and for a time, the focus of the community shifted from the shaman to the pastor or priest.

The opening of prayer groups in these churches allowed for leadership by local laymen and women and offered an opportunity for shamanistic practices to return within a Christian context. Families once known for practicing shamanism, or being adept at falling into a trance, had the opportunity to continue their practices. Music and dance set the stage for the trances, in which the community could hear the wise words coming from the woman or man in a trance. The names of Christian saints, however, largely replaced those of ancestors, though ancestors were mentioned and called on to assist the living.

Thus, under the same drum rhythms, often with different names mentioned, shamanistic practices have negotiated their presence in a world of both Christian and indigenous culture. Though attendance at church services has risen, and the congregation faithfully listens to the pastor's sermons, attendance in prayer groups is far larger and more important to the Congolese society. The official services are accepted because they leave a larger opportunity for prayer groups to operate freely.

The Katangan Shaman (Ngaga)

A typical Katangan shaman living close to Moero Lake in the southeastern DRC might appear this way: He would wear a long, oversized robe in the style of priests, or a tunic or any other pastor's chasubles used for religious services, with a big red cross sewn at chest level, a small black cap like the Muslim *taqiyah* to cover the center of his head, and a white painted face. He might wear big, old glasses perched on a very thin head, he might sport a long and dirty beard, and his thin body might be completely covered by his robe. One might notice his hands to have long, unwashed nails and his feet and toes darkened by long walks. A washbasin of water covered with a buffalo tail would likely be on his right side. On his left, there would be a pan full of smelly pounded roots that he uses either to powder his patients or as incense on a small fire burning in front of him to expel bad spirits and to

make sure that his big hut has an appealing aroma. A large rosary would be on the wall, and a voluminous old Bible would lie neglected on the earth floor.

As soon as clients arrive at his hut, the Ngaga (shaman) starts his therapy with a song that recalls the chanting of psalms in the Roman Catholic Church. However, apart from the melody, the chant is quite different: The shaman uses his own words, mentioning his ancestors and different charismatic leaders of his people. He invites them to come and work with him for the consultation, the diagnosis, and the therapy prescription. By the end of his litany, he would have mentioned Jesus, the Virgin Mary, and the good people who did good things all around the world. Then, he pours more incense on the fire, sprinkles the participants with water, and announces that *Mukalay*, the spirit, is very close. Everybody joins in the singing and dancing.

Then, the drums begin, and a small group leads the participants in a highly rhythmic melody. More and more bodies shake, at first very slowly, before the participants enter into a trance. As the music continues, the public starts shouting and going in all directions, but they are stopped by the shaman's acolytes and regrouped.

The third level in this typical shamanist event is launched as soon as the shaman leading the trance takes the cross from the wall and holds it in his left hand. With his right hand, he sprays powder on the public and pours more on the fire. The patient is led toward the shaman, who holds his hands over him as in a Christian ceremony and walks all the way around the patient. He speaks about the bad spirit that has attacked the patient and forcefully orders it to go away. To one of his acolytes, he murmurs the names of a number of plants that should be used to complete the healing of the patient. Because of the shaman's special status and his use of both Christian and African traditions, many clients come to him.

Midnight Crossroads Miracles and Spiritual Magic

Throughout the rule of President Mobutu, a variety of new spiritual practices entered the country, including those that were not connected to any previous religious tradition present in the country.

Some of these involved black magic, and though the ideas were said to have come from as far away as eastern Asia, many of them were based on indigenous beliefs.

The leaders of such very small mystic groups generally lived hidden away from the public. Among their small number of private clients were athletes and politicians. The athletes sought them out to ensure success and agility to score goals while playing sports such as soccer, and the politicians visited them to seek power and protection against their political enemies. Others visited them to gain power to become rich, to harm their enemies, or gain strength to undertake illegal or immoral actions. Everything was believed to be possible thanks to the assistance of these magicians who mixed worldly goals with mysterious mystical practices.

Often, these magical rituals took place at midnight and were organized at a crossroads. The magician would bring his client there and call on Satan to come for a specific ritual. He would then sacrifice white chickens, whose blood was spread around to make a circle in which Satan would arrive. At the center of the circle would be a water basin and a number of candles. It is believed that the magician would call Satan while reciting incomprehensible words. Satan's arrival was preceded by a violent wind, and the client was asked to close his eyes to avoid any curse as living human beings are not supposed to see Satan. After addressing Satan and asking him to assist the visitor, the magician would proceed with the ritual.

The client would be asked if he believed in the power of the magician and if he was willing to deal with Satan. After the candidate agreed, he would be asked to pay for the magician's work and for the sacrifice. A fairly large amount of money would be given. Human sacrifices were not excluded; the magician would ask for the names of people he could kill and use in his work. The magician would then put white powder on the kneeling client's face, deliver a long incantation, and then put red powder on the client's face. Some of the money offered would be left at the crossroad as an evil enticement. It was believed that whoever picked up that money would die and immediately join Satan and work at his service. The client would then be asked to leave and to go back home without glancing back at the meeting point.

Though most people in the DRC practice standard forms of Roman Catholic and Protestant Christianity, many people also observe these rituals associated with shamanism and black magic. Thus, various forms of spiritual practice intermingle in the country's eclectic religious culture.

Felix Ulombe Kaputu

See also Africa; Vodou

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DENG XIAOPING (1904–1997)

Deng Xiaoping was the most powerful leader of the People's Republic of China after Mao Zedong. Although he never actually held any of the highest ranking official government posts, three of his protégés did—Hu Yaobang, Zhao Ziyang, and Jiang Zemin. In many ways, Deng was the de facto leader of China from 1978 through the early 1990s and is credited with launching China's rapid social change and economic growth, most notably through developing "socialism with Chinese characteristics" and a model of economic reform that became known as the "socialist market economy." Under Deng's influence, China became open to foreign investment, the global market, and limited private competition.

Religion Before Deng

Prior to Deng's return to government in 1977 (after his ouster in 1966 during the Cultural Revolution and again by the Gang of Four in 1976, having been reinstated by Zhou Enlai in 1973), the public practice of religion in China had essentially been extinguished. During the Cultural Revolution, religious buildings were destroyed, and clergy and laity were persecuted and killed. However, many religious believers continued to gather and worship clandestinely in private homes during this period.

Policy Changes

Under Deng, the official religious associations that had been eliminated during the Cultural Revolution were resurrected, the Bureau of Religious Affairs was reestablished to act as the liaison between the government and religious denominations, and theological seminaries (in which political study was required) were restored. In addition, Article 36 of the 1982 People's Republic of China constitution, which reflects Deng's ideas on how to modernize China, reads as follows:

Citizens of the People's Republic of China enjoy freedom of religious belief. No state organ, public organization or individual may compel citizens to believe in, or not to believe in, any religion; nor may they discriminate against citizens who believe

in, or do not believe in, any religion. The state protects normal religious activities. No one may make use of religion to engage in activities that disrupt public order, impair the health of citizens or interfere with the educational system of the state. Religious bodies and religious affairs are not subject to any foreign domination.

However, Merle Goldman points out that China's leaders have frequently demonstrated disregard for the constitution throughout Chinese Communist history. Moreover, the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) policy continued to privilege the freedom not to believe in religion. For example, party members were prohibited from believing in or participating in religion in "Document No. 19," a directive comprehensively outlining policies on religion as part of Deng's "reform and opening" that was promulgated by the CCP Central Committee in 1982. The basic policy outlined in Document 19, according to Pitman Potter, was one of respect for and protection of the freedom of religious belief, pending such future time when religion itself would disappear. While the freedom of religious belief was explicitly guaranteed, the freedom of religious practice, to be administered by the state, was notably not. Moreover, only five religions, Buddhism, Daoism, Islam, Catholicism, and Protestantism, were recognized, in part to exclude folk religions, superstition, and cults from protection.

Motivations

There were several motivations for these policy changes. Deng's regime recognized that the disillusionment with Marxism-Leninism resulting from the Cultural Revolution had led many Chinese people to search for something to replace it and that religion had often been selected to fill this void. Moreover, the CCP could not monitor or control religion when it was being practiced underground.

Policies of religious tolerance were also partly an attempt to improve the country's international image. Deng's regime hoped that projecting an image of religious tolerance would help obtain foreign aid and/or improve relations with the West, Japan, and the Islamic world. At the same time, the government sought to diminish the influence of the resurgence of Islamic fundamentalism on its Muslim minorities—a growing phenomenon in

much of the Muslim world. Thus, mosques and Muslim seminaries were reopened earlier than their counterparts in other religions. Simultaneously, the Party began a campaign of sending millions of Han Chinese to Muslim regions to dilute the Muslim population.

According to Merle Goldman (1986), the Deng regime's "tolerance and even encouragement of public worship did not mean that it had a new appreciation of religion, a policy of religious freedom, or a desire for more religious believers" (p. 150), but rather, it represented attempts at "weaning believers gradually from their religious faith, not through forceful means but through a limited tolerance" (p. 153). Yet she claims that this lenient approach did not appear to reduce the number of religious believers and that unsupervised practice continued in private homes throughout the country.

Liza G. Steele

See also Atheism; China; Chinese Popular Religion; Tolerance

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DENMARK

Denmark is the smallest of the Nordic countries and, since 1849, a constitutional monarchy. A majority of Danes, 82.1% (as of January 2008), are members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Denmark—by Section 4 of the constitution, the state church, officially headed by the queen of Denmark. Pastors in the Church of Denmark are civil servants employed by the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs, which also constitutes the head of administration. The economic base of the Church of Denmark is state-collected church taxes combined with a direct state subsidiary (12%), which symbolically covers the expenses of the Church of Denmark to run the civil registration and the burial system for all citizens.

The high membership rate and wide use of church weddings, baptisms, and burials combined with a church attendance rate of about 2% has stirred debates on the status of religion in Denmark: Is Denmark a society without God, or does the Church of Denmark function as a carrier of national identity in a civil religious manner?

The approximately 200,000 Muslims constitute the largest minority religion in Denmark. Most of the Muslims are immigrants or descendants of immigrants, the major groups being Turks, Pakistanis, Bosnians, Somalis, Iranians, and Palestinians, but there are also an estimated 3,000 converts to Islam. Efforts to establish strong umbrella organizations for Danish Muslims have been unsuccessful, though many Muslims acknowledge the need for official spokespersons for the Muslims. Most prayer halls are situated in apartments, cellars, and old factory buildings; of the few custom-built mosques, only one—a mosque built by the *Ahmadiyya* community—displays its identity on the outside. A Muslim cemetery was inaugurated in 2006.

Other large denominations include about 50,000 Catholics and 15,000 Jehovah's Witnesses. The European headquarters of Scientology is situated in Copenhagen.

Denmark has a strong tradition for substantial (75%) state support for private schools. Some 20 Muslim free schools, 22 Catholic schools, a Jewish school, and several Free Church-supported schools have been established on state support. The about

100 recognized/approved religious communities may receive tax-deductible donations and perform legally valid marriages, and they are exempted from various taxes, including real estate tax.

The world's attention fell on Denmark during the 2006 cartoon crisis, when the publication of 12 cartoons of the Prophet in the *Jyllands-Posten* newspaper provoked strong reactions in the Muslim world, leading to what has been called Denmark's most serious foreign policy crisis since World War II.

Lene Kühle

See also Europe; Nordic Countries

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DESECULARIZATION

For well over a century since the inception of the social-scientific study of religion, there was a broad consensus that the importance of religion was waning in the modernizing world. The cause for this putative decline was traced to various developments, including the increased division of labor in society, capitalism, and the nature of Protestant Christianity itself. At some point during the middle of the 20th century, these diverse views solidified into what has since become known as the secularization thesis. Never a unified theory in the strict sense of the word, secularization nevertheless was for several decades the main prism through which the role of religion

in the modern world was examined and explained.

But the secularization thesis also attracted criticism from early on. In recent years, this criticism has increased and gained in strength, to the point that some scholars have been ready to declare the secularization thesis defunct while others consider it of limited use at best. Peter L. Berger, a renowned sociologist of religion, is a prime example of this change of mood in the field. Although he was one of the best known proponents of the secularization thesis in his early work, Berger has since recanted and has become an advocate of what he has termed the *desecularization of the world*.

Desecularization can be briefly defined as the resurgence of religion in public life. Contrary to the predictions of the secularization thesis, religion seems to be alive and well in the modern world. In *The Desecularization of the World: Resurgent Religion and World Politics* (1999), the agenda-setting book on desecularization, its editor Peter L. Berger and the other contributors list many examples of the importance of religion in contemporary public life around the globe. From the evangelical Protestant upsurge in Latin America to the role of Islam in global politics, the world seems to be as religious as it ever was, as Berger puts it in his introduction. Whatever the world is, it certainly isn't secularized.

If this is the case, why is it, then, that so many, Berger himself included, came to believe that secularization was inevitably happening in the first place? Those favoring the idea of desecularization like to point out that the original secularization thesis was the product of an intellectual climate prevailing at a time when the decline or even disappearance of religion seemed plausible, particularly in western Europe. The thriving religious culture of the United States, however, always provided a stumbling block for the secularization thesis. Whereas parts of the developing world might be predicted to secularize in the wake of wider modernization, the United States, though arguably a modernized country, showed very little or no signs of secularization. Therefore, the term *American exceptionalism* was sometimes used to account for this anomalous case. Today, however, from the perspective of desecularization, it is Europe that seems exceptional. In other words, while the importance of religion in public life and individual

consciousness may indeed have declined in some parts of Europe, secularization cannot be considered a global phenomenon.

The major problems with the “desecularization thesis,” as it might be called, arise from the fact that it is akin to what the sociologist Karl Mannheim called a “diagnosis of our times”—more a selective description of what the world is like than a theory of social and religious change. Even Berger, the author of a highly sophisticated theory of secularization, largely ignores his own theoretical framework—apart from stating that it is false. The problem here, as analysts such as José Casanova have pointed out, is that the permanence or resurgence of religion in public life in different parts of the world does not by itself prove the secularization thesis wrong. It does call for the refinement of theory but without reference to the particular theory they are trying to invalidate; individual case studies can help very little in understanding broader patterns of social change.

It should also be remembered that, although under attack from many directions, the secularization thesis is by no means dead. A contingent of sociologists of religion continue to hold—and in some contexts with good reason—that the secularization thesis is a valid perspective on long-term religious change in the modern world. Echoing the more sympathetic commentators, such as Casanova, their issue with Berger's recantation is that it is ultimately ahistorical. What Max Weber (and Berger himself), for example, said about secularization referred to a specific historical and social context, such as the Protestant Reformation. Today, however, desecularization is described as a global phenomenon, said to happen regardless of context. Against this, it can be argued that the religious revolution in Iran does not really refute what has happened in Essex, as the sociologist Steve Bruce put it.

Finally, a problem arises out of the term itself. The term *desecularization* and the reference to a “resurgence” of religion in the modern world imply that secularization *has* in fact happened and what we are witnessing now is a return or a new rise of religion in public life. At the same time, however, many of those arguing for desecularization emphasize the fact that the world (with the possible exception of western Europe) *has never* been secular. There is a clear logical discrepancy

here, and while this might seem like a little detail, it shows how problematic the term *desecularization* is in the first place.

The consensus in the social scientific study of religion has shifted in recent decades: A strict interpretation of the secularization thesis has been abandoned for a more balanced account of religious change in the modern world. The “new paradigm” of rational choice theory has shown convincingly how the vitality of religion in the United States can be explained. Scholars working with other theoretical frameworks and on other areas of the world have also broadly agreed that religion is not universally in decline. Therefore, it would perhaps be appropriate to say that *desecularization* is a useful term when referring to changes in social-scientific thinking about religion. As a concept for describing religious change in the modern world, it is, for the reasons mentioned above, much more problematic.

Titus Hjelm

See also Berger, Peter; Durkheim, Émile; Laicization; Martin, David; Modernization; Public and Private Religion; Secularization; Weber, Max

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DETAINEES

Technically, a detainee can be any individual held by an armed force; detainees along with the wounded and the sick are the three vulnerable populations to which the International Committee

of the Red Cross has traditionally directed its services. The term *detainee* as it is used in public discourse today, however, usually refers to individuals held as suspected terrorists. The legal status of such suspects has been the subject of intensive debate and legislative action in the United States and Europe since the September 11 attacks, particularly on the questions of what interrogation procedures, some amounting to torture, can be used on detainees and the length of detention without trial.

The U.S. presidential administration of George W. Bush (2001–2009) has received especially intense criticism for its creation of a new class of legally unprotected detainees known as “enemy combatants” and for the unprecedented scale of its use of “extraordinary rendition” to clandestinely transfer detainees from one nation to another. The category “enemy combatant” was created by the Bush administration to argue that suspected terrorists should not be counted in any of the four classes of detainees entitled to protection under the Geneva Convention. As stated in the “Joint Doctrine for Detainee Operations,” a 2005 document produced by the Joint Chiefs of Staff,

In reference to the Global War on Terror there is an additional classification of detainees who, through their own conduct, are not entitled to the privileges and protection of the Geneva Conventions. These personnel, when detained, are classified as enemy combatants. (p. I-11)

“Extraordinary rendition” refers to the process of transferring a detainee from one nation to another without any form of judicial or administrative process. Human rights groups such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have maintained that both actions made the torture of detainees more likely. The Obama administration has removed the term *enemy combatant* and instituted new measures to prevent torture; however, like the Bush administration, it has maintained the right to hold suspected terrorists indefinitely without charge and to employ extraordinary rendition.

Incidents of detainees being tortured and sometimes killed by U.S. military personnel abroad have been documented at Abu Ghraib prison (Iraq), Bagram Theater Internment Facility (Afghanistan),

and Guantánamo Bay Naval Base (Cuba). In some cases, photographs depicting prison abuse, including torture, became publicly available, resulting in high-profile international scandals.

The extreme vulnerability of the least protected detainees has elicited philosophical reflection, perhaps most notably by the Italian critical theorist Giorgio Agamben, who in a 2004 interview with Ulrich Raulff described the situation of enemy combatants as “comparable with those in the Nazi camps. . . . [T]hey have absolutely no legal status. They are subject now only to raw power; they have no legal existence” (p. 6).

Aaron S. Gross

See also Prison Religion; Refugees; Terrorism; Torture; War on Terrorism

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DETRADITIONALIZATION AND RETRADITIONALIZATION

Cultural globalization accompanies the economic and financial processes of globalization. Many students of high or postmodernity link those processes and claim that modernization erodes or even eradicates local or national traditions, and the most radical expression of this view maintains that the process of detraditionalization is unstoppable. The position that will be taken in this essay is that there is, indeed, a process of detraditionalization that, however, is coupled with retraditionalization in many societies.

As a number of research projects show, traditional culture is alive and well. Native traditions

are spreading; syncretistic religions are strong in Africa and Latin America. There are growing efforts to synchronize traditional cultural and religious values with the changing and modernizing structures of society. This entry examines the complex processes that maintain, erode, or reinvigorate local and national traditions and the role of religion in these processes.

Traditions and Their Role in Society

To discuss the process of de- or retraditionalization, one has to clarify the meaning of traditions. The concept originates from the Latin word *tradere*, meaning “to hand over, deliver, entrust.” In general, it refers to the beliefs, practices, and customs passed from generation to generation. They are embedded in practices of everyday life, such as celebrating birthdays or significant anniversaries. They are also linked to religious practices celebrating important dates (often linked to significant events in a religion’s history), and the special occasions of a religious tradition can transcend national cultures, as one can see in the holidays of almost all religious traditions. Almost all of the great religious traditions contain traditional elements in their theology. For Judaism, it is a body of laws and doctrines received from Moses and handed down from generation to generation. For Christianity, it is a body of teachings delivered by Christ and the apostles. For Muslims, it is the Hadith—the teachings attributed to the prophet Muhammad. For Hindus, it is the teachings about ethics (dharma) found in ancient texts and in the examples of legendary figures. For Buddhists, it is the *dhamma* of moral teachings in the Buddhist textual tradition. In Chinese religion, it is the *Analects* of Confucius and other ancient codes of moral behavior and social responsibility.

Originally, all religious and nonreligious traditions were transmitted orally. This involved the possibility of changing—or even distorting—some elements, as one can observe by studying, say, African traditional narratives. But even traditions transmitted in written form are subject to different interpretations—as one can see, for instance, in the various understandings and explanations of sacred religious texts. Various Christian theologies differ in their understanding of the tenets of Christianity. Orthodox and Reform Judaism do not interpret

the Talmud in the same way. Sunnī, Shi'ite, and Wahhabi varieties of Islam also adhere to different traditions.

However, traditions are important elements of identity of an ethnic or national community. Maurice Halbwachs, a French philosopher and sociologist, linked traditions to the collective memory of a group or community. However, collective memory can be manipulated. A good example would be the rewriting of history by authoritarian or totalitarian regimes by reinterpreting important events in a nation's history or culture or interpreting historical events from the viewpoint of a community or nation (cf. the controversy concerning the interpretations of the Armenian massacre or the conquests of the Ottoman Empire).

There is no unanimous agreement among philosophers, sociologists, and anthropologists concerning the interpretation of the meaning and functions of traditions. Some, such as Friedrich von Hayek, the Austrian British economist and political scientist, consider traditions as transmitters of knowledge. Others, however, look at them as perpetuating myths about a community. There is, however, a unanimous acceptance, even among those who interpret traditions differently, such as Karl Popper and Eric Hobsbawm, that they are socially constructed.

Popper's "rational theory of tradition" acknowledges that certain traditions are local and cannot be transplanted to other societies. Rational, scientific approaches to nature and society are relevant in cultures where these have been developed and practiced over a long period of time, inculcated through the educational system and scientific, technical practice. For example, people in modern societies by and large do not believe in witchcraft or sorcery. In his view, the best way to deal with traditions is not to accept them uncritically but rather assess them critically for accepting or rejecting certain traditions.

Hobsbawm and his collaborators developed the theory of "invented traditions." The essence of this theory is that many traditions that are considered ancient are relatively recent inventions by influential elements of society. The contributors to the book *The Invention of Tradition* (1983), which he coedited with Terence Ranger, list a number of traditions usually considered ancient but that are in fact relatively recent. Hobsbawm's contention is

that the reference to a "historic past" with its set of practices, norms, and values implies continuity. However, the continuity is largely fictitious and is invoked in times of rapid social transformations. For example, when former colonies gained independence, they often reversed the "traditions" imposed on them by the colonial powers and returned to—or invented—their own traditions. Another example could be found in east-central European countries after the collapse of the communist regimes. They often invoked national traditions that reflected conditions that no longer exist because of economic, social, and cultural transformations.

The invented traditions, as Hobsbawm sees them, served to strengthen social cohesion and collective identity, in the sense of Halbwachs' idea, but they also helped legitimize social hierarchies and institutions, as well as establish and maintain authority. One could conclude from these considerations that the past is always interpreted and serving the present.

In the religious sphere, the description of events, for example, as relayed by the writers of the Gospels, in the analysis of Halbwachs, serve to establish a continuity within a monotheistic belief system. One could add that other belief systems strive to establish and maintain a real or deemed continuity. Even relatively new and rapidly expanding religious movements, for example, Pentecostalism, refer to selected biblical texts.

Traditions in Late Modernity or Postmodernity

Late modernity or postmodernity brought about profound changes in relating to traditions. The Centre for the Study of Cultural Values at Lancaster University (United Kingdom) organized in 1993 an international conference on the topic "Detraditionalization: Authority and Self in an Age of Cultural Uncertainty." Selected papers were published under the same title in 1995, edited by Paul Heelas, Scott Lash, and Paul Morris.

There was a general agreement that the high- or postmodern conditions led to the erosion of traditional authority because of the increased individuation and the reflexivity characteristic of modern conditions that make a break with previous conditions. Under these circumstances, subjectivity and

individual decisions concerning morality and religion became ever more widespread. The very fact of the multiplicity of religions and religious organizations (new religions, sects, and cults; New Age movements) does away with the monopoly of traditional, established churches and their influence on secular institutions and legislations. What was earlier taken for granted—for example, the sanctity of marriage—has been questioned and abandoned. In modern societies, there is no single accepted worldview; there are competing ideologies and cultural meanings, and the individual has to make his or her own choice about cultural trends, about religion, and about morality. For religion, it often means that there is a *religion de bricolage* (do-it-yourself religion) that allows the individual to choose tenets of his or her religion that fit him or her and ignore others or else assimilate meanings and corresponding behavior from the teachings of several religions, for example, Christianity and Buddhism.

Research shows that in many cases, church religion has been replaced by spirituality, meaning that a person believes in a transcendent power or spiritual authority but not in a personal god. This corresponds to the trend of detraditionalization that forces persons to establish their own identities. However, one should take into account the impact of educational institutions and the mass media in influencing many individuals' attitudes concerning cultural, moral, and religious ideas; therefore, the autonomy of the individual is not fully unrestricted.

Modernity did not entirely eradicate traditions. In many fields of society, they are still present, albeit not as forceful and determinant as in premodern times. Most religious institutions have their roots in premodern times (and often face difficulties in adapting to contemporary cultural norms—e.g., the issue of gender equality in the clergy in the Roman Catholic Church). Certain cultural norms, for instance, the taboo on incest, maintain their validity in modern times as well. Communities, even though they changed forms, are still important elements of societal cohesion. However, postmodern conditions in many cases prevented nation-states from becoming unified communities; they became detraditionalized because the subcommunities (ethnic ones) established or maintained their identities. Moreover, a person

could choose to change his or her identity—for example, if he or she converts to another religion.

Detraditionalization is not an all-encompassing process in (post)modernity. It coexists with the maintenance of traditions, albeit in different forms. The “invention of traditions” includes the possibility of “rejuvenation” or reconstruction of traditions adapted to modern conditions. As an example, one can refer to a strengthening of national symbols even under the conditions of increasing supranational organizations. The economic and financial process of globalization, coupled by the mostly American popular cultural one, infringed on the traditional or modern national or local cultural or even political traditions, and the repercussions are increasing. More supranational organizations (the European Community, the Organization of American States, etc.) experience a growing pressure of the constituting members to preserve their own legal systems within the common decisions of those organizations.

Retraditionalization occurs when nations and communities react to the pressures of cultural globalization. It happens under different conditions: (a) as a reaction to the overpowering, mostly American, popular culture and (b) due to the desire to maintain or (re)establish traditional culture or social institutions. For example, when previously colonized entities gained their independence, they reverted to their traditional culture and societal arrangements. Retraditionalization could include conservative trends as well when it evokes traditions that stem from premodern periods—for instance, reintroducing positions that churches once occupied in the political, cultural, or educational sphere, as one can observe in the practice of many postcommunist states.

De- and retraditionalizations are not mutually exclusive processes. Roland Robertson, the English social theorist, invented the term *glocalization*. Its meaning is that the process of globalization is accompanied by the effort of maintaining local identities. This is analogous to the coexistence of abandoning and retaining or returning to traditions. Postmodernity creates an insecurity for the individual inasmuch as traditional ethical norms have become relative; left to the volition of the individual and community, relations have weakened or disappeared.

Cultural Globalization and Religious Traditions

This dynamics can be seen in the religious situation. All monotheistic religions are global. The largest Islamic country is Indonesia. Christianity, in its various forms, is present worldwide. Judaism is not restricted to Israel. All of them have to cope with the problems and tensions created by modernity. That causes controversies and even splits within religious communities and contributes to the emergence of fundamentalist, traditionalist movements. A good example is the controversy within the Anglican Church about ordination of women and homosexuals, and about the position of women and celibacy of priests in the Roman Catholic Church. On the other hand, it contributes to the emergence and a certain popularity of new religious movements that feel free from the perceived constraints of traditional churches or religious institutions.

The globalization and localization in the religious sphere can be observed in two large tendencies. One is the spread of popular and syncretistic religions, mostly in developing societies, although they are still present in modern societies as well. Pilgrimages, fetes of saints, penitents' associations, and so on show that even in developed societies religious traditions have not entirely disappeared. However, popular religions are more widespread in the developing world. Their vitality can be observed in Latin America, even in urban settings. Popular religion is an intermediary between official and indigenous religions and performs meaning-giving functions for the masses. In this, it constitutes a powerful means for constructing and maintaining identity, especially in the face of globalizing culture. Modernization in developing societies creates a large mass of displaced former peasants who eke out a living in an urban setting, and popular, syncretistic religions can provide them with a community. It is closer to their traditions and counteracts the rigid, ethical religions.

The other tendency is the rapid expansion of Pentecostalism worldwide but mainly in Africa and Latin America. Pentecostalism is now a truly global religion that within a century went from a small community originating in the United States to the fastest growing Christian community. Estimates indicate that in 2000, Pentecostals constituted about a quarter of Christians worldwide.

Pentecostalism has its roots in charismatic Christian ideas. It puts the emphasis on personal faith and spirituality. It does not have a sophisticated theology; it is rather a religion of practice and has strong links to indigenous cultural-religious expressions. Therefore, it can shed the image of a missionary religion superimposed by colonial powers, and its members have a common language with their spiritual leaders. Its rituals make widespread use of music and chanting, more than other Christian rituals. Pentecostals believe in the gift of the Holy Spirit guiding their lives, in divine healing, and in prophesying. They practice *glossolalia*—that is, speaking in tongues (which in some cultures is akin to what practitioners of witchcraft or some native Latin American ceremonies use). Pentecostalism encourages honest work and emphasizes marital fidelity and equality of women, who play an important role in Pentecostal communities; it discourages consumption of alcohol.

While Pentecostalism is not directly involved in the economic and political sphere, it exerts an influence on them, mostly because it is against the corrupt power elites—especially in Africa—and, contrary to the traditional missionary practices and the position of established churches—especially the Roman Catholic Church in Latin America—it encourages self-reliance. In Latin America, Pentecostalism is reinforcing the Protestant presence, and in sub-Saharan Africa, it contributes to the detraditionalization process without totally rejecting traditions. Pentecostalism combines both globalizing and localizing trends in religious culture. Because Pentecostalism negates the division between the this-worldly and the supernatural and refutes multiple realities, it can alleviate for its adherents the difficulties in coping with the exigencies of the (post)modern world.

The rapid transformation caused by globalization causes a weakening and erosion of traditional structures and ideas but does not fully eradicate them because people, communities, and societies need to maintain a historically developed continuity in their identity. This is why retraditionalization processes attempt to be countervailing forces.

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See also Global Religion; Modernism; Modernization; Postmodernism; Secularism; Secularization

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DHARMA, KARMA, AND SAMBARA

The notions of dharma, karma, and samsara constitute the conceptual space within which an orthodox Hindu mindful of the classical Brahmanical tradition lives out his or her adult life. Dharma is the expression in the affairs of human beings of cosmic harmony and stability (*rita*). Literally, it means that which maintains, sustains, and supports. It includes the ideas of natural law, moral righteousness, and religion as these terms are generally understood. Concretely, dharma refers to the complex of duties that a person should discharge in the course of everyday life. While certain duties such as truthfulness are binding universally (*sādhāran* dharma), most are context sensitive, varying according to the actor's social status (*varna*, *jāti*, or caste) and the stage of life (student, householder, retiree, or renouncer) (*varna-āshrama* dharma).

The sources of dharma are as follows: (a) a timeless morality received through "internal" revelation (*shruti*, that which has been heard from the seers, notably the Veda), (b) time-honored textual and oral traditions (*smṛiti*), and (c) good customs (*sadāchār*) derived from the lives of exemplars. Moral preceptors themselves, like Mahatma Gandhi (1869–1948), have often invoked the ultimate authority of the conscience or "inner voice" (*ātmanah tushti*).

Dharma, then, is the foundation on which the moral agent constructs his or her social life, in which he or she sows the seeds of action (karma). Karma is invariably goal directed and value oriented, goals and values being ideally inseparable.

In its most general expression, karma is dharmic action. Concretely, it refers to ritual performances, whether life cycle rites (karma-*kānda*) or devotional performances (such as *pujas* and pilgrimages). Besides, there are "secular" activities, most notably the rational pursuit of economic and political ends (*artha*) and aesthetic and sensual enjoyment (kama). The pursuit of *artha* and kama must take place within the framework of dharma, establishing a hierarchy of goals and values (*purushārtha*).

All purposeful action is bound to bear fruit (karma-*phala*), and it is the fate of the actor to enjoy or suffer the same, for suffering (*dukha*) follows evil action just as surely as satisfaction (*ānanda*) follows good actions. Karma, thus, has the double connotation of practical action as well as eschatology or self-constructed fate. Karmic action usually comes in three forms, namely, (1) mental acts (e.g., compassion, forgiveness, greed, anger), (2) speech acts (e.g., praise, abuse), and (3) physical or bodily acts (e.g., exclusion from personal physical contact).

The fruits of individual karmic actions are rarely, if ever, exhausted in a single lifetime; they accumulate (*sanchit* karma). One of the persistent problems in this context is whether the load of karma may be lightened by transferring some of it to another person through ritual procedures. At the time of death, the body perishes, but the residue of the fruits of karma necessitates reincarnation of the soul in another corporeal body. This "wandering" of the soul from body to body is called samsara. Just as the notion of social action (karma) cannot be separated from its moral foundation (dharma), it can also not be detached from its consequences, resulting in samsaric bondage. Traditionally, the ultimate goal of every moral agent should be to obtain release (*mukti*) from the cycle of birth-death-rebirth, or the transmigration of souls.

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See also Hindu Law; Hindu Orthopraxy; Hinduism

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DIASPORA

Diaspora has become a key term in both religious practice and the analysis of religions from a global perspective, a lexical frame linking reflections about collective identifications, migration, territory, imagination, and memory. As a term that is both one of social practice and one of scholarly analysis, its use requires special care. At the simplest level, analytical attempts to define “diaspora” refer to three issues: (1) a group’s dislocation from a perceived homeland, (2) the incomplete assimilation of that group in a host society, and (3) the ongoing relations of a group with a place and people left behind—ranging from a minimal relation of sentiments to a maximal one of remittances of money and goods or even frequent bodily returns. This entry builds from this simple characterization to examine various ways of defining *diaspora*, specifying what the construction and maintenance of a diaspora requires and considering particular issues relevant to thinking about *diasporic religion*.

Paths Toward Definition

The notion of diaspora has been progressively widened over the past century from the classic Jewish, Greek, and Armenian cases to potentially include almost everyone. Its colloquial use suggests affiliations given by virtue of biological descent, which allegedly transmit “blood” continuity across space: The Jewish diaspora from this perspective is the set of people whose families were from, but then were exiled or otherwise departed from, Palestine in the distant past during dispersions under Babylonia, Rome, or other conquerors. The Irish diaspora is built of the descendants of the families that left the green isle during the potato famines of the 19th century, and so on.

For analytical and comparative purposes, this folk meaning falls short on at least two counts. First, in this view there exist perennially stable groupings of humans who under conditions of emigration inevitably turn into diasporas. The problem with this is that there are no such naturally existing groups and, it follows, no natural diasporas either. The maintenance of sentiments of affinity linking even apparently highly cohesive social groups requires enormous cultural work and is never simply “given.” The second problem with everyday uses of diaspora is that the category is overly broad. It is not helpful to say that everyone is diasporic, though it is true that if one expands the temporal horizon widely enough, all human beings are descendants of East Africa. The reason most people are not East African diasporans, though all have ancestors from there, is because that memory is not part of their conscious experience: Neither is it constitutive of their bodily habitus, nor are they viewed by others as members of that category. Folk invocations of diaspora fail to specify the cultural particularity of a diaspora—that this cultural form depends not merely on having a family tree that sprouted in another place but also on the fact that the double consciousness in relation to place is central, even actively conjured in their lived experiences. Diasporans feel a gap between here and *there*, where they are *really from*. Often, they even value and cultivate that gap, finding in it a unique and vital distinction.

The prevalence of these confusing folk usages, not to mention the mixed approaches of analytical meanings—as a collective memory, as a self-conscious identifier adopted in varying degrees, as an ideological mode of cultural performance making political claims—suggests the need to more clearly give boundaries to the term.

Definition by Etymology

One way to delimit its semantic range is through etymology. *Diaspora* derives from the Greek verb *speirein* (“to sow or scatter,” as in seed) and the preposition *dia* (“over”), thus meaning “to scatter over.” The same Indo-European root, *sp-*, appears in words such as *spore*, *spread*, or *sperm*. *Diaspora* was first used by the Greeks to describe the colonization of Asia Minor and the Mediterranean world, and it probably connoted a

sacrificial loss of the homeland for the cause of Greek expansion.

The word took on a different valence as applied to the Jewish experience, as a translation of the Hebrew term *galut* in the Greek version of Hebrew scripture, the Septuagint, connoting severance, exile (Deuteronomy 28: 25, 58–68), and the Jewish dispersions (732 BCE, conquest by Assyria; 586 BCE, conquest by Babylonia; 70 CE, conquest by Rome). Yet at least in the later context of rabbinic teaching it also carried the promise of ultimate return. In Jewish thought, diaspora carries within it a soteriology, the promise of the future salvation of the people through a return to their place of origin. Other groups' religious diasporic practice may proffer analogous promises of geopiety projected into the future. This suggests how diasporas not only have distinct causes but also draw on different, imaginative, and sentimental valences: diasporas of hope, of terror, of despair, and of desire.

Definition by List

Another route to definition has been the attempt to specify the empirical contents of a diaspora, so as to enable the differentiation of "diaspora societies" from other kinds of societies. Scholars have by now agreed on a relative consensus of traits constituting diasporas. Most obvious in these lists is the dispersion of a present group of past ancestors from an original center to two or more new sites. Next is some retained collective memory about the homeland. A third standard criterion is the maintenance of relations with the departed homeland, at least as an imagined community, which defines in significant ways the contemporary experience of the host land. These relations may include economic as well as social and cultural remittances sent back and forth, or they may entail ritual performances that call the homeland to mind to improve or transform the experience of the host land.

A fourth characteristic of a list-based definition calls attention to the need for institutional infrastructures that make and sustain diasporic sentiments through stagings and performance. This is important because it points to the constraints on diasporic cultural forms: Emigrants must rely on artifactual representations that recall the homeland to mind, only some of which are possible using the materials at hand in the host land.

A fifth common feature invoked is that a diaspora group remains at least partly separate, distinct, or alienated from the mainstream society within the host country. Often the sense of separate difference is fueled in part by the nostalgic idealization of a specific ancestral homeland and ancestral time, which may or may not be linked to aspirations of actual return. For example, relatively few African Americans actually remove themselves permanently to Africa, though the ritual experience of momentary "return" both in space and in time is widely performed in African diaspora religions of the Americas.

Defining by Relation

It will aid the definitional process to confront an apparently simple question: Who is not in diaspora? First, people can go back to wherever they consider home; when they do so on a permanent basis, they cease to be in diaspora. Recent examples include ethnic Germans and Greeks returning to their homelands from the former USSR after 1989. A second way a group can be nondiasporic is by remaining always in transit, for example, as nomads, such that the lack of any established homeland location precludes any sense of territorial dislocation. The Bedouins and the Gypsies (Romani) provide possible examples.

Next, a community that is entirely uprooted to a new homeland is no longer dispersed; it remains "intact," merely in a new place, and the key spatial feature of diaspora, the engagement of host land and homeland communities across a gap, is forfeit. Moreover, at least as a logical possibility, one can imagine a group that remains dislocated from a homeland community but that so fully assimilates in the host land that it is no longer cognizant of the homeland and abandons the sort of coresponsibility that is constitutive of active diasporas.

Finally, a group lacking the resources, time, energy, and political clout to continually guard and fan the sparks of memory can cease to live in diaspora. Diasporic affiliations and representations come into being under certain historical conditions and may be transformed or disappear under others.

Making and Maintaining Diasporas

To these common ways of defining diaspora, five further considerations may be added to further

sharpen the use of diaspora and to evaluate how diasporas are made and maintained in practice.

A Diaspora Is a Specific Kind of Culture

Diasporas are cultural rather than biological forms. For a diasporic culture to be maintained or transmitted, information such as memories, tastes, and habits must be held in common by multiple individual participants. Individual minds must receive and reproduce the words, habits, and tendencies that, if and when assembled densely and consistently enough with those of a group of people located in another place, come to be called a “diaspora” in speech contexts of comparisons with other clustered habits, memories, aesthetic preferences, or languages. The reproduction of such a sufficient though partial similarity requires communications between individuals that bridge interpersonal space. Diaspora culture is distinctive in that the transmissive gaps that must be bridged are enormously widened.

Diasporas Cross Gaps and Are Also About Such Gaps

Diasporic cultural transmissions no longer entail the receptions and incorporations of words or ideas passed contiguously, through direct contact or immediate networks, but rather signals and symbols exchanged via electronic media, phone calls, letters, videotape, or informal gossip networks. Cultural transmission may no longer be conducted through human copresence in known places, as in the homeland, but rather at a distance across empty space dividing the homeland from the host land. The wider the spaces those transmissions must cross, and the more rival signals that exist in the cultural field of reception, the more variation may occur. This is so even if, as is often the case in diasporic religions, there arise strident discourses insisting on traditional fidelity and absolute continuity between the homeland and the diasporic group.

The diasporic experience often entails not only a spatial gap but also a perceived temporal gap, as the homeland is considered by those in diaspora to carry the symbolic weight of the “original” and the “inherent,” just as for those remaining in the homeland, the diaspora often must bear the load

of “modernity.” For example, when a Caribbean in New York receives a videotape of a ritual from her home village and watches it in her high-rise apartment, she may view the videotaped actions according to a script in which the ritual is happening not only elsewhere but also else-when: in an earlier time, the time of her childhood. The homeland acquires an aura of origins and authenticity, at once a geographic backwater compared with the city and a sacred place—sacred because it mediates the past in some way that resists transience—even though the homeland village is itself fully engaged with its own local processes of modernity.

Diaspora as a Series of Interventions, Not a Permanent State of Being

The Irish Americans of Chicago may be sentimentally joined to Ireland for a given occasion, such as the Saint Patrick’s Day parade or a Notre Dame football game, but only with substantial effort. To not only be of Irish extraction but to also *feel* it as a central part of one’s being is contingent and usually temporary, since it is only one among a set of possible affiliations. Such emotions are evoked by some situations and not by others, which is why such diasporic conjunctions require more or less elaborate stagings.

Performing diasporas requires a discursive framework—holidays set apart, songs, rituals, texts, and so on—as well as extensive material and social infrastructural supports. Thus, the manifestation of “the Irish diaspora” in the United States depends on the distinction of a given day from others on the calendar, on major cities’ assent to closing streets for parades, and on the manufacture and sale of green hats, beer, and buttons. It entails a conjunction of commercial and civic interests that can only be achieved infrequently and not achieved at all for other only *potentially* diasporic groups that lack sufficient numbers, capital, and political clout. Without repeated commemorations, diasporas may disappear from the minds of potential members. When the homeland cannot be called to mind, or fails to evoke sentiments of affinity, a diaspora ceases to exist.

Such commemorative labor is enjoined not only in large performances that are consciously and ideologically diasporic but also in small, often unconscious habitual acts. For example, a Jamaican

diasporan uses the colors of his hat to keep that identity “in mind” both for observers and for himself, though he may never devote conscious deliberation to the matter. Diasporas are sentimental communities but also habit communities. The homeland must be performed again and again. But why do this work? Diasporas are desirable because they are consequential actions. By naming a horizon of expectation, they provide solidarity, purpose, identity, and futurity. Against this horizon, diasporans not only perform rituals but also raise funds and mobilize campaigns to effect change in both émigré communities and the homelands they remember or revisit. The Garifuna diaspora in New York, for example, generated the revenue that brought electricity to many Honduran villages in the early 1980s. It also won a new status for Carib, its mother tongue, as an “official language” recognized by the city of New York, a recognition that prodded the state of Honduras into following suit. Invoking a “diasporic” identity helps define and legitimize cultural boundaries within a competitive cultural market of recognition, which can help generate support from city and state governments for social services, for institution building, and for the spaces required for commemoration.

Diaspora Culture Is the Elevation of One Group Over Others

Because being diasporic *does* something, diasporas are interested interventions that temporarily level differences by suspending rival reference group affiliations and elevating just one. For example, Caribbean English- and French-speaking Blacks in the United States often emphasize their West Indianness or Haitianness and their distinctive accents so as not to be too easily conflated with their African American proximal hosts, who are perceived as suffering discrimination and reduced social status. A Haitian in New York may under certain circumstances feel, be identified as, or introduce herself as “African American,” “African,” “Caribbean,” or “French”; but all of these are likely to be suspended during a Vodou ceremony in Brooklyn in favor of an authentic “Haitianness,” since that is the diasporic identifier most befitting that particular occasion.

Still, while diasporic affiliations elevate one identification over others for emphasis, the

nomenclature of diaspora also connotes distance and *limits* any absolute identification with the distant place. Being a member of the African diaspora both forges a link with Africa and guards a critical distance, allowing for its selective invocation. For example, during the 1980s, many African Americans actively protested South Africa’s apartheid system in part by virtue of African diasporic loyalties that found common cause with South African victims of apartheid. Yet similar mobilizations have not occurred as frequently in relation to other African traumas, notably in Sudan and Rwanda, because famines and massacres were less directly familiar to the North American Black experience than South Africa’s racial segregation. This suggests how diasporic sentiments and political interventions are constrained by what is imaginable and relevant within the cultural repertoire, political context, and material context at hand.

Diasporic Religion

Many scholars have argued that religious participation is enhanced through migration and diasporic affiliation. The hypothetical acceleration of religious action occurs because migrants are forced to assimilate and become homogenized in the economic or productive sectors of life, leaving cultural domains—religion, music, or style—as primary resources for maintaining a sense of continuity with the past. Where cassava cultivation and the hanging of hammocks is impossible for most Caribbean emigrants in large urban centers, for example, religious performance may shoulder a heavier load as a source of ethnic affiliation and spatial memory of the place left behind.

An even stronger hypothesis claims that not only is religion accorded special emphasis in diasporic settings, diasporas in certain respects actually *make* religions.

Consider the classic case of the diasporic religion Judaism. Because the Jewish diaspora carries within it the idea of the anticipated future return to the homeland, the historic dispersion from the homeland entailed not only loss but also great vitality. The destruction of the Temple brought forth by necessity a more transportable, transmissible style of Judaism, one based not on temple ritual but rather on the Law (Mishnah) and its interpretation. Out of the diaspora emerged the

formation of an incipient scriptural canon, the formation of synagogues under the leadership of charismatic prophets, the exegetical style based in contact and communication with rival traditions, and even the very notion, value, and ritualization of “return” itself. In this sense, Babylon was the crucible that made Judaism a fully articulated religion.

In diasporic situations, religious words and acts that were formerly “natural” parts of the social environ and its quotidian routine become the object of conscious selection. They must be planned for, allotted space, deliberated, and agreed on. For groups in exile or emigration, religion is reified by being dislodged from its embedded, unspoken status to becoming a discrete object of contemplation and contest. This critical reevaluation can have the effect of accelerating religious sentiments, discourses, and practices or at least allowing space for critical revisions of tradition to occur.

Yet this is far from inevitable. The acceleration of religious participation under diasporic conditions depends on the status of religion in the receiving country. It is not at all clear, for example, that Moroccans who arrive in Paris become more religious by virtue of that transit in the same way that Koreans do on arriving in the United States, since religion is not a historically privileged and legally protected category for social organization in France to the degree that it is in the United States. In such cases, religion may become less central upon its becoming a problem for reflection. As religious practices are refracted through diasporic contexts, what they will surely not do is to remain the same.

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See also Globalization; Jewish Diaspora; Refugees; Transnational

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DIVINATION

Divination is the act of foreseeing and foretelling the future, and interpreting present actions and decision-making processes, via omens and supernatural means. Divining is facilitated by trained diviners, soothsayers, shamans, seers, priests, and psychics, who use ritual objects to “spiritually read” symbols and signs. Divination can be used to decipher potential life warnings, upcoming illnesses, personal struggles, symbolic dreams, individual relationships, and problematic social interactions. Practitioners employ divination to answer life-altering questions about a variety of topics, from finding the perfect spouse or job, to knowing when to build a house or business, to uncovering personal or communal wrongdoing, to even determining the time of one’s death. In communities where water or produce resources are sparse, divination can unearth what actions are required for rain or crops to

bountifully return. As a worldwide phenomenon, practiced in both ancient and modern times across religions, divination serves as an indicator of humanity's continued fascination with discerning unknown questions through spirit-centered methods. For practitioners, divination is an individual and community tool relaying a seeker's potential life outcome through revealing the necessary steps to follow to avoid ill fortune and achieve success.

Objects used to divine can vary from culture to culture, ranging from Tarot cards, rune stones, palms, astrological signs, pendulums, Ouija boards, tea leaves, and coffee grounds in Europe to spiritually reading sand, mirrors, divination chains, divining rods, dreams, candles, the Bible, eggs, animal entrails, and cosmological signs (such as thunder, and star and cloud formations) in Africa and Latin America. China is noted for its *Book of Changes*, the I Ching, which is more than 4,500 years old. Many other divinatory methods around the world are used—the connection between the methods being that the objects used are ritualized, held to high esteem, and seen as conduits capable of revealing higher answers from supernatural orders. Ifa, an elaborate divination system originating with the Yoruba of Nigeria, uses divining chains (*opele*) holding 256 possible codes, with each code containing 16 different stories, proverbs, herbs, and divinities determining a divination's outcome; training and initiation can take decades to master. Other divination methods, such as palmistry, can be rudimentarily book learned within a few weeks.

Practitioners generally believe that divination is made possible through one of the following means: (a) divine beings or spirits associated with prophecy, (b) ancestral beings speaking on a person's behalf, (c) energetic presences manipulated or honed from other worlds or dimensions, (d) a diviner's intuition or telepathic abilities, (e) a scientific system of nature interpreted, or (f) for those outside a communal religious system, "magic" and sheer luck. For nonbelievers, divination can be viewed as chicanery or merely coincidental—an ill-attempted form of personal psychotherapy—or, on the other end of the spectrum, as a demonic practice inviting ill-tempered spirits to heretically act against God's law.

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See also Astronomy; Feng Shui (Geomancy); Prophecy; Shamanism; Spiritualism

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DIVINE LAW

For most religious traditions, even indigenous, divine law consists of mandates believed to be given to human beings by a deity or deities. These mandates pertain to communal regulations, civil laws, liturgical practices, morality, ethical behavior, dietary practices, and personal hygiene habits. The mandates can be passed down through poetry, sacred stories, songs, place names, and sacred writings. Divine law is arguably the most important law of any society. It is central to most, if not all, religious traditions. Since it is derived from the divine, it is considered sacred. To break, ignore, distort, or reject the law is to reject the creator of the law, and it is believed that the divine will exact punishment for any such actions. Even more, every society and religious tradition has created a hermeneutic, or a science of interpretation, to comprehend, categorize, and apply divine law to a given situation. In Hinduism, the transcendent law is related to the concept of dharma; in Buddhism, it is *dhamma*; and the Confucian tradition in China has the notion of righteous behavior associated with the concept of *li*. Westerners are most familiar with three different conceptions of divine law: Jewish, Islamic, and Christian.

Jewish conceptions of divine law are based on the *Tanakh*. The *Tanakh*, or Hebrew scriptures, is divided into three major portions: Torah (Teaching), *Nevi'im* (Prophets), and *Ketuvim* (Writings). Although all the books contained within the *Tanakh* are considered to be divinely inspired, the first five books, or the Torah—that is, the books of Moses—hold primacy in Jewish theology. Contained within the Torah are the 613 obligations or mitzvahs incumbent on all Jews. These

obligations are mandated by God. They cover morality, communal governance, ethics, dietary regulations, and ceremonies. In addition to the Hebrew Scriptures is the Oral Torah, which essentially consists of the Talmud. The Talmud itself is made up of the Mishnah and Gemara. In essence, the Talmud contains rabbinical interpretations and commentaries about the Tanakh and proper liturgical practices. It is believed that God's words as recorded in the Tanakh cannot be properly understood without familiarity with the Oral Torah or Talmud. In this way, the Talmud is part and parcel of divine law.

Islamic conceptions of divine law are based on the Qur'an (recitation) and the Hadith (trodden path), which consists of the Shari'a (the way). The Qur'an is the sacred scripture of Islam. Unlike the Tanakh, it is divided into suras (chapters), not books. These suras are arranged from the longest to the shortest, not chronologically or thematically. The Hadith consists of the most reliable accounts of the actions and teachings of the Prophet Muhammad on practical matters. In this way, the Hadith complements and supplements the Qur'an. It is believed that the Qur'an cannot be properly understood without reference to the Hadith. One must accept both books as being divinely inspired, though the Qur'an holds primacy. Both the Qur'an and the Hadith taken together make up the Shari'a. The Shari'a is commonly broken up into five categories of mandates: (1) belief, (2) morality, (3) devotion, (4) interactions, and (5) consequences. As with the Tanakh and the Talmud, most aspects, if not every aspect, of a believer's existence are covered by these divinely established laws.

The Christian conception of the divine law combines the Hebrew scriptures with the Christian scriptures or the New Testament. The New Testament is used to interpret the Hebrew scriptures, or Old Testament. Christians believe that the arrival or advent of Jesus Christ is promised throughout the Old Testament. What Christians call the Old Testament, Judaism, the religion that Jesus and his disciples were born into and practiced, calls the Tanakh. Jesus did not write any portion of the New Testament. In the Christian view, the New Testament is the articulation of God's new covenant with mankind, thereby rendering the ceremonial practices, dietary regulations and liturgical laws of the Hebrew scriptures obsolete. For

Christians, the Hebrew scriptures tell of God's old covenant with Israel. In this way, the Old Testament is interpreted through the lens of the New Testament.

There was no Christian Bible for at least 100 years after Christ's death. Most of the churches had been founded by the actual apostles of Christ or people who were the disciples of the apostles of Christ. The four books relating the ministry of Christ are written from four different perspectives. The Acts of the Apostles is a continuation of the Gospels. According to Luke, it is the second part, so to speak. It was written by Luke. The Pauline Letters are epistles or letters written by Saint Paul to specific churches or individuals. The Catholic Letters are called Catholic because they are considered to be universal; that is, they were written at the time intentionally for the benefit of all Christians and not just for specific churches or individuals. The Book of Revelation records a vision of the end of the world seen by Saint John of Patmos.

The Christian concept of divine law was popularized by the Dominican theologian, Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274), when he categorized and ordered what he perceived to be the four laws that govern human existence. Previous church philosophers, especially Augustine of Hippo, had long recognized the idea of divine law but had failed to clearly define it and articulate its relation to other forms of law. Aquinas in his monumental *Summa Theologiae* not only clearly defined divine law but also explained what it is and how it relates to other types of law. For Aquinas, there are four kinds or categories of law: (1) *lex aeterna* (eternal law), (2) *lex naturalis* (natural law), (3) *lex humana* (human law), and (4) *lex divina* (divine law).

Eternal law is the overall law governing the universe; it is God's architectural blueprint; it is the physical law that governs the universe. Eternal law dictates that humans have an instinctive desire or impulse to reproduce just as any other kind of animal. Natural law makes humans capable of loving, caring, and educating their offspring beyond what is needed or required for base survival. Natural law is the intrinsic human ability to judge right from wrong. It is the law written on the heart of every rational creature. Simply put, it is practical reason. For Aquinas, because of natural law, humans know inwardly that the murder of innocent people

is wrong, that certain sexual activities are wrong, that the family as an institution is good, and that people must work together for society to function.

From natural law, human law emerges; it provides specifics. Bad human law is a lesser evil than having no human law. Human law is the only form of law that originates directly from human beings, not God. As such, these laws are posited or positive laws. There are two kind of positive laws. First, civil law is created by humans for the proper governance of a particular city. Second, *ius gentium*, the law of nations, is a universal law created by humans that all have in common and for the purpose of “international” relations. That is, all peoples or nations have laws regulating private property, murder, theft, warfare, communication, and travel. From this stems *ius peregrinandi*, the law of the foreigner, which implies trade.

Finally, divine law is revealed law or law based on Christian scriptures. Because natural law is too broad and human law is concerned with actions affecting society, the aim of revealed or divine law through the Bible is to regulate the actions of humans within the Christian community for the purpose of spiritual salvation. According to Aquinas, only Christians have divine law and thus can be punished for its violation. Jews have the old or obsolete divine law, and Islam’s divine law is fraudulent. In this way, non-Christians cannot be punished for violations of divine law because they lack the revealed word of Christ. The natural and human laws of all peoples must be respected, even by Christians, so long as divine law is not contradicted.

Robert L. Green Jr.

See also Christianity; Dharma, Karma, and Samsara; Ethics; Hindu Law; Islam; Judaism; *Li*; Mahayana Buddhism; Natural Law; Roman Catholicism

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DIVINE LIGHT MISSION

The Divine Light Mission (DLM) was one of the better known of the new religious movements that received attention during the turbulent 1960s and 1970s, particularly in the United States. The movement originated in India in 1960, led by Guru Shri Hans Ji Maharaji, but was promoted in the United States and other Western nations by his youngest son, Guru Maharaj Ji, whose Indian name was Prem Rawat. Maharaj Ji assumed leadership of the movement when he was 8 years old, after the death of his father, but actual leadership rested with his mother, with whom he had many conflicts before breaking with her and traveling to the United States and United Kingdom at the age of 13 to establish the DLM in those and other Western nations.

The DLM achieved considerable success for a time, especially in Western nations, and at its prime, it was operating in 37 countries and established several hundred centers and ashrams for its participants. The DLM attracted considerable media attention through the large numbers of young people who joined and attended its festivals, which were a major way by which the organization raised funds necessary for its operations. Participants were called *premies*—the designation for those who had received the special knowledge associated with joining the movement. The movement also attracted some well-known people, inducing them to become followers, at least for a time. Among them was Rennie Davis, one of the famous defendants in the Chicago Seven trial, who was in charge of one major festival that took place in Houston’s Astrodome in 1973. This festival was not successful and left the DLM with a large debt that took years to pay off and resulted in severe restructuring of the organization.

Further problems arose for the movement when in 1974 Mahari Ji married his secretary, a non-Indian, which was against his teaching of celibacy and also very upsetting to his mother as well as many followers. Many followers left the movement, and the decline of the DLM became noticeable, with a majority of the followers leaving during the late 1970s. What remained of the DLM in the Western nations became quite Westernized under the leadership of Prem Rawat. The organization's name was changed in 1983 to Elan Vital, and it continued to operate in a limited way using this designation. The DLM does exist in India, with the organization being headed by the eldest brother of Prem Rawat, Satpal Rawat.

The DLM attracted attention from the Anti-Cult movement and even some governments, with many accusations of "brainwashing" and "mind control" being made, based in part on the dramatic behavior changes observed sometimes in members of the movement. Those living in the ashrams were expected to practice celibacy and abstain from alcohol and meat. A number of "deprogrammings" of participants occurred during the time of the DLM's prominence in the media, but attacks against the DLM faded as the movement itself started to decline.

James T. Richardson

See also New Religions; New Religions in the United States; Popular Religion; Radhasoami

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DJIBOUTI

Djibouti (locally called *Jumhuriyat Jibuti*) is a small, recently formed East African nation located on the Horn of Africa, southeast of Eritrea and at

the crossing of the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea. Independent from France in 1977, the Republic of Djibouti holds a strategic location in the Muslim world, as its position is adjacent to the Middle Eastern nation Yemen and at the Red Sea crossing. Approximately 94% of the country identifies as Muslim, with small percentages of foreign-born Catholics and practicing Christians, many of whom are refugees from the neighboring countries.

Before 1859, when France's interest in the area arose due to British pressure seeking control over the Red Sea, the arid, volcanic region was sparsely populated by nomadic groups, particularly the Issas and Afars. The Issa are of Somali origin and typically reside in the south, constituting 60% of the population, whereas the Afar, about 35% of the population, hold allegiances with Ethiopia and reside in the north. Both groups are predominantly Sunnī Muslim, and the country since 1977 has been a member of the Arab League.

Islam became regionally present as early as 615 CE, with mass conversion by the 10th century; nevertheless, local festivals, traditions, and styles of dress remain and often become fused or practiced in conjunction with the Muslim faith. Today, the practice of all faiths is permitted under the nation's 1992 constitution, though the sole recognized religion of the state is Islam. International groups have noted that strong pressure exists for Muslims to remain Muslims, with converts to Christianity facing tremendous social and familial ostracism. Equality between the sexes is poor. Female Muslims in Djibouti are typically circumcised, have literacy rates below 20%, bear an average of around three children each, and cannot marry outside of their religion.

With a population near 750,000 and less than 0.1% arable land, food production is difficult. Education beyond basic schooling is limited, and access to higher education is usually sought outside the country. Despite Djibouti's economic and agricultural poverty, the United States holds a strong interest in the country as a means to countering threats of global terrorism, with the only U.S. military base in sub-Saharan Africa located on Djibouti's soil.

Today, the official spoken languages are Arabic and French, though Afar dialects of lowland eastern Cushitic and Somali are still prevalent in the region. Formerly called French Somaliland,

Djibouti's borders were created without regard to former ethnic allegiances or traditional lineages. This haphazard construction of its oft-contested borders and access to railway transport have contributed to ethnic, political, and social tensions within Djibouti's borders as well as in relation to its neighboring countries—Somalia, Ethiopia, and Eritrea—for more than the past century. In 1981, Djibouti became a one-party state, and in 1991, the Afar Revolt began via the Front for the Restoration of Unity and Democracy, inciting civil war, which was unresolved until 2001. Though the 1992 constitution provides for a multiparty system, the second-term president, Ismail Omar Guelleh, was controversially reelected in 2005 with a received vote of 100%.

Christi M. Dietrich

See also Africa; Eritrea; Ethiopia; Islam; Somalia

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DŌGEN (1200–1253)

Eihei Dōgen, transmitter of the Soto Zen tradition to Japan, is widely regarded as one of the most profound and original of Japanese philosophers.

Born of aristocratic parents, Dōgen was orphaned young and entered the great Buddhist monastery of Mt. Hiei near Kyoto. He was, however, disturbed by doubts, especially concerning the common Mahayana doctrine of “original enlightenment,” asking why, if we have an inner enlightened Buddha nature from birth, we then need to strive for enlightenment. Traveling to China to study, he eventually attained Zen enlightenment at a Soto monastery in 1225. On his return to his homeland, Dōgen founded the Eihei-ji temple in the Soto tradition. That lineage emphasizes enlightenment in the context of quiet sitting and everyday work.

The value of everyday experience is really the background of Dōgen's greatest intellectual achievement—the *uji*, or the “being-time” argument—as explained in his most famous work, the *Shobogenzo* (which could be loosely translated as “collection on true dharma seeing”). The exposition is difficult but seems to mean that every moment of time, and the world as it is in that moment, is a distinct here-and-now reality, linked to the past and future only by unreliable mental constructs, memory, and imagination. Dōgen's thought has been compared with Einstein's relativity and modern existentialism, though his point was to validate enlightenment as one with “just sitting” and daily-life activities such as working in the kitchen rather than as something to be attained outside one's present self.

Dōgen was also far ahead of his time in his equal evaluation of the religious experience of women and men. He died in obscurity, however, and it was only later that the importance of his teaching was realized. By the late 18th century, his writings had become normative for Soto Zen. In postwar Japan, the “Critical Buddhism” school, seeking to determine what had gone wrong in Japanese Buddhism that allowed it to be so easily coopted by Japan's medieval samurai and modern militarists, saw the flaw to be in the “original enlightenment” concept Dōgen had questioned. They alleged that, according to it, because we have an enlightened Buddha nature within us from birth, whatever we do with “no-mind” sincerity, including swordsmanship or dying for the emperor, is legitimate. Dōgen emphasized enlightenment as not something attained but as consciousness that must be realized moment by moment.

Many of the Western Zen centers are in Dōgen's Soto tradition, and his philosophical influence is widely felt throughout the world.

Robert Ellwood

See also Japan; Zen Buddhism

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DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

As with most Caribbean nations, the religious setting in the Dominican Republic is changing rapidly. Still, the predominant religion is Christianity, specifically Roman Catholicism. Officially, roughly 90% of the population practices it, and the Church still exerts enormous influence on the country, through strong linkages with the government, a well-established education system, and the legal sanctioning of marriages. For a brief period in the 1950s, religion and the Church were suppressed under the oppressive rule of Rafael Trujillo. But after his assassination, Catholicism quickly reclaimed its dominance.

While most citizens practice traditional Roman Catholicism, through a process known as syncretism, it has melded with African (Benin, Congo, Yoruba) and native Amerindian (Taino) religious elements to produce a form of Dominican Catholicism. A heady mix of African religious symbolism and gods with Roman Catholic ritual, this hybrid form is otherwise known as Dominican Santería, or *Congo del Espiritu Santo*. The unabashed inclusion of African drums is a distinctive feature of Dominican Catholicism and other religions as well.

In addition, there is an approximately 5% Protestant presence. Because of the efforts of missionaries, Protestants from the United States and the West Indies have established footholds in the Dominican Republic since the mid-20th century. As in the rest of Latin America, though, Evangelicalism is presently the fastest growing form of Protestant belief among the population. Evangelical churches have sprung up rapidly throughout the country and are quite strong in the rural and poor areas. Some see this rise in Protestant belief as a direct result of the failure of Roman Catholic churches to satisfy the material needs of the poor. Evangelical churches tend to promote a disciplined and frugal lifestyle, a personal conversion experience, public confession of sins, spiritual healing of illness, relief from poverty

through prayer, and demonstration of faith through the gifts of the Holy Spirit, namely, the ecstasy of speaking in tongues.

In addition to the evangelical churches, there are Baptist, Mormon, and Seventh-Day Adventist communities. Also, there are some non-Christian communities as well; synagogues have been present on the island since the arrival in the 1930s of World War II Jewish refugees. More recently, mostly due to immigration, there is a growing presence of other, perhaps less expected, faiths, each with a less than 1% share of the population; Baha'i, Buddhist, Chinese folk religion, Islam, and Hinduism have well-attended centers of worship on the island.

Perhaps the most controversial form of spirituality in the republic is the practice of Vodou. Borrowed from neighboring Haiti, Vodou has historically been looked down on by many professed Dominican Christians because of racial and social pressures (many view it as a Haitian practice). And yet it is becoming more popular and openly practiced as resistance to it is reduced through multicultural education. In the Dominican Republic, Vodou has been recast as Las 21 Divisiones and is a more fluid version than its Haitian counterpart, which is also practiced (though naturally less popular). Again, the main difference between the two is the use of different African-inspired musical instruments during the ceremonies.

Leonard D. McMahon Jr.

See also Caribbean; Vodou

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DOUGLAS, MARY (1921–2007)

Mary Tew Douglas, a British anthropologist, is most famous for her work on ritual purity, bodily

symbolism, and cultural perceptions of risk. Trained at Oxford under Evans-Pritchard, she began her career studying the Lele of the Congo. After numerous articles and two books on these and other central African peoples, she turned to more theoretical matters—notably, connections between how people order their conceptual worlds and how they order their social lives. She applied her insights broadly, arguing that culture and social structure must be seen as part of a single system, not as two unconnected parts of life.

Purity and Danger (1966) was Douglas's first book to attract attention from scholars of religion. There, she presented ritual purity and taboo as expressions of both mental and social dividing lines. For example, the rules in the Book of Leviticus that describe what the Hebrews could and could not eat were neither early health edicts nor random prohibitions. Instead, they resulted from anomalies in the Hebrews' classification system. Pigs were tabooed as food because they share the cloven hoof of (edible) ungulates but do not chew their cud. Animals that chew cud but do not have cloven hooves—camels, rock hyrax—were similarly shunned. Such purity systems, said Douglas, are not primitive; instead, they exemplify well-developed analytic thinking. For the Hebrews, they also simultaneously symbolized and enforced the Hebrews' status as a people set apart from others. Food, marital status, and social endogamy went together.

Douglas argued against dividing peoples into “moderns” and “primitives”—with the former somehow thinking more flexibly than the latter. In *Natural Symbols* (which appeared in two conceptually different versions in 1970 and 1973), she pointed out that Mbuti Pygmy theology was every bit as abstract as modern liberal Protestantism. Simultaneously, one can find what amounts to magical thinking both among the Lele and in contemporary urban professionals. There are, she said, three basic patterns: (1) societies that emphasize classification and hierarchy are prone to ritualism, (2) societies that emphasize individual enterprise are antiritualistic, and (3) societies that maintain high boundaries against outsiders while simultaneously claiming that all insiders are equal, suffer from sectarianism and fears that one's enemies are consorting with evil. (The Lele, along with many university departments, fit this mold.)

Scholars have since applied her “grid-group theory” to topics as varied as New Testament communities, 19th-century scientists, and ancient China. Douglas herself came to focus on why people in different societies evaluate risks differently (*Risk and Culture*, with Aaron Wildavsky, 1982). She then developed her approach in two directions. First, she emphasized the active role that people play in constructing both their cultural beliefs and their social orders (*In the Active Voice*, 1982). Then, she combined this active-voice sociology with a revised functionalism, asking what practical purpose various beliefs play in people's lives (*How Institutions Think*, 1986).

Douglas's ability to find the clever example and the perfect turn of phrase gave her work considerable influence, sometimes despite a logical imprecision hidden beneath her stellar prose. Her short essays, especially, were startlingly creative on a variety of fronts (e.g., *Implicit Meanings*, 1975). Above all, her work forces one to think about what one takes for granted about the world—and what this might mean about how people order their collective lives.

James V. Spickard

See also Africa; Animals; Democratic Republic of the Congo; Halal; Lévi-Strauss, Claude; Symbol

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DUBAI

See United Arab Emirates

DUMONT, LOUIS (1911–1998)

Louis Dumont was an influential Indologist and social anthropologist who made a significant contribution to the global consciousness about religion and culture. Dumont was born in the Ottoman city of Salonika, Turkey, in 1911, where his French engineer father had served the interests of the Turkish government. Soon after the family moved back to France, young Louis won a place in the elite *École Polytechnique* in Paris to study mathematics. The career in science and technology envisioned for him by his parents, however, proved to be stifling. After only a short while in these studies, Dumont quit them in a brash spirit of youthful rebellion. Throughout much of his 20s, Dumont indulged in Bohemian pursuits in Oriental exotica and experimental modes of art. He was drawn to self-styled esotericist mystics such as René Guénon as well as to the avant-garde philosophical and surrealist circle, known as *Collège de Sociologie*, one of whose members, Georges Bataille, sought to institute human sacrifice in the great traffic circle that is today's Place de la Concorde.

Abandoning his studies in mathematics invited the wrath of Dumont's family, who promptly disowned him. What might have been a potential calamity for others succeeded in liberating Dumont from a gray provincial careerism and steered him instead toward a cross-cultural and comparative ethnology and Indology—the very two disciplines that fitted him out to contribute to the studies of world civilizations from a global perspective. Dumont can be said to have professionalized his jejune interests in things “primitive,” acquired perhaps from Bataille and the *Collège de Sociologie*, as well as exploiting the equally exotic excursions into Indian thought that so fascinated René Guénon. From the romantic primitivism of the *Collège de Sociologie*, Dumont learned how setting modern culture in relation with so-called primitive ones could shed new light on our own preoccupations. If “we” believed in the preeminence of the individual and “they,” of the “whole,” what else might this tell us about ourselves? Going well beyond Guénon's binary opposition of hierarchical India to the egalitarian West, Dumont

adapted Claude Lévi-Strauss's new structural methods of seeking binary opposition across cultures to illuminate mathematically precise systems of Indian kinship or, in other words, to shed light on the nature of the opposition of pure and impure that defined the much misunderstood scheme of caste in classical India. Dumont's gradual emergence from youthful romance into the beginnings of an original career that would be destined to feature wholesale global comparisons of the civilizations of the West and India would, however, be rudely interrupted by the global cataclysm of world war in 1939.

In that fateful year, Dumont entered the French army but, along with thousands of his compatriots, was captured by the Germans at the end of the so-called Phoney War (*Drôle de Guerre*) in the spring of 1940. While Dumont's imprisonment in Germany might well have terminated, or at least suspended, his Indological pursuits, it unexpectedly facilitated them. With the connivance of sympathetic prison guards, Dumont stole away from his prison factory labor job to receive instruction in Sanskrit from the Jaina specialist Professor Walther Schubring at the University of Hamburg.

After the war, Dumont worked in a menial capacity for a while at the *Musée National des Arts et Traditions Populaire*. His friends and professional acquaintances encouraged him to resume the career in ethnology that he had begun before the war. Among these sympathetic sponsors were the great Indo-Europeanist Professor Georges Dumézil and the director of *Musée National des Arts et Traditions Populaire*, Georges-Henri Rivièrè. Under the direction of Rivièrè, Dumont took his first steps in the ethnographic field to study a festival of the Rhone River monster, *La Tarasque*, native to the Provençal town of Tarascon. Dumont's first monograph, *La Tarasque* (1951), is a testament to his work in Provence.

But by 1948, India would beckon. Dumont began his first stint of fieldwork there, now greatly influenced by the new structuralism of Lévi-Strauss. Putting Lévi-Strauss's structural methods to use in his South Indian studies of kinship and affiliation, he published two works—*Une Sous-Caste de l'Inde du Sud* (A South Indian Subcaste) and his great classic on caste in India, *Homo Hierarchicus: Le*

système des castes et ses implications (Homo Hierarchicus: The Caste System and Its Implications)—in 1957 and 1966, respectively. Both show the influence of the cross-cultural methods brought forth by structuralism by putting the relationship of opposition, both binary and otherwise, at the center of theoretical attention.

After lecturing from 1951 to 1955 at the Institute of Anthropology in Oxford, Dumont returned to India in 1955 and between 1957 and 1958, for a total of about two further years of fieldwork, this time in North India. Between these fieldwork trips, Dumont assumed the post of *Director d'Études* (Director of Studies) at the *École Pratique des Hautes Études, VIième Section* (section 6) and both established the *Centre d'Études Indienne* and founded the periodical *Contributions to Indian Sociology*. From the early 1960s, Dumont began a series of publications that would define his intellectual profile for the remainder of his life. These would be his classic writings on caste, individualism, and world renunciation in Indian religion: *Homo Hierarchicus* (1957) and *La Civilisation Indienne et Nous* (Indian Civilization and Us; 1964). These works may be seen as setting a kind of high watermark of his Indological work. His essays on world renunciation in India would be gathered into an anthology in 1970—*Religion, Politics and History in India*. In these works, Dumont worked out a series of answers to problems vexing Indologists for generations: How does one explain the role and characteristics of that strange Indian cultural phenomenon—the man outside the world, the world renouncer? How, in particular, is he related to the person who remains securely ensconced in the everyday, caste-ridden society and, most curiously, to the modern Western individual? How might we see the civilizations of India and the West as representing two systematically varying schemes of choices as to ultimate social values—the one, India's, opting for hierarchy and the other, the West's, for equality?

In the mid-1960s, Dumont turned away from direct attention to India and redirected the priority of his gaze halfway round the globe on what he saw as its polar opposite—the West and its ideology of individualism. *From Mandeville to Marx* (1977) was an effort to comprehend the nature of Western individualism insofar as it had to do with

the emergence of the “economy” as a cultural *a priori*. The peculiarity of our arrangement of things, with the economy effectively swallowing up and dictating to politics, stands out when we bear in mind the diametrically opposed arrangements of classical India, where the value of *artha* encompassed both what we would call politics and economics but was still in all matters subordinated to dharma. Seeking the ultimate origins of Western individualist ideology, which emerged with such a vengeance in the victory of the economic, Dumont argued that it was in Christianity that the grounds of our belief in the sacredness of the individual were to be found. “A Modified View of Our Origins: The Christian Beginnings of Modern Individualism” first articulated this viewpoint. Shortly thereafter, Dumont collected his shorter writings on individualism into two volumes: (1) *Essays on Individualism* (1983/1986) and (2) *German Ideology: From France to Germany and Back* (1991/1994).

In all these later works, Dumont's central concern was to discover how it was that the Western individual, unlike the Indian equivalent, was a this-worldly creature, in contrast to the first Christian individuals, as well as the Indian world renouncers. This is the same question as why a “this-worldly” individual did not develop in India. Similarly, why was the evolution of the modern state coincident with the emergence of the worldly individual? Dumont's answer lay in the evolution of the relation between the Western empire and the church. At a crucial juncture in the history of the West, the church gave up its otherworldly character and embraced a worldly political role. This process entailed two remarkable and defining characteristics of the West: First, caught up in the transformation of the church, the ideal of the human person became that of the worldly individual and, second, the state took on some of the spiritual character of the church. In embracing a political role, the church itself invested politics and thus political structures with transcendent qualities, but the state assumed in the bargain that it would have “churchish” qualities as well. This is why the nation bears the qualities of a transcendent reality and why nationalism expresses so compelling a system of absolute values. For Dumont, the modern state is thus a transformed church, and thus, any global encounter of the

West with other cultures needs to take this into account—both to the extent that other societies have adopted the Western model and to the extent that they might seek to operate from other foundational principles.

Ivan Strenski

See also Dharma, Karma, and Samsara; Equality; Hinduism; India; Lévi-Strauss, Claude

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DURKHEIM, ÉMILE (1854–1917)

Known generally as France's first sociologist, Émile Durkheim was far more than that. Durkheim was born David Émile at Epinal in Lorraine in 1858, the eldest male in a Jewish family that had produced generations of rabbis. As expected, Durkheim prepared himself for the rabbinate, but in a fit of rebellion, he quit this training at about 14. The emotionally charged nationalism of the day played a major part in Durkheim's embrace of a "religious" patriotism. It seemed to overwhelm any affiliation to a traditional religion, even his own Judaism. By the age of 18 or so, Durkheim turned atheist, or at least agnostic. Durkheim had his higher education at the prestigious *École Normale Supérieure*, where Numa Denis Fustel de Coulanges, author of a classic study of ancient Roman religion, *The Ancient*

City, greatly influenced the young Durkheim. Like his classmates at the *École Normale*, Durkheim was drawn to the work of the spiritualist philosopher Émile Boutroux. On completing his studies, Durkheim went almost immediately into teaching, first in secondary schools, then in the University of Bordeaux, and eventually in Paris.

It was from the works he published during his university career, the academic periodical that he founded, *L'Année Sociologique*, as well as the "school" he created around the journal that Durkheim's impact on the study of religion can be measured. What one soon realizes in considering his life's work is that Durkheim was among the first modern scholars to internalize a global perspective in the study of religion. He did so in at least three ways: (1) he put cross-cultural studies of the social dimension of religion at the forefront of his writing, (2) he devised and championed a durable method and practical program of cross-cultural comparison, and (3) he was responsible for the creation of a team of scholars who collaborated in the study of religion and who influenced others in later generations of scholars in many countries to carry on the study of religion in a Durkheimian way. From France, all across Europe to Turkey, to the Americas, both North and South, and across the Pacific to Japan, Durkheim is counted as a major thinker on society and religion. There is little to account for the renown that Durkheim gained internationally other than the fact that his scholarship was global from its first years.

Durkheim achieved a global perspective by bringing the cross-cultural and comparative study of the social dimension of religion into play. This meant that he would accord more attention to the collective, group, or institutional functions and contexts of religion—wherever and whenever they occurred. Durkheim was, for example, particularly interested in institutionalized asceticism such as that found both in Christian monastic groups and in the ritual ordeals practiced in small-scale tribal societies. He also was particularly drawn to the emotional dimension of religious rituals, such as in the "charismatic" religious movements so sacred among the early Christians. By comparing the Christian example with the role of emotional effervescence in the festive sacred revelry of aboriginal Australia, he felt that he could make sense of both better. Furthermore, insofar as Durkheim's work

concerned philosophical, psychological, or theological matters in religion, he wished to show how they depended on their social location for much of their form and content. Following up on the case of Christian charismatic movements, how might the early Christian belief in the visitations of the sacred Holy Spirit be related to the effervescent emotional vitality of the young community and its avid ritual life? How and why was the notion and experience of the “sacred” so widely deployed in the religions of the world, and why was it so often linked with the identities of religious communities?

Beyond his early sociological works, *The Division of Labor in Society* (1893) and *Suicide* (1897), Durkheim was also a historian of moral and educational theory. Later in life, culminating in his great classic, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (1912/2001), he established himself as an expert in the study of remote small-scale societies around the globe, with special attention to their ritual and religious lives. What is remarkable even in the earlier works is Durkheim’s facility with data from across many cultures. Although *The Division of Labor* is on its face about industrial organization in modern societies, it works cross-culturally and comparatively with data drawn from tribal Africa; ancient Greece, Rome, and Egypt; the Bible; Brahmanical India; Confucius; the Eskimos; the Franks; the Jews; and the Visigoths. While focused locally on the social problem of suicide in contemporary France, Durkheim’s *Suicide* also engages comparative data regarding taking one’s own life that goes beyond the French scene among Catholics, Protestants, and Jews to include comparisons across Europe, both historically and in his own day—with Slavs, Gallo-Romans, and the Germanic nations.

In the service of globalizing the study of religion, Durkheim made one of the greatest theoretical contributions to the creation of an analytic language for religious studies—the definition of religion as the administration of the “sacred.” The use of *sacred* made it conceptually possible to embrace the entire world of religion under one globally applicable notion. This improved the conceptual situation commonplace in Durkheim’s day of defining religion as “belief in god.” Durkheim explicitly rejected this term on the grounds that it was not inclusive. It did not reflect global religious realities. Such a definition in terms of “belief” narrowed

religion into being understood solely as an intellectual matter. But, more controversially, it made religion wholly theistic, or god centered. This stricture excluded too much of the religious world that was not theistically based. For instance, at least three sorts of Buddhism—Theravada, Ch’an, and Zen—are not theistic, nor are Indian religions such as Jainism or Advaita Vedanta or, for that matter, Chinese religions such as Daoism or varieties of Confucianism. Thus, by opening the conceptualization of religion to a more inclusive notion such as the “sacred,” Durkheim allowed the study of religion of his day and ours to become global enterprises.

This new concept would, however, make little difference in achieving a globalized study of religion were it not put into practice. The chief way one puts such inclusive notions into practice is by the process of cross-cultural comparison. Durkheim was just such a confirmed comparativist. He thought that cross-cultural comparison of religion was not only desirable but also essential to the proper scientific study of religion. His comparative sociology was thus not a special brand of sociology but rather sociology itself. A good example of how this viewpoint broke out in print came from Henri Hubert, one of Durkheim’s closest collaborators. He wrote an introduction to his French translation of the Protestant theologian P. D. Chantepie de la Saussaye’s *Manuel d’histoire des Religions* (Handbook of the History of Religions). In defense of a global comparative study of religion that favored no faith, Hubert specifically attacked Chantepie’s claim that because of their special link with divine truth, Judaism and Christianity were exempt from comparison with other religions! The Durkheimians stood for the proposition that cross-cultural comparison needs to be global and to include every religion.

I have already indicated how even Durkheim’s early sociological work dealing with the social problems of his own milieu were enriched by comparison. The same may be said a fortiori of his great work—ostensibly—on the religious life of aboriginal Australia. From the outset in *The Elementary Forms*, Durkheim makes the remarkable admission that the purpose of his close case study of the religious life of Australian aborigines is not to do the equivalent of local history but to reveal the essential and universal nature of religion—everywhere and

at all times! Thus, what looks like a parochial case study is in reality one of the most ambitious works ever undertaken to discover the global nature of religion.

Finally, however great an individual thinker may be, his or her work sometimes falls by the wayside because no one carries it on into succeeding generations. Durkheimian thought retains an originality and vitality into our own day. The bulk of responsibility for the continued interest in Durkheim's thinking worldwide lies in the fact that Durkheim created a team of coworkers who together did collaborative research and writing. This effort was decisive in the creation of an entire generation of scholars who studied religion in the same cross-cultural comparative mode pioneered by Durkheim himself. Consider, for instance, how globally minded Henri Hubert and Marcel Mauss, Durkheim's two closest coworkers were. Mauss covered Africa, Australia, the Americas, India, and Oceania; Hubert took responsibility for the Celts, Greeks, and Romans, together with their Mesopotamian and Near Eastern counterparts. Mauss commanded Buddhism, Hinduism, and the "primitive" religions; Hubert was in charge of Druidism, Gnosticism, Judaism, Christianity, and the "mystery" religions. Marcel Granet wrote on Confucianism and Daoism; Paul Masson-Ouseil brought out the role of magic in early Hindu religion; Celestin Bouglé applied Durkheimian ideas to the analysis of caste, as did his latter-day successor, Louis Dumont; Mary Douglas developed Durkheim's concept of the sacred, insofar as it generated notions of purity and pollution; Louis Delaporte's work on Mesopotamian religion

brought the role of women priestesses to light at a time when modern scholarship paid little or no attention to women's roles in religion; Alexandre Moret argued that totemism was even present in so-called high religious traditions such as that of ancient Egypt; Adolphe Lods attempted to understand the prophets of the Hebrew Bible in relation to their social class membership; Charles Guignebert likewise sought to better understand the dynamic of ancient Jewish cult formation; and so on.

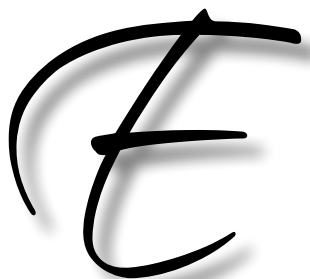
What such a list indicates is not that Durkheimian thought is widespread among different intellectual domains but that in its substance it has always had global ambitions.

Ivan Strenski

See also Australia; Douglas, Mary; Dumont, Louis; Global Religion

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EAST ASIA

See China; Japan; Korea, Democratic People's Republic of (North Korea); Korea, Republic of (South Korea); Taiwan

EAST TIMOR

East Timor is a largely Christian state in Southeast Asia that occupies the eastern half of the island of Timor in the Indonesian archipelago. At the time of Portugal's relinquishment of colonial control over East Timor in 1974, only one third of the population espoused Catholicism as their religious faith, the majority worshipping *luliks* or animist objects. There was no pressure for mass conversion to Catholicism on the part of the Portuguese colonizers, though there had already been some missionary work mixing local ancestor worship and Catholic doctrine, and emphasis had been placed by the missionaries on the apparent parallels between traditional indigenous Makasae mythology and the Old Testament. Following World War II, the Catholic Church used Tetum, an indigenous East Timor language, thereby rendering the liturgy an expression of national identity, and the Church was one of the only colonial institutions to highlight abuses in the Portuguese regime.

It was the Indonesian invasion and subsequent annexation of Timor in December 1975 that

served as a catalyst for mass popular Catholic conversion in Timor. The Catholic Church came to prominence as a focal point for resistance to Indonesian attempts to forcibly integrate Timor through the Church's documentation of human rights abuses, calls for national self-determination, and provision of sanctuary for Timorese dissidents. The "Catholicization" of Timor culminated in Bishop Carlos Belo's winning the Nobel Peace Prize in 1996 (along with José Ramos-Horta, a prominent Timorese nationalist). In East Timor, Catholicism interacted with nationalism to provide a moral basis for action, a centripetal force uniting potentially disparate identities, and an institutional framework for mobilization and action. These factors are particularly apparent in the Santa Cruz massacre (November 1991), when protesters took refuge from Indonesian Army intimidation in Catholic graveyards and chapels and were subsequently massacred. Sites of massacre, such as the Santa Cruz cemetery, emerged as places to commemorate fallen nationalist heroes. In the Timorese case, Catholicism translated worldly suffering—that is, massacres and oppression—into spiritual injustices against the Timorese "nation," and these were viewed as being perpetrated by Islam against Christianity. In these circumstances, the Timorese struggle for national self-determination emerged increasingly as one shaped by Catholic identity and practice.

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See also Indonesia; Missions and Missionaries; Roman Catholicism; Southeast Asia

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EASTER

The Christian festival of Easter combines elements from several religious traditions. The Christian holiday celebrates the resurrection of Jesus from the dead after his crucifixion at the time of the Jewish observance of Passover. The timing—and the name—of the festival is based on pre-Christian pagan rites at the time of the spring equinox, most likely associated with the goddess Eostre and, hence, Easter. The fertility symbols of the rabbit and the egg are likely associated with these pagan customs as well. In the contemporary age, the holiday has nonreligious associations with springtime and nature.

Easter, a major Christian holiday celebrating the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, has both religious and secular significance today. In the religious context, Easter has particular significance for Christians and those for whom the resurrection of Jesus is a religiously significant event. The timing of the liturgical celebration of Easter varies to some extent among Christian groups. For instance, within the Roman Catholic Church, Easter occurs at different times for those who follow the Latin Rite and those who follow the Syrian, Greek, and other Eastern Rites owing to the calendar and the method used for calculating the date. The Latin Rite uses the Gregorian calendar, which is also the dominant calendar used by the majority of societies and for commercial purposes. Some groups use the Julian calendar, while Jews use a lunar calendar.

Generally, the Sunday on which Easter is celebrated varies depending on whether the Latin Rite of the Roman Catholic Church or the Gregorian calendar is followed.

As with the evolution and development of the annual liturgical calendar, Easter as it is now celebrated evolved from the understanding of Jesus' apostles (all of whom were Jews) and their familiarity with Jewish practices and was adapted as the adherents encountered other cultures and practices. Hence, Easter parallels the Jewish celebration of Passover that commences with the *Triduum*, which is Latin for "3 days." Following the traditional Jewish practice of days beginning and ending at sunset rather than the secular day of midnight to midnight, the three days begin with the evening celebration of Holy Thursday, continues through Good Friday, and culminates in the celebrations of the Holy Saturday Easter Vigil and the Sunday celebrations. Easter is then celebrated for 7 weeks or 50 days, until the feast of Pentecost. Being approximately a seventh of the 365 days or 52 weeks of the year, the Easter season bears a relationship to the liturgical year in the same proportion as Sunday is to the week. For Christians, Easter season is, in this sense, the beginning of a new and renewed life.

For observant Christians, as for Jews, the Passover experience conditions, modifies, and determines the understanding of life and all of reality. For instance, the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy issued by the Second Vatican Council of the Roman Catholic Church states,

Holy Mother Church is conscious that she must celebrate the saving work of her divine Spouse by devoutly recalling it on certain days throughout the course of the year. Every week, on the day which she has called the Lord's day, she keeps the memory of the Lord's resurrection, which she also celebrates once in the year, together with His blessed passion, in the most solemn festival of Easter. (para. 102)

Following the proximate preparation for Easter in the season of Lent, the Easter season concluding with Pentecost provides an opportunity for annual renewal through reflection on the significance of Passover to the new life. The Easter experience leads to a new covenant and appreciation of the

adherents' lives. It is a time for renewal and the commencement of new life and progression into spiritual time. For Christians, Easter holds the possibility of a life lived with the spiritual enlightenment initiating the new kingdom of peace and joy—a new creation.

Culturally, Easter is a time associated with semi-religious or secular practices as they have evolved over the centuries. Commercial products such as Easter bunnies and Easter eggs are marketed in association with this festival. Easter as a festival defined as a springtime reaffirmation of life is thus widely diffused within those cultures where Christianity has been influential historically.

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See also Christianity; Eastern Orthodox Christianity; Festivals

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EASTERN ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY

Eastern Orthodox Christianity, or the Orthodox Catholic Church, is one of the three major branches of Christianity and the world's second largest Christian communion. Eastern Orthodoxy is the majority religious affiliation in Russia, Greece, Romania, Bulgaria, Georgia, Serbia, Moldova, Ukraine, Belarus, Macedonia, Montenegro, and Cyprus and is a significant minority in numerous countries throughout the world. The Eastern Orthodox community is not a single ecclesiastical institution but actually a communion of independent churches that remain united through common theological beliefs and worship practices. The Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople holds a preeminence of honor among all Orthodox bishops but has no

administrative authority outside of his patriarchate, nor is he believed to possess doctrinal infallibility. The Orthodox Church has grown considerably since the fall of communism in Europe, and the center of Orthodox monasticism, Mount Athos, has undergone remarkable revival. Estimates place its number of adherents close to 300,000,000, which makes Eastern Orthodoxy the world's third largest religious body after Roman Catholicism and Sunnī Islam. This entry discusses the beliefs and practices of the Orthodox Church, its history, and the church today.

Beliefs and Practices

Leaders of Eastern Orthodox Christianity believe it to be directly descended from Jesus Christ and his apostles through an unbroken apostolic succession of its bishops. Its governance is hierarchical and conciliar, which means that all theological disputes must be worked out through councils of bishops—not through the exclusive promulgation of any individual bishop. The Orthodox Church adheres to the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, and thus, like the vast majority of Christians worldwide, it holds firmly to the doctrines of the Trinity and the divinity of Christ. Its Holy Scripture consists of the New Testament together with the Greek Septuagint text of the Old Testament, which includes the “apocryphal” books.

In many of its doctrines and practices, the Orthodox Church resembles the Roman Catholic Church, with which it shares a millennium of common history. However, Greek patristic writers have had a much greater influence on Orthodoxy than Latin writers like Augustine. The Orthodox place little emphasis on the doctrine of Original sin and the hereditary guilt that it implies. Thus, while much Western theology understands the spiritual salvation of human beings in primarily juridical terms—in terms of a need to be legally acquitted before God—the Orthodox, on the other hand, are less concerned with legal acquittal than with progress in *theosis*, or deification. Deification does not signify a process of becoming *a* god but rather progressive conformity to the likeness of God. Salvation, for the Orthodox Christian, is therefore the unending transformation of human beings into reflections of the divine. The doctrine of *theosis* provides the theological rationale underlying

nearly all other aspects of Orthodox belief and practice.

The Orthodox Church's worship is highly liturgical and sacramental, with a strong emphasis on the activity of the Holy Spirit. The church officially recognizes seven sacraments, although its understanding of this number is less rigid than in Roman Catholicism. Four of these sacraments are incumbent on all Orthodox Christians. Baptism, which represents the believer's death and resurrection with Christ, is the sacrament by which new members enter the church. It is administered by triple immersion in water, to both infants and adult converts. Baptism is immediately followed by the sacrament of chrismation, in which the newly baptized person is anointed with a specially prepared oil that bestows the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. The Eucharistic service, or Holy Communion, is practiced with leavened bread and wine that is believed to be transformed, through an invocation of the Holy Spirit called the *epiclesis*, into the mystical body and blood of Christ. The Eucharist is administered to all baptized and chrismated Orthodox Christians, including infants, and is the sacrament by which one is united with Christ and all other Orthodox Christians. The most common Eucharistic liturgies used by the Orthodox are the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom and the Liturgy of St. Basil the Great. Preparation for participation in the Eucharist is made through confession, the sacrament by which sins committed after baptism are absolved. A practicing Orthodox Christian is expected to go to confession at least four times a year.

Marriage is a sacrament among the Orthodox because it is understood to represent Christ's union with his church. Although marriage is a sacrament and considered holy, voluntary celibacy is also highly valued and is a prerequisite for all monastics (monasticism is considered to be a sacrament by some Orthodox, although this is not universally recognized). Ordination is the sacrament through which leaders in the church are appointed; the Orthodox Church currently ordains only men to its three major holy orders—bishops, priests, and deacons—although for several centuries female deacons were ordained. Priests and deacons may be married, but bishops must be celibate. The final sacrament of the seven is Holy Unction, a rite in which the seriously ill are

anointed with oil for the healing of their souls and bodies.

The Orthodox Church has a rich and distinctive spiritual tradition. Central to Orthodox spirituality is the practice of *hesychasm*, or stillness, which centers on "the Jesus prayer," a short, frequently repeated prayer for mercy that aims at quieting the soul, thus increasing its receptivity to the will of God. Orthodox monastics often practice *hesychasm* in conjunction with specialized postures and breathing techniques intended to aid in promoting stillness, but these practices are generally not recommended for the average practitioner. Whether or not one practices the Jesus prayer, it is normal for practicing Orthodox to have a set of liturgical prayers that they recite each day. In addition, it is Orthodox practice to fast from animal products on Wednesdays and Fridays as well as during appointed seasons throughout the year. Also important in Orthodox spirituality is the veneration of icons of Christ and the saints, which is believed to help focus attention during prayer and aid in making the presence of God manifest. Most Orthodox icons are two-dimensional paintings that follow strict guidelines for composition; statuary is generally discouraged. Orthodox likewise maintain that the veneration of saints inspires the believer to achieve greater holiness, and they actively seek saints' prayers and intercessions. Of particular significance is Mary, who is honored with the title *Theotokos*, or "Mother of God," and is viewed as the supreme model of obedience to God for all Christians.

The Orthodox Church also follows a highly developed calendar in which all days throughout the year commemorate "feasts" of saints and/or major events. The most significant of these is Easter, which is more commonly referred to by its Greek name, *Pascha*. Because all Orthodox churches (except Finland) calculate the date of Easter using the old Julian calendar, the Orthodox date of Easter usually differs from the date used in Western Christianity. Orthodox are renowned for the jubilation of their Easter celebration, which is always preceded by Great Lent, a 40-day period of fasting, intensified prayer, and almsgiving. Three other feasts throughout the year are preceded by a fasting period: Christmas (December 25), the Falling Asleep of the Mother of God (August 15), and the Feast of the Apostles Peter and Paul (June 29). In addition

to these feasts, 10 others are major holidays in the Orthodox world: Palm Sunday, the Ascension of Christ, and Pentecost, which move in relation to the date of Easter, and the Nativity of the Mother of God (September 8), the Elevation of the Cross (September 14), the Entry of the Mother of God Into the Temple (November 21), the Baptism of Christ (January 6), the Meeting of Our Lord (February 2), the Annunciation (March 25), and the Transfiguration of the Lord (August 6). Thus, the entire year is punctuated with fasts and feasts that remind the Orthodox believer of God's redemptive actions.

History

Some Western presentations of the Eastern Orthodox Church claim that it originated with the "Great Schism" of 1054, in which the Pope of Rome and the Patriarch of Constantinople mutually anathematized each other on account of several disagreements, most notably the Pope's addition of the *filioque* clause to the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed. Such an account is problematic for several reasons. First, the date of 1054 is somewhat artificial because tensions had been brewing between Rome and the East for several centuries prior. Second, there is strong evidence that Christians in both the East and the West continued to identify strongly with each other for nearly a century and a half until the Fourth Crusade sacked Constantinople in 1204. Perhaps most important, however, is that the "Great Schism" did not represent the formation of any "new" ecclesiastical body but, rather, the fracture of the "one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church" of the Byzantine Empire into two. Since the sixth century, the Byzantine church had been jurisdictionally administered by five patriarchates: Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem. The predominantly Latin-speaking patriarchate of Rome became known as the Roman Catholic Church, whereas the four Greek-speaking patriarchates of the East became the Eastern Orthodox Churches.

The history of the Orthodox Church therefore begins with the earliest centuries of Christianity, during the periodic persecutions of Rome, which tested the new religion with frequent martyrdoms. These persecutions permanently ended with the conversion of Emperor Constantine to Christianity

in the fourth century. After Christianity became the official religion of the Byzantine state, the emperors quickly realized that doctrinal unity facilitated political stability, and therefore, over the span of five centuries, they summoned seven "ecumenical councils" to work out major theological disagreements. These seven councils constitute the backbone of official Orthodox dogma. The two major councils of the fourth century, Nicaea (325) and Constantinople (381), condemned challenges to the divinity of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit as heresy. In the fifth century, Christological controversy arose concerning the exact relationship between Christ's humanity and divinity. The councils of Ephesus (431) and Chalcedon (451) together attempted to clarify that Christ possessed both a divine and a human nature, which were held in unity but without mixture. This century saw the first lasting schisms of Christianity as the Assyrian Church of the East rejected Byzantine authority in 424; the Oriental Orthodox Churches (e.g., the Coptic, Ethiopian, and Syrian Orthodox) are descended from those groups that were dissatisfied with the outcome of Chalcedon. Constantinople II (553) and Constantinople III (680–681) further clarified the definitions of Chalcedon, and the second council of Nicaea (787) defended the propriety of the veneration of icons against the iconoclasts.

The first millennium also witnessed two major missionary efforts that hold a great place in Orthodox history. In the ninth century, Saints Cyril and Methodius undertook missionary efforts among the Slavic peoples of Europe. They are credited with translating the Bible and liturgical texts into what is now known as Old Church Slavonic and are believed to have developed the Cyrillic script, which is still used in many eastern European nations. Their feast day is a national holiday in many Slavic countries. Of similar significance is the conversion of Prince Vladimir of Kiev in 988, which in turn led to the conversion of the Russian people and, ultimately, several centuries later, to the establishment of contemporary Orthodoxy's largest wing, the Russian Orthodox Church.

After the sacking of Constantinople solidified the 1054 schism between Rome and the East, there were several attempts at reunification. The most notable was the apparent achievement of union at the council of Florence (1439), but the unification

was rejected by the majority of Orthodox in Constantinople. Efforts for reunion continued but were abruptly cut off when the Ottomans captured Constantinople and brought about the demise of the Byzantine Empire in 1453. The Orthodox under the jurisdiction of the Ottoman Empire were allowed to practice their religion under the auspices of the millet system, in which the Orthodox clergy became civil rulers, reporting directly to the Ottoman authorities. As a result of Constantinople's captivity, Russia assumed the most prominent role in Orthodoxy from the 16th century until the rise of communism. The Russian Church undertook extensive missionary activity, most notably in China, Japan, and Alaska. The spread of Orthodoxy to most Western nations occurred, however, not through missionary activity but as a result of eastern European and Arab Orthodox immigrants fleeing Muslim and communist governments.

The Church Today

The Orthodox Church today is made up of 14 independently self-governing, or "autocephalous," churches. In order of descending rank of honor, they are the ancient patriarchates of Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem and the national churches of Russia, Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria, Georgia, Cyprus, Greece, Poland, Albania, and the Czech Lands and Slovakia. The Orthodox Church in America was granted autocephaly in 1970 by the Russian Orthodox Church, but this has yet to be recognized by Constantinople, which regards the church as merely "autonomous"—that is, self-governing in most respects but dependent in some ways on their mother churches. Autonomy is possessed by several churches, including Finland, Japan, Ukraine, and Mount Sinai.

The contemporary Orthodox Church is facing a unique challenge that has been brought about by the emigration of peoples from traditionally Orthodox lands to western Europe, the Americas, and Australia. This has created a situation in which a majority of the autocephalous Orthodox churches have established competing jurisdictions within a single region. This problem is exacerbated by the lack of consensus among the Orthodox concerning how a local church becomes autocephalous; the Church of Russia, for example, believes that autocephaly should be granted by the mother church that first

evangelized a region, while Constantinople asserts that it has jurisdiction over all lands that lie outside of Orthodox countries. In the early 21st century, efforts to find a compromise solution for the "diaspora," as Orthodox Christians living in non-Orthodox lands are often called, have intensified, although no conclusive resolution has been reached.

A related difficulty for the Orthodox Church is its relationship to religious nationalism. Although the Orthodox officially repudiate *phyletism*, the heresy of equating church and nation, most Orthodox churches are national churches. Membership in the local church is often seen as synonymous with national identity, and religious loyalties are often bound up with patriotism. This is particularly significant in the nations that constituted the former Soviet Union, as several national churches that are not recognized as autocephalous have sprung up, in part due to nationalist fervor. In these countries, the Russian Orthodox Church often maintains a presence that stands in tension with the local Orthodox churches. In Ukraine, for example, membership in the autonomous Ukrainian Church under the jurisdiction of Russia, instead of the local Ukrainian Orthodox Church, which claims an unrecognized autocephaly, is sometimes interpreted as unpatriotic. Similarly, in the diaspora, nationalist loyalties among first-generation immigrants facilitate disunity among Orthodox jurisdictions and create tensions with the younger generation of Orthodox, many of whom desire assimilation into the surrounding culture. For these and other reasons, the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I declared nationalism to be one of the greatest problems facing the Orthodox Church.

Religious fundamentalism has also proved to be a threat to the unity of the Orthodox Church as numerous groups have split from the major churches over a variety of issues, especially disputes over the ecclesiastical calendar and ecumenism. Controversy over the calendar has resulted from the 13-day discrepancy between the Julian calendar and the Gregorian calendar produced by Pope Gregory XIII's reforms in 1582. Because the Gregorian calendar is the accepted civil calendar in most countries worldwide, an Orthodox council in 1923 resolved to adopt a revised Julian calendar that is in substantial conformity with the Gregorian version. Jerusalem, Russia, Serbia, and Georgia opted

to remain on the old Julian calendar but remained in communion with the rest of the Orthodox world. Some Orthodox groups consider the adoption of the “new calendar” as an unacceptable concession to non-Orthodox powers and have gone into schism. A related issue is the fundamentalist accusation that the major Orthodox churches have succumbed to the “heresy of ecumenism” and are engaging in unacceptable activities with the non-Orthodox, such as recognizing Protestant and Catholic baptisms, engaging in open theological dialogue, and holding common prayer services.

Nevertheless, most Orthodox churches have been very active in ecumenical dialogue and are members of the World Council of Churches. Many Orthodox and Protestant theologians have had productive theological dialogue with each other. Likewise, greater understanding has been facilitated with the Oriental Orthodox Church and the Assyrian Church of the East. The Orthodox and Catholics have enjoyed particularly cordial relationships since the mutual anathemas of 1054 were lifted in 1965 by Pope Paul VI and Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras I. Missionary activity, however, has strained relationships between the Orthodox and other Christians. The Russian Church, for example, has had tense relations with Rome due primarily to disputes over Jesuit missions in Russia. Likewise, many Orthodox churches have been dismayed by the large influx of Protestant missionaries since the fall of communism and have cooperated with their respective state governments to restrict missionary activity. Nevertheless, most interaction between Orthodox and other Christian groups is considered positive, and there is a general trend toward facilitating greater understanding and cooperation with non-Orthodox churches. Of particular interest is the leadership the Orthodox Church has shown in its concern for the natural environment; Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I has written so extensively on the theological basis for environmentalism that he has been nicknamed the “Green Patriarch.”

Rico Gabriel Monge

See also Assyrian Church of the East; Christianity; Constantinople; Coptic Christianity; Heresy; Religious Nationalism; Roman Catholicism

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EBENEZER BAPTIST CHURCH

Ebenezer Baptist Church is situated in the Sweet Auburn district of Atlanta, a neighborhood that has been called the cradle of the civil rights movement. Ebenezer was a spiritual center of civil rights activism, most notably as the home church of Martin Luther King Jr. Drawing inspiration from this legacy, Ebenezer has remained committed to nonviolence and the fight for social justice. The church derives its name, Ebenezer, from a Hebrew word meaning “stone of help” (1 Samuel 7:12).

Ebenezer was organized in 1886 by a former slave, John A. Parker, who became the church's first pastor. Ebenezer's initial home was a small, boxlike structure on Airline Street in Atlanta's historically diverse Fourth Ward. When Alfred Daniel Williams became Ebenezer's minister in 1894, the church's membership swelled rapidly. Ebenezer decided to build a larger sanctuary on McGruder Street in 1895 and relocated twice more before putting down roots on Auburn Avenue in 1914. During his tenure at Ebenezer, Williams was a strong advocate in the struggle for racial equality in Atlanta; for instance, his labors helped secure the bond that funded the construction of Booker

T. Washington High School, which in 1924 became the first public secondary school for Blacks in the state of Georgia.

Martin Luther King Sr. assumed Ebenezer's pastorate after A. D. Williams died in 1931. King had married Williams' daughter, Alberta, in 1926 and had served as assistant pastor at Ebenezer since 1927. As part of his ministry of social justice, King took part in the efficacious campaign to equalize teachers' salaries in Atlanta and led repeated efforts to register African Americans to vote. In 1960, King enlisted his eldest son, Martin Luther King Jr., to be copastor of Ebenezer, and his presence instilled the church with a more ecumenical and international orientation. The funeral services for the famous civil rights leader following his assassination on April 4, 1968, brought worldwide attention to Ebenezer. Alfred Daniel Williams King Sr., the younger brother of the deceased, was appointed as the new copastor of the church but died suddenly in 1969. Otis Moss Jr. served briefly as Ebenezer's third copastor during 1971. On June 30, 1974, tragedy struck again when Alberta Williams King, the organist, and Edward Boykin, the deacon, were shot and killed during Sunday service by Marcus Chennault, a young man from Ohio. Shortly after, in 1975, the elder King retired after 44 years of service at Ebenezer.

Joseph L. Roberts Jr. was selected as Ebenezer's fourth full-time minister and oversaw the construction of the church's Horizon Sanctuary in 1997, a new, larger facility located across the street from the old property. The original building, which is now called the Heritage Sanctuary, still attracts many visitors as part of the Martin Luther King Jr. National Historic Site. On Roberts's retirement in 2005, Raphael Gamaliel Warnock took up the pastorate of Ebenezer.

James R. Young

See also Churches; King, Coretta Scott; King, Martin Luther, Jr.; Nonviolence; Racism; Social Justice

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ECKANKAR

Eckankar was founded by Paul Twitchell (1909–1971) in California in the mid-1960s. Although the Hindi/Punjabi term *Ek Onkar* (lit. “one God/Power”) was most likely derived from Guru Nānak's *Japji* (the first set of hymns in the Sikh holy book, *Gurū Granth Sāhib*), Twitchell altered its original phonetic spelling and definition, claiming that *Eckankar* was a Tibetan-Pali word meaning “coworker with God.” According to Twitchell, Eckankar was an ancient spiritual path with a lineage of 970 “Eck” Masters who trace back to Gakko, who brought the true teachings of soul travel from the city of Retz on the planet Venus. Twitchell alleged that through this bilocation philosophy, a neophyte can leave his or her body via an inner light and sound and soul-travel to higher regions of consciousness, which lead ultimately to the supreme lord, Sugmad.

In an early article titled “The Cliff Hanger,” published in *Psychic Observer* in 1964, Twitchell explained the basis behind his new group. He claimed that Eckankar was based on his own experience in Shabd-Yoga, a meditation practice aimed at uniting the individual spirit with the universal sound current, a form of yoga that is the hallmark of the Radhasoami religious tradition in North India. Eckankar's organization and teachings have evolved since Twitchell died of heart disease on September 17, 1971, in Cincinnati, Ohio, shortly after giving a talk. Twitchell's widow, Gail Atkinson, claimed to have had a dream in which her husband appointed Darwin Gross to be his spiritual successor and the leader of Eckankar. Gross, who eventually married and then divorced Atkinson, served as the Living Eck Master for 10 years until 1981, when he appointed Harold Klemp to succeed him as the spiritual leader of the organization. Two years later, in 1983, there was an acrimonious split between Klemp and Gross, which resulted in the latter being excommunicated from Eckankar.

Under the present leadership of Klemp, Eckankar has expanded its core audience worldwide and has an estimated paid membership of anywhere between 40,000 and 100,000 members yearly. Klemp has also produced a wide-ranging series of books and discourses and has moved Eckankar's

former center of operations from Menlo Park, California, to Chanhassen, Minnesota, where he established the temple of Eck.

Eckankar has weathered a storm of controversy since its inception, primarily because of questions concerning Twitchell's alleged plagiarism, biographical redactions, and purported historical antecedents. While Eckankar has been directly influenced by the Self-Realization Fellowship, Theosophy, Scientology, and particularly the Sant Mat teachings of Radhasoami (which has a similar specialized version of sound-current yoga), it has, in turn, influenced a number of new religious offshoots, including the Movement of Spiritual Inner Awareness, founded by John-Roger Hinkins; MasterPath, founded by Gary Olsen; the Ancient Teachings of the Masters, founded by Darwin Gross; the Divine Science of Light and Sound, founded by Jerry Mulvin; the Sonic Spectrum, founded by Michael Turner; and the Higher Consciousness Society, founded by Ford Johnson. Each of the founders of these groups was at one time a member of Eckankar, and they have all incorporated many Eck terms and ideas into their respective organizations.

David Christopher Lane

See also Hinduism; New Religions; New Religions in the United States; Radhasoami; Scientology

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ECONOMIC ISSUES AND RELIGION

Most religious traditions have been profoundly ambivalent about economic issues. On the one hand, many religious teachings advocate a division of

the spiritual and the material and the religious necessity of becoming removed from worldly life. On the other hand, most religious traditions teach the importance of moral responsibility for social matters. This requires the need for discipline and justice in economic affairs as in other areas of public life.

In the Hindu tradition, these contradictory attitudes are expressed by the differing moral and spiritual requirements for each of the four stages of life. While the last stage of life stresses ascetic withdrawal from the world to seek spiritual perfection, the householder stage of life requires responsible engagement in economic and social activities. The classic Hindu text, *The Arthashastra*, is a manual for correct behavior in the political and economic realm. In other religious traditions, the ambivalence toward economic issues is expressed in the moral restraints on economic activity that are prescribed in religious teachings.

There are several ways in which religious traditions have conceived the relationship between religion and economic matters:

1. *Religion and economics are separate*: This is the position taken by many Christians in their interpretation of Jesus' statement "Render unto Caesar what is Caesar's" (Matthew 22:21). When asked about the requirement to pay taxes, Jesus showed his followers a coin that had the image of Caesar imprinted on it. Some Christians regard this as meaning that religion and economics are distinct from each other and that religion has no role in economic life.

2. *Religion includes economic obligations*: The sacred scriptures of most religious traditions include rules of behavior that touch on economic matters. Debt bondage from usury, for instance, is a form of wealth creation that is banned in Islam and discouraged in Judaism and Christianity. All three major monotheistic faith traditions recommend tithing for the purpose of charity, as well as enumerating inheritance laws that increase opportunity and prevent stagnation. Both Hindu and Buddhist traditions incorporate economic morality into their rules for daily life.

3. *Religion provides values that affect economic behavior*: Max Weber argues in *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* that the rise of

capitalism in Protestant countries is related to the value system of the society, which in turn is influenced by religion. Protestant values, for instance, require the faithful to work hard and responsibly but prohibit them from displaying their wealth in an ostentatious manner. With the creation of excess wealth that individuals are prevented from lavishing on themselves, the money is saved and reinvested in business, thus stimulating capitalist economic development.

4. *Religion involves a kind of economic exchange:* Marcel Mauss, a disciple of the great French sociologist Émile Durkheim, wrote in *The Gift* that religious rituals and practices involve a kind of reciprocity of gifts, offering sacrifices and prayers to God and receiving worldly and spiritual benefits in response. In another way of thinking about this interrelationship between religion and economics, religious teachings require humans to be responsible stewards of the world. Hence, the world's religions are concerned with securing and regulating the creation and circulation of worldly resources, including monetary wealth. Slavery is a special case of an economics issue that is also a profound issue of human rights. The practice extends to ancient history—Plato and Aristotle, for instance, agreed in *The Republic* and *Politics*, respectively, that human beings are inherently unequal and that, thus, slavery is legitimate. The early books of the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) assume that slavery was a normal condition, and hence, for example, Deuteronomy 5:14 states that everyone is equal on the Sabbath; even slaves should not be forced to work. In ancient Hebrew society, every 50th year, some slaves were offered their freedom in accordance with the admonition given in Leviticus 25:10. In the name of Christianity, Theodora, the showgirl-turned-empress, outlawed slavery in the Roman Empire.

In recent centuries, all religious traditions agree that all human beings are equal before God, and largely as a result, slavery is illegal. When most Westerners think of slavery, they picture the transatlantic transport of Africans to the Americas chained in the holds of ships, and indeed, this form of slavery is illegal today. More broadly defined, slavery is the inability to change employers due to the weight of debt or the threat of physical

violence. In that sense, slavery has never been more prevalent than in recent decades, with only a limited amount of religious protest against it. In 2001, the U.S. State Department acknowledged that human trafficking at its current growth rate will surpass drugs and guns as the world's largest illegal industry. Laws against underage prostitution or child sex tourism are inconsistently enforced around the world.

Debt Bondage and Usury

One form of slavery that is banned by religious decrees but is still rampant around the world is *debt bondage*, where an employer pays a worker less than the worker's debt to the employer. This practice is most prevalent in South Asia, but significant international corporations are also involved. A portion of the world's chocolate supply, for example, is harvested by child slaves in the Ivory Coast. Allegations of rampant exploitation in the diamond mines of the Congo and on sugar cane plantations in Brazil have received publicity and are under investigation.

Usury is the charging of excessive rates of interest that can lead to debt bondage. Shakespeare's father was arrested for usury based on a 25% loan in the mid-16th century. By strict interpretation, usury means *all* interest. Credit cards, payday loans, and adjustable rate mortgages are convenient services yet are advertised and structured so as to take advantage of desperate or suffering people unfamiliar with the concept of compound interest. State usury laws were circumvented by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1978, and then, credit card rates doubled during the 1990s from highs of 20%–40%. Payday loan interest rates of 400% were allowed in North Carolina in 1997 and then limited to 36% for military families. American banks were instrumental in creating a global recession in September 2008 after competing to make home loans to people who could not afford them.

In 1976, an economics professor at Chittagong University, Muhammad Yunus, freed 42 women stool makers in Jobra, Bangladesh, from debt bondage with \$27 out of his own pocket. He then founded Grameen Bank, which would go on to lend amounts below \$100 to 7 million women entrepreneurs. A founder of microfinance, Yunus was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2006 for his

efforts. Islamic finance circumvents the prohibition against usury by requiring *mudaraba*, or profit and loss sharing, known in the United States as venture capital, in which the lender becomes a partner motivated to share in the risk and the reward by helping the entrepreneur. In 2008, the Amana Mutual Funds of Bellingham, Washington, ranked as one of America's best investments by avoiding usury.

Sustainable Taxation

In addition to promoting innovation and efficiency over physical and economic slavery, religious ethics promote the circulation of wealth to increase initiative and opportunity and to promote stewardship, including philanthropy. Charity in Islam is especially important for social services such as education, health care, and the environment, which religious ethics (on stewardship and social justice) generally encourages.

Giving Time

In *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Max Weber described how the religious values of honesty, hard work, and saving for the success of the nuclear family helped northern European economies to surpass Mediterranean economies during the Industrial Revolution. Marcel Mauss agreed in *The Gift* that how we choose to give of our time influences our level of economic and social power. In addition to sacred religious practices, economic exchanges contain opportunities for meaningful relationships and the sharing of traditions, including knowledge and wisdom.

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See also Marx and Religion; Marxism; Material Culture

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ECUADOR

Ecuador, a country of approximately 13.9 million inhabitants, straddles the equator (for which it is named) on the Pacific coast of South America, bordered on the north by Colombia and on the south and southeast by Peru. The country is split, geographically and culturally, into three distinct regions. The lowlands along the Pacific coast have a Spanish-speaking, mainly mestizo (mixed indigenous and European heritage) population. The Andean highlands that constitute the central region of Ecuador are home to a population of predominantly indigenous descent, many members of which speak Kechwa, a dialect of the Incan imperial language Quechua, either exclusively or in addition to Spanish. In the Amazonian basin in the east, the site of much of Ecuador's sizable petroleum reserves, a number of small indigenous groups, such as the Huaorani, continue to live a traditional lifestyle despite the incursions of settlers from outside the region. Estimates of the religious demography of Ecuador suggest that 90%–95% of the population identifies as Catholic, with the bulk of the remainder comprising members of various Protestant denominations, including many who are Pentecostal believers. Church attendance among Catholics is relatively low, but personal devotions and sacramental rituals thrive in many areas.

The roots of Ecuador's modern religious landscape lie—as they do for much of Latin America—in the collision of European and indigenous cultures during the Spanish invasion and conquest of the 16th century. When the first Spanish expedition, accompanied by a Dominican friar and a

priest, arrived in Ecuador in 1532, they encountered the northernmost expanses of the vast Inca Empire, which had occupied the area in the waning decades of the 15th century. The popular, or folk, Catholicism that many Ecuadorians practice today, characterized by sacramentalism and veneration of a variety of saints, developed out of the semisuccessful efforts of European Catholic missionaries to convert the population of the Spanish colony. A dearth of religious education in local languages and the lack of an indigenous clergy left room for substantial devotional diversity and innovation.

From Ecuador's independence in 1830 until the latter half of the 20th century, the Catholic Church allied itself primarily with conservative political groups in opposition to liberals, such as Eloy Alfaro, who invited Protestant missionaries to Ecuador in 1895. The global ecclesial reforms of the Second Vatican Council and the progressive sentiments of the 1968 Episcopal Conference in Medellín did, however, take root in Ecuador. Many clergy, notably Bishop Leonidas Proaño, adopted tenets from the emerging liberation theology. Proaño, along with 17 other bishops, was arrested by the Ecuadorian military government in 1976 on charges of "subversion."

The growth of Protestant churches that began during Alfaro's presidency expanded rapidly in the second half of the 20th century but has not yet reached the level in other Latin American countries, such as Chile and Guatemala. It remains to be seen whether Protestant growth will continue and to what extent Catholicism will remain the dominant religious influence in Ecuador's future.

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See also Incas; Latin America; Liberation Theology; Saints; Syncretism

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ECUMENICALISM

Ecumenicalism, the friendship and cooperation among differing religious groups and faiths, has a long and rich history. The varied trends in ecumenical thought and action can be traced to the various understandings of the word itself. "Ecumenism" originates from the Greek noun *oikoumenē*, "the inhabited earth" or "the whole world," and the adjective "*oikoumenikos*," understood as "ecumenical." There are few biblical passages that use the word *oikoumenē*. The 15 references to *oikoumenē* are all found in the New Testament; interpretations of each use and its significance vary.

With so few references, the purpose and function of ecumenicalism has been derived mostly from applications of the term. During the fourth century CE, *oikoumenē* often referred to the Christian empire under Roman rule. Ecumenical councils gathered periodically to discuss the state of the Christian faith within the Roman Empire and to settle disputes among Christian groups. Both Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox traditions are considered to have continued this trend with their own ecumenical councils. Similarly, early creeds, such as the Nicene or the Apostles' Creed, are generally considered ecumenical because they are widely accepted by Christians. Since these early instances, the term largely fell out of use until the 19th century, when Christians became increasingly concerned with divisions in doctrine and polity among Christians around the world. From this concern, the modern ecumenical movement was born. The modern ecumenical movement was and is the pursuit of reconciliation among various Christian groups, including the Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant faiths. As a result, much of the history of ecumenicalism pertains to Christians working together for the "church universal," or a single Christian church. More recently, however, common parlance often equates "ecumenical" with increased interaction and unity among world religions through interfaith dialogue and cooperation. These contemporary ecumenical organizations promote religious pluralism and pursue increased interaction among diverse faiths rather than agreement on theology.

The Modern Ecumenical Movement

The modern ecumenical movement began among Protestant denominations after the 1910 World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh, Scotland. Delegates from various Protestant missionary organizations met to consider the division and competition among Christians. Noticeably absent from the conference were Catholic and Orthodox delegates as well as representatives from non-Western countries. Though representation at the meeting was not ecumenical in composition, the principle topic for the 1910 conference was an ecumenical one. The intent of the World Missionary Conference was to unite “Christendom” in an effort to advance worldwide missions. Focusing on the mission set forth in Matthew 28:19 to “make disciples of all nations,” delegates agreed that fulfilling such a mission appeared impossible in light of divisions over theology and polity. The goal of the conference was to develop a consensus on how the Christian church, broadly conceived, could progress in its missionizing efforts in a cooperative way. Several issues emerged as central to this ecumenical movement: the missionary enterprise of the church, the shared social and welfare services offered by churches, and the ideological points of contention that separate denominations from one another.

One legacy of the 1910 World Missionary Conference was the creation of the World Council of Churches in 1948. The World Council of Churches hosted its first assembly in Amsterdam in 1948 with the theme “Man’s Disorder and God’s Designs.” In all, 90 churches around the world accepted the invitation to join. The Roman Catholic Church surprisingly declined the invitation, though it remained open to dialogue. Still in existence today, the goal of the World Council of Churches is to unify all Christians under one ecumenical organization. Currently, the World Council of Churches includes 349 churches from 110 countries. Although Roman Catholic churches are not members of the World Council of Churches, dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches continues to occur. Dialogue began in 1960 when Pope John XXII created an official secretariat position for Christian unity.

After the Second Vatican Council (1962–1964), Roman Catholics became increasingly

interested in ecumenicalism. With the *Decree on Ecumenism*, the Roman Catholic Church officially expressed interest in reconciliation with other Christian faiths and in restoring the universal Christian Church. This document provided the basis for ecumenical endeavors by the Roman Catholic Church as a whole and its members as individuals. Since the Second Vatican Council, Roman Catholics have had a strong presence on interfaith councils and in ecumenical organizations. Roman Catholic affirmations of ecumenism continued with Pope John Paul II. In a letter titled *The Light of the East* (1995), Pope John Paul II affirmed the theology of Orthodox Christianity and the important relationship between the Roman Catholic and Orthodox traditions. Despite the schism, Pope John Paul II stressed the eventual unification of both traditions. Additionally, Pope John Paul II’s encyclical *That All May Be One* (1995) continued the ecumenical trend of the Second Vatican Council by asserting the Catholic Church’s responsibility in moving toward Christian unity.

Ecumenical Debates

Christian ecumenism has not been without internal problems. Members of ecumenical organizations and councils often find the role of women a controversial issue. The ordination of women and the acceptance of female church leadership proves to be a historic and contemporary divisive issue on which members cannot always agree. Likewise, division within ecumenical councils often occurs on “generational” lines between “older” and “newer” faiths. For instance, the issues of theology and polity that drove Roman Catholics and Protestants apart historically are of little relevance to contemporary Asian, African, or Latin American Christian groups. The methods of reconciliation between Roman Catholics and Protestants do not necessarily apply to all reconciliation efforts among Asian, African, Latin, European, and American Christians. Moreover, “newer” groups insist on maintaining indigenous thought and practice rather than accepting European forms as normative. Ecumenical organizations often avoid these doctrinal points of discord by focusing on service as the true mission of ecumenism. Goodwill toward humanity

theoretically unites members of ecumenical councils; however, members often disagree on the methods of service. Divisions occur over two approaches: (1) those that focus on the individualism found within Christianity and the need to reform society through transforming the inner life of individuals and (2) those that focus on the social nature of Christianity and the need to reform individuals through a transformation of systemic social structures. Although most Christians understand both foci as necessary for change, ecumenical members often disagree on which should take priority.

Ecumenism and Interfaith Dialogue

Ecumenical and interfaith interest is not limited to Christian denominations and organizations. Ecumenism includes interaction among the world's faiths. After World War II, for instance, Christian ecumenical organizations committed to dialogue with Jewish organizations. Acknowledging a shared identity in the biblical figure of Abraham, Christian ecumenists renewed their interest in reconciling relationships among Abrahamic faiths. In the late 20th century, as globalization reached new heights, global religions turned toward ecumenicalism. The tendency to join ecumenical organizations spread across all faiths. Though ecumenical outreach began with Islamic reform movements in the 18th century, interfaith dialogue has increased between Muslims and other religious adherents in the late 20th century. As globalized terror organizations proliferated and gained worldwide attention, the interfaith community intensified its efforts to promote awareness about Islam's core beliefs. Many ecumenists also promoted the universalities found in each religion, rather than stressing the points of discord.

Worldwide Challenges

Ecumenical movements have not existed without criticism. In the early 20th century, as ecumenical Christian organizations formed, Protestants were increasingly divided over the creation of these organizations. Viewing denominational and ideological boundaries as less important than solving urban social problems such as poverty, liberal Protestants turned toward ecumenicalism as an

opportunity to achieve their social and political goals. Viewing denominational and ideological boundaries to be of paramount importance, conservative Protestants, in contrast, viewed these efforts as a rejection of the fundamentals of the Christian faith. Along with ideological divisions around the issue of ecumenicalism, conservative Protestants viewed ecumenical organizations as an expression of the urban elite. Though specific to Protestants in the United States, this example parallels broader, global divisions over ecumenicalism. Many faiths have accused ecumenical organizations of religious syncretism, sacrificing religious truths for acceptance, and abandoning efforts to proselytize. The primary criticism of ecumenical organizations is that they promote universalities and similarities among religions at the expense of fundamental truths of specific religions. Despite these criticisms and challenges, however, ecumenical movements continue to grow, especially around colleges and universities, connecting local denominations to other faiths worldwide.

Cara Burnidge

See also Christianity; Religious Dialogue; Vatican Council, Second; World Congress of Faiths; World Council of Churches

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EGYPT

Egypt has long been at the crossroads of cultural influences and home to a variety of religious faiths. The Bible attests to Egypt's political importance in the ancient Near East and to its place in monotheistic history. Judaism, Christianity, and Islam have all left their mark—in terms of material and intellectual culture—on Egypt. But it is Islam that has played the dominant role in ushering the country into the global era and shaping its identity. Indeed, the growing public, political nature of Islam in Egypt is tied to globalization

and attests to the power of religion to provide a voice for social protest and change.

Colonialism, Defensive Modernization, and Religion

Egypt entered the global age as a territorial possession of a declining Ottoman Empire and an important regional player in an emerging world system dominated by Western powers. This new world system was the result of historical forces that had transformed Europe into the center of modern science, technology, commerce, and politics. Other regions were integrated into this new system as “the periphery” and compelled—either through force, self-interest, or both—to accommodate to Western-style modernity. This asymmetric power arrangement gave rise to European colonialism, which deeply affected much of the Muslim world. In Egypt, Ottoman authorities, starting in the early 19th century, welcomed British advisors and investors to help invigorate the economy and revamp social institutions. By the end of the century, Egypt had witnessed dramatic social and economic changes, but it had also accumulated a significant debt. The British, following a pattern of colonial insertion first begun in India, took control of Egypt to ensure their financial interests and to further exploit the country’s resources. Their colonial presence would not end until the mid-20th century, after a tide of nationalism swept through the country.

While religion was not at the forefront of the new world system, it did infuse the cultural undercurrents of modernity, modernization, and colonialism. At the historic center of this system, the British viewed their culture, including Christianity, as essential to their modern success and as superior to the native cultures and religions over which they ruled as a colonial power. In fact, Christian missionary activity was part of the colonial enterprise—an attempt on the part of the British to transmit not just the material blessings of modernity but its cultural sources as well. For Egyptians, the interpretive link between modernity and religion, and Islam in particular, proved more ambiguous because the social transformations within their country had a foreign origin and were not directly tied to their cultural past.

Keenly aware of their weakness vis-à-vis the West, Egyptians recognized the need to adopt new industries, technologies, and practices and to reform their traditional systems of law, education, and politics. They also questioned religious traditions and institutions that were thought to have allowed a once-great Islamic civilization to decline. At the same time, Egyptians were rightly worried about the seeming Western orientation of modernity and modernization and about the cultural threat entailed in equating modernization with Westernization. Thus, while the global reach of the new world system and the colonialism that accompanied it set in motion an unprecedented exchange of goods, ideas, and ways of life, it also created a crisis of identity and authenticity in Egypt and other peripheral countries. The response to this crisis, which has been called *defensive modernization*, embraced development and change to empower native populations and thus limit further Western incursions. It emphasized laying the infrastructure for a modern society that could compete economically, politically, and militarily in a new global age. And religion proved to be an important factor in this competitive environment.

In Egypt, in the late 19th century, modernizers like Jamal al-Din al-Afghani and Muhammad Abduh criticized traditional Muslim thinkers who had rejected Western science as foreign, un-Islamic innovation. Islam, according to the modernizers, had always accepted science and new knowledge, but with the expansion of Islamic power in the classical period, Muslim thinkers had grown complacent, and Islamic thought had stagnated. A return to the true path of Islam, so the modernizers argued, would allow Muslims to develop and recover their rightful power.

By framing modern knowledge and change in terms of Islam, modernizers provided cultural legitimacy for the seemingly foreign-born social transformations already under way in Egypt and reaffirmed an identity and tradition challenged by recent trends. As a result, a new Muslim self-consciousness became fused with modernization.

Secular and Religious Nationalism

A tourist poster popular in Egypt in the 1980s announced that Egypt was the cradle of monotheism. The images on the poster depicted a history

that linked the most recent manifestation of monotheism—Islam—with its Abrahamic predecessors—Christianity and Judaism—and then back to the monotheistic sun worship of the Pharaoh Akhenaton. Such imagery captures the way modern Egyptians wished to present themselves to the outside world: a nation with a rich and pluralistic history. It also reflects the creative efforts that drove nationalist thinking in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Of all the modern political ideas that took hold in Egypt, none put down deeper roots and made more of a lasting impression than nationalism. Like its precursors in Europe, nationalism in Egypt drew on the history, language, and symbolism of native religion(s) to unify the people and shape a common political identity; also like nationalisms in Europe, Egyptian nationalism proved to have an ambivalent and competitive relationship with religion—particularly Islam, the majority religion. In the hearts and minds of some Egyptians, this new political identity supplanted Islam; in others, it vied for supremacy; and in most, the two became inseparably fused.

The British takeover of Egypt, in the late 19th century, spurred patriotic sentiment and calls for independence. But Egyptians expressed their growing sense of political identity through two modern ideas introduced by the British: nationalism and political parties. Both ideas were secular in their European and Egyptian contexts, which is to say that they did not fall under any institutional religious authority or have a particular religious or theological agenda; both were also subject to cultural influences that made otherwise secular political expressions take on religious hues. Secular nationalism in Egypt encompassed a range of differing and sometimes contradictory views. Some thinkers, such as Ahmad Lutfi al-Sayyid, argued for a particular “Egyptianness” that made those living along the Nile unique both culturally and politically. Others, such as Taha Hussein, claimed that Egyptians had more in common culturally and politically with Europe (the West) than with the Arab region or the Islamic world (the East). But the strongest strain of secular nationalism among Egyptians combined Arab ethnicity and Islamic tradition—twinned elements that traced back to Islam’s origin in the Arabian Peninsula. Arab Muslim armies had conquered Egypt in the seventh century, and over time, Cairo had emerged as one

of the great urban centers of Islamic civilization—a place to seek out Islamic learning and culture. These same armies had once operated on the world stage, competing against and, in some instances, winning out over Christian Europe.

The glories of the Arab-Islamic past were prime material for Egyptians to work with as they imagined their nation’s history and culture, despite the fact that other emerging Arab nations were working with the same material. And evidence of the country’s Islamic heritage permeated the architectural landscape. Of course, Egypt’s Pharaonic past was also readily at hand, but it was a dead culture, and a nation required a living culture—a past that was not really past but ongoing. Even Egyptian Christians, the Copts, engaged in Islam-infused secular nationalism, for they, too, as a protected minority (*dhimmi*), had been part of this civilization and had contributed to its greatness.

While secular nationalism was the rule in Egypt, there was an exception: The religious nationalism fostered initially by the Muslim Brotherhood and later by other activist Islamist groups. Founded in 1928, at the peak of nationalist ferment, the Muslim Brotherhood rejected Western-style politics. Nationalism and the nation-state, according to the Muslim Brotherhood, imposed a false European political consciousness on Muslims, thereby dividing the *umma* (the community of believers) and pitting Muslims against one another. The founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, Hassan al-Banna, called for the formation of a unified Islamic state ruled by Islamic law, but he recognized that this kind of transnational enterprise could not be achieved overnight. So he advocated instead a religious nationalism that, unlike secular nationalism, took Islam seriously in both the political order and the social life of citizens.

The religious nationalism of the Muslim Brotherhood was, in many ways, a counternationalism, an attempt to create an alternative political modernity that did not depend on Western models. In the context of the British occupation, it operated like other nationalist movements, fighting for independence, building a political base, and appealing to the perceived needs of the Egyptian people. After independence and the creation of a secular state system, the Muslim Brotherhood went into political opposition, working in the streets to demonstrate

Islam's potential to manage a modern society. Militant offshoots of the Muslim Brotherhood, such as *Takfir wa'l-Hijra* (Excommunication and Emigration) and *al-Gama'a al Islamiyah* (Islamic Group), adopted a more confrontational political style, hoping to end secular rule through violence.

Instead of fading from the scene, religious nationalism—which when speaking of the Muslim world is more typically referred to as political Islam or Islamism—has remained a powerful force in Egypt throughout the second half of the 20th century and the first decade of the 21st. Its ongoing challenge to the legitimacy of the secular state has ensured a heightened role for religion in the public sphere and compelled the state to secure a religious legitimacy of its own.

Religion and the State

The foundations of a centralized modern state in Egypt started with the leadership of the Ottoman Khedive Muhammad Ali and continued under the British. The ideological direction of the state, however, only emerged after the 1952 revolution, which brought the charismatic Gamal Abdel Nasser to power. A military officer with no formal political training, Nasser gradually found a political niche for himself, as international defender of Third World peoples, and a political direction for the country, a state-imposed Arab socialism that emphasized rapid development and shunned democracy. Nasser proved himself a clever student of Cold War politics when, in 1956, he nationalized the Suez Canal, which was still owned and controlled by the British and set off an international incident that almost led to war. To acquire the necessary aid for development, Nasser turned to the Soviet Union. While Nasser's successor, Anwar Sadat, reoriented Egypt's political economy, shifting to capitalism and bringing the country into the U.S. orbit of power, he continued the authoritarian style of rule that Nasser began and that continued until the brief popular uprising that led to the resignation of Sadat's successor, Hosni Mubarak, in February 2011.

The state, under each of these leaders, adopted a common policy toward religion: to control religion in order to exploit it for state purposes or to prevent it from becoming a weapon against the state. This policy has largely failed, and the failure

has contributed to the domestic and global strengthening of Islam and Islamism.

The group of Free Officers who led the 1952 revolution recognized the political potential of Islam. After taking power, the Free Officers eliminated party politics but allowed the Muslim Brotherhood to continue its activities. A member of the Free Officers and Nasser's second in command, Anwar Sadat, reached out to the Muslim Brotherhood in the hope of using the organization's popular base to rally support for the new regime. The effort failed and demonstrated to the then leader of the Muslim Brotherhood, Sayyid Qutb, the cynical attitude toward religion held by the Free Officers. After a botched assassination attempt by a lone Muslim Brotherhood gunman in 1954, the government cracked down on the organization: Thousands were arrested, often never having been charged or brought to trial, and the organization was declared illegal. It was from one of Nasser's prisons that Sayyid Qutb penned what would become a modern jihadist classic, *Maalim fi'l-Tariq* ("Milestones"). Influenced by the writing of Maulana Abu al-Ala Mawdudi of Pakistan, Qutb argued that modern Muslim society had fallen into a state of *jahiliyyah* (ignorant sinfulness), which could only be purified by the fire of God-sanctioned violence.

Nasser's offensive against Islamists, both radical and moderate, ran parallel with his efforts to create an acceptable, politically neutral version of Islam in Egypt. To this end, he nationalized Al-Azhar, the oldest Islamic university in the Islamic world and the voice of traditional Islamic authority. Once under the government wing, faculty members became state-paid functionaries, whose careers depended on supporting government policies and steering clear of sensitive political issues. Al-Azhar was also forced to change its curriculum to include secular subjects because the state only wanted religious scholars who were attuned to the modern world to preach in mosques and teach in schools. Over time, the state brought all mosques under government control—ostensibly to ensure upkeep but in truth to police public preaching.

Nasser's unstated authoritarian bargain with the Egyptian people required the (temporary) sacrifice of political freedoms for fast-paced industrial

and economic growth. It was a bargain many were ready to make. But Egypt's stunning defeat by the Israelis in 1967, along with the stubborn realities of slow economic development, forced Egyptians to question the wisdom of Nasser's way forward. It also sent the country into a spiritual crisis as many began to question why God was punishing Egypt. Islamists had a ready answer: By following a secular, Western model of development, Egypt had strayed from the path of Islam. When Sadat took charge after Nasser's death in 1970, he forged a new state relationship with Islamists. But he too, like Nasser, had his own political agenda in mind. Eager to counter the Nasserist forces that questioned his abilities, Sadat released Islamists from prison and empowered them to criticize socialism and Nasser himself. Sadat also cast himself as the believing president, someone who was sensitive to the obligations of faith and aspects of the Islamist cause.

Sadat's outreach to Islamists did not prevent the 1970s from becoming a bloody decade of Islamist violence. Radical groups such as al-Fanniya 'Askariya ("Military Academy Group") and Takfir wa'l-Hijra burst onto the scene, attacking symbols of state power and authority. Nasser's prisons may have kept militancy in check and thwarted serious political opposition, but they also engendered deep hatred and resentment toward the government. The prison experience produced different responsive tracks within the broad array of Islamist groups: moderates who took their message to the people through preaching, teaching and charitable work; separatists who established a bloc of the faithful apart from society; and militants who turned to violence to address Egypt's sinful condition. These tracks were amorphous, and both individuals and groups shifted their responses over time. At the end of the decade, the Jihad group, outraged over Sadat's peace overtures toward Israel, assassinated him. The new government responded by declaring a state of emergency and imposing martial law—a condition that has remained in force to the present.

Having witnessed the mistakes of his predecessors, Mubarak adopted a cautious, carrot-and-stick approach toward Islamists. And Islamists, radical and moderate, gave the regime plenty of reason to feel threatened. The radicals attacked Copts and tourists and established de facto control

in areas of Upper Egypt and Cairo. At the same time, the moderates ran successfully for office in professional unions, one of the few venues for free and fair elections. A dramatic event in 1997 proved to be a watershed moment for radicals and Egyptians in general. Members of Gamaa Islamiya (Islamic Group) killed 58 tourists and 4 Egyptians in a frenzy of bloody violence at the temple of Hatshepsut near Luxor. Reports of tourists being hacked to death with hatchets and swords shocked Egyptians and caused imprisoned members of the group to renounce violence.

The violence of the radical Islamist movement had been aimed at the Mubarak regime, but what brought his rule to an end on February 11, 2011, was about as far from jihad as one could imagine. It was a series of massive, nonviolent movements of largely middle-class and relatively young professionals who organized their protests through Facebook, Twitter, and other forms of electronic social networking. These protests constituted a catalyst for change.

There was, however, a religious element to the 2011 Egyptian nonviolent movement. The peak moments came after Friday prayers, when sympathetic mullahs would urge the faithful to join the protest as a religious duty. But theirs was not the divisive, hateful voice of jihadi rhetoric. In a remarkable moment when the Muslim protestors were trying to conduct their prayers in Tahrir Square and Mubarak's supporters tried to attack them as they prayed, a cordon of Egyptian Coptic Christians who had joined the protests circled their Muslim compatriots, shielding them. Later, a phalanx of Muslim protestors protected their Christian comrades as they worshipped in the public square, an urban intersection that was for that time transformed into a massive interfaith sanctuary. Rather than separating Muslim from non-Muslim, and Sunnī from Shi'a, the symbols that were raised on impromptu placards in Cairo's Tahrir Square were emblems of interfaith cooperation; they showed the cross of the Coptic Christians together with the crescent of Egypt's Muslims in a united religious front against autocracy.

Since then, Islamist-state confrontation has continued to be tense at times. The Muslim Brotherhood has had a new lease of political life in the elections that have taken place both nationally and locally. Hence, religion has continued to play a role in

Egypt's political life, though in more diverse and less strident ways than before.

Secular Failures and the Turn Toward Islam

The last two decades of the 20th century saw a renewed emphasis on Islam in Egyptian public and private life. This renewal was evident in the increase in mosque attendance, the number of Islamic books being published, and the percentage of women veiling. It was also clear in the spate of public confessions by famous Egyptians, especially female media stars, who spoke of their decision to adopt an Islamic lifestyle. And newly minted converts to Islamism confessed to their previous belief in Arab socialism or communism. News stories reported on trends in religious activity, such as women attending *dars* or informal religious instruction in private homes and the charitable work of Islamic NGOs. Egyptian secularists voiced concern about the growing presence of and dependence on Islam in public discourse. But it was secularism itself, or more accurately its perceived failures, that led to the new turn toward Islam.

Egypt's experience with secularism was tied to three successive authoritarian governments that increased the nation's foreign debt, thwarted meaningful political participation, abused human rights, and failed to create sufficient jobs. With this kind of track record, Egyptian frustration with Western-style modernization is understandable. This is not to say that Egyptians have come to embrace Islamist politics or the imposition of Islamic law, but they have come to realize the potential of Islam to mediate the ill effects of modernity. On a personal level, Islam is seen as a spiritual refuge from the harsh social and economic realities of daily life in Egypt. On a social level, Islam's moral teachings of compassion and integrity are seen as an antidote to rampant corruption and government ineptitude.

Global factors also contributed to the turn away from a Western developmental model and toward a model infused with native Islamic values. While Western colonialism has ended, Western control over Egypt's economic life has not. The World Bank and International Monetary Fund—the new face of Western economic interests—oversee Egypt's currency and bread prices. And the new world system, in which Egypt found itself a

peripheral player, brought its own set of political compromises and contradictions. International support for Israel has allowed what many Egyptians consider a Western colonial power to take over the border, in the heartland of the Arab Muslim world. Peace with Israel did bring benefits to Egypt—a return of the Sinai Peninsula and a yearly payment from the United States—but it also meant betraying the Palestinian cause. Moreover, United States financial aid to Egypt was used to maintain a militarized state that suppressed its own people. According to many Egyptians, the United States, contrary to its own stated policies and goals, has not fostered democracy in Egypt, the Middle East, or the Muslim world. Instead, it has supported corrupt, autocratic regimes that ensured the flow of oil and assisted in the new war on terrorism, which seems to some like a war on Muslims and Muslim societies.

Western intervention in the Muslim world—starting with the first Gulf War and continuing to the invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan—has raised fears of a new era of Western colonialism and heightened transnational Muslim loyalties. These fears and loyalties are reinforced by Western discourse, following the collapse of the Soviet Union, about an emerging clash of civilizations and the rise of Islam as the new enemy.

The clash that did come was not what the West expected, for it took the form of a global jihad that rendered borders obsolete, and then in the second decade of the 21st century, it took the form of the Arab spring protests. Both global jihad and non-violent democratic protest have attracted the attention and participation of Egyptians. Its first wave came in the Afghan battle to remove occupying Soviet forces, a fight portrayed as a religious duty and secretly supported by the United States. Stymied in their efforts to create an Islamic order in Egypt, militant Egyptian Islamists were among the volunteers who traveled to Afghanistan to support their Muslim brothers and sisters. One of the recruiters for this anti-Soviet jihad was Sheikh Omar Abdel Rahman, an Al-Azhar-trained cleric who had provided Sadat's assassins with religious justification for the deed. After serving time in prison, Sheikh Omar took his radical message on the road to Sudan and Pakistan, ending up in the United States, where he was implicated in the first plot to destroy the World Trade Center. Another

famous global jihadist of Egyptian origin is Ayman al-Zawahiri, a medical doctor and a member of Gamma Islamiya. al-Zawahiri became one of the Afghan Arabs, as the Arab jihadists in Afghanistan were known, and then, after the defeat of the Soviets in 1989, went on to join al Qaeda, where he served as Osama bin Laden's second-in-command and became the shadow leader of the movement after bin Laden's death in 2011. Few Egyptians support the violent attacks associated with the global jihad, but many are sympathetic to Muslims' efforts around the world to liberate themselves, in the name of Islam, from Western dominance. The uprisings in Cairo's Tahrir Square and elsewhere in January and February 2011 that resulted in Mubarak's resignation were democratic in spirit but also self-consciously Egyptian.

For Egyptians, and Muslims in general, Western political and technological achievements no longer appear as convincing and invincible as they once did. Muslims living in European nations, where political ideals of freedom and equality are affirmed, find themselves treated as second-class citizens because of their religion and culture. And the United States, the winner of the Cold War, has seen its policy goals in Iraq and Afghanistan foiled by seemingly unsophisticated enemies.

These global events are receiving special attention because of the growth of the Internet and the emergence of media outlets such as al-Jazeera. As a result, Egyptians are experiencing Islam on multiple levels—personal, social, national, and international—and the combined effect reinforces broader Muslim identity and consciousness. It is not surprising, in this regard, that the 2011 protests were organized largely through cell phones and Internet social networking, such as Facebook and Twitter.

A New Global Future for Islam?

Polling data indicate that Egyptians, like Americans, are a highly religious people. The processes of modernization and globalization, however, have led Egyptians to understand and experience their religiosity in specific ways. The public turn to Islamic militancy and to Islamic democracy in a post-Mubarak period is the result of identity politics driven by national and international factors—not the expression of Islam's traditional form in Muslim society. The future of Islam in Egypt, then,

depends on the new global formations that have yet to emerge.

Jeffrey T. Kenney

See also Islamic Modernism; Islamic Reform; Islamism (Political Islam); Middle East; Muslim Brotherhood; Religious Nationalism; Secularization

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EL SALVADOR

The Central American country of El Salvador, one of the smallest nations in the Americas, is among the least diverse religiously. Although most Salvadorans are Catholic, a growing Protestant population and changes within Catholicism have transformed the nation's religious profile in recent decades.

Religious life in El Salvador, as in most of Latin America, has been dominated by the Roman

Catholic Church since colonization by Spain. Until the 1960s, the vast majority of Salvadorans practiced a form of syncretic popular Catholicism that centered on the saints and the Virgin Mary. The country's patron saint is Jesus, *El Salvador del Mundo* ("The Savior of the World"). Under the leadership of Luis Chávez y Gonzalez, archbishop of San Salvador from 1938 to 1977, the Salvadoran church began modernizing even before the second Vatican Council (1962–1965). Following Chávez, Oscar Romero's 3 years as archbishop (1977–1980) were marked by intensifying political radicalization and violence. Progressive Catholicism influenced by liberation theology spread farther in El Salvador than in most of Latin America. Romero was nominated for canonization 10 years after his assassination in 1980. Presently, Salvadoran Catholicism includes not only popular and progressive variants but also a large Charismatic movement that enjoys significant institutional support.

The first Protestant missionaries arrived in El Salvador from the United States in 1915. Although it is hard to know exactly how large El Salvador's current Protestant population is, most estimates place it at around 25% of the populace, mostly Pentecostal. In addition to Pentecostal groups such as the Assemblies of God, several mainline Protestant churches have a strong presence in El Salvador, including the American Baptists, Episcopalians, and Lutherans, who have been leaders in social and political reform.

El Salvador's relative lack of religious diversity stems partly from the fact that it has experienced little immigration due to political instability and high population density. Furthermore, having no Atlantic coast, the nation lacks the vibrant Afro-Caribbean population present in other Central American nations. That said, El Salvador is still far from homogeneous religiously. There are small populations of Asian and Middle Eastern descent, and some important national leaders have come from these communities. Less than 2% of the population embrace Judaism and Islam, although there are small, active communities, primarily in the capital city, San Salvador. There is also a small but significant indigenous revitalization, especially in the western part of the country, with both cultural and religious elements.

While few people have immigrated to El Salvador, as many as 2 million Salvadorans have

left the country, most to North America. They have taken with them distinctive values and practices, including both liberationist Catholicism and Pentecostal Protestantism.

Anna L. Peterson

See also Latin America; Liberation Theology; Missions and Missionaries

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ELIADE, MIRCEA (1907–1986)

Mircea Eliade was one of the founders of the modern academic field of history of religions and was a pillar of the University of Chicago's school of comparative religious studies from 1958 to 1986. Eliade was a prodigious Romanian novelist who survived World War II as an exiled fascist cultural attaché before becoming the most influential founder of religious studies in the United States.

As an attempt to bridge East and West and archaic and modern, Eliade's scholarship encourages cultural dialogue and a respect for the power of symbols and history. His critics allege that generalizations about ethnic and religious communities for the sake of comparison minimize the important roles that conflicts and politics play in religion. His support for fascism in Europe before World War II combined with his writings about the revolutionary power of nostalgia seem to endorse violence despite his nonpolitical humanistic stance.

As a high school student in Bucharest, Eliade published a hundred articles and taught himself multiple languages in his parents' attic. He trained

himself to sleep 5 hours a night and wrote fiction for relaxation, eventually becoming one of Romania's most famous novelists. While studying the influence of Neoplatonism on Italian Renaissance philosophy in Rome after college, Eliade wrote to the Maharaja of Kassimbazar, who sponsored 3 years of study in the home of the famous Hindu philosopher Surendranath Dasgupta in Calcutta. According to his autobiography, Eliade desired "to become truly 'Indian'" before he was expelled from the house for seducing his mentor's daughter Maitreyi.

While "in the field," Eliade combined his textual study of Sanskrit, scripture, and philosophy with yoga techniques in a Himalayan ashram near Rishikesh, where he "awoke at daybreak and bathed in the Ganges, just a few meters from my *kutiar*." At age 25, back in Romania, he served a brief mandatory stint in an artillery unit despite his poor eyesight. Later, Eliade participated in Christian nationalist political efforts, where he opposed both the proletariat and the aristocracy; instead, he considered it best to have a fascist dictator lead the modernization of the nation since democracy required too much patience. First imprisoned by King Carol II for 4 months, he was then "exiled" as cultural attaché to London in time to survive the Blitz. After his wife died of cancer in Lisbon in 1944 and the war ended, Eliade was reborn a nonpolitical, humanistic educator through what he called a "spiritual resurrection."

An intellectual trying to bridge East and West, primitive and modern, Eliade was well positioned to heal Westerners distressed by the Holocaust and the H-bomb's devaluation of human life, using romanticism and reason. With a variety of languages and 3 years of Hindu practice to his credit, along with the discipline to synthesize large amounts of scholarship, Eliade tried to resacralize the West using Eastern and archaic wisdom. As he told his interviewer, recruited by Georges Dumézil to teach at the Sorbonne, Eliade had his greatest impact following Joachim Wach at the University of Chicago, where he was to train half of America's distinguished chairs of religious studies between 1958 and 1986.

Though his methods have been called into question even by his most prominent supporters, Eliade's profound impact on the academic study of religion is indisputable. Eliade championed the comparative study of religions, which he called the

history of religions, employing a phenomenological approach—for instance, examining how the multiple meanings of a symbol change over time. Since this method avoids the absolute truth claims of theology, it could be taught in public schools following the *Schempp* decision of the U.S. Supreme Court in 1963, which mandated the academic study of religion. Eliade's approach further avoids reducing religion to its social or psychological functions, thereby treating the beliefs and practices of pre- and non-Christians as worthy of study and respect.

Eliade has been criticized for overemphasizing commonalities between religions and for ignoring specific historical and political contexts. As a synthesizer, he was accused of being an armchair anthropologist. A more damning accusation is that Eliade's postwar goal of uncovering the universal principles of *homo religiosus* required that he essentialize, or generalize, about entire ethnic or faith communities, which eerily shadows his prewar support for messianic totalitarianism in Romania, according to Robert Ellwood. Following his self-proclaimed postwar "resurrection," Eliade himself refused to clarify his association with known anti-Semites in Bucharest during his 20s, in particular the prominent role his patron Nae Ionesco played in the Legion of the Archangel Michael (also known as the Iron Guard). Among personal accounts, a Jewish colleague, Mihail Sebastian, wrote of Eliade's "catastrophic naiveté" during his young adult years.

Whereas specialists respect his dissertation on yoga and his book *Shamanism* as distinctive works of scholarship, three works are highlighted here for their attempt to champion the sacred in a secular age, to bridge East and West, and past and present. In 1949, Eliade published *Patterns in Comparative Religion*, which may be the best introduction to his thought. Here, Eliade introduces his theory that all religions provide people with order and orientation in time and space. In particular, Eliade emphasized the importance of creation myths around the world, which tell of cosmic struggles between order and chaos at the original time (or *illo tempore*) and require annual renewal in religious festivals. Heroic battles against serpents or the emergence of cosmic trees of life coincidentally span multiple cultures. In modern Judaism, Passover continues to commemorate the

Exodus from Egypt and thereby renews the community each spring. According to Eliade, the experience of demarcating sacred from profane space is also universal, with a particular emphasis on the symbolism of the center, or axis mundi. For example, Mecca provides a sacred touchstone for Muslims, who walk in the footsteps of Abraham and Muhammad simultaneously.

Also, in 1949, Eliade published in French a more philosophical text comparing linear and cyclical conceptions of time in *The Myth of the Eternal Return*. For Eliade, a secular age involves a “terror of history” by privileging the free will of the autonomous individual who remains powerless to influence linear history. Cyclical history follows destruction with creation so that freedom is actualized. For Eliade, secular moderns have lost their awareness of how the sacred can contribute to sociohistorical regeneration.

Third, in *The Sacred and the Profane* (1957), perhaps Eliade’s most frequently assigned text in college classes, Eliade neatly combines Rudolf Otto’s and Émile Durkheim’s definitions of the sacred as irreducible, meaningful, powerful, set apart or marked, and not profane in support of his theory of order and orientation in time and space. The sacred can be observed in its empirical manifestations, or what Eliade termed *hierophanies*. The study of a symbol’s history reveals unconscious meanings; however, the sacred cannot be manufactured since its power originates in a catastrophic event (*kratophany*). Eliade’s work not only helped create religious studies as a field of study in universities; it has been very much at the center of debate in the development of major concepts for that field.

Vincent Francis Biondo

See also Campbell, Joseph; Jung, Carl Gustav; Myth; Smith, Huston

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EMERGENT RELIGION

Emergent religion is an approach to religious identity and belonging that, while rooted in historical precedent, is situated and made at home in post-modern, postestablishment settings. First evident among Christians in “post-Christendom” contexts in the United Kingdom, the United States, and Australia/New Zealand, it has since manifested itself among Israeli, North American, and British Jews, and there are signs of emergence in American Islam. The communal life of emergent practitioners is marked by holism, pluralism, and an acceptance of ambiguity. Rather than form a community defined by physical location or gatherings at certain times and places, emergents define their community as people who have a shared mission in the world.

Emergent practice is concerned with “authenticity”—that is, experiences consistent with the roots of the tradition but still contemporary and accessible

in as many ways as possible. The inner life of the emergent religious practitioner may include meditation, contemplation, and body movement (e.g., yoga). The marks of spirituality are often outside the congregational service and in the everyday lives of the practitioners. In this way, emergents create a lived religious repertoire not only with other like-minded individuals but in the external world, where religious and secular forms of pluralism reign.

Many emergent religious leaders contrast their interest in and comfort with talking about God with the reticence and discomfort of their institutional counterparts. They frequently encourage their participants to talk about, or at least reflect on, spiritual life in the secular world, even using the secular world for theological reflection. The distinction between the sacred and the secular becomes blurred. They do not see a tension between science, religion, and spirituality.

Emergent religious communities are connected through shared narratives of the ancient past, rooted in their scriptural tradition. Narratives of liberation and redemption are revisited in their original textual form and reinterpreted for application to the contemporary context and as a prescriptive guide for community action. Among emergent Christians, these approaches are called “ancient-future” because they claim a return to ancient texts for the purposes of building a just future. Emergent religious reformers also use a narrative of having navigated a transition from institutional religion to spiritual community as a tool for community organizing.

Emergent communities see themselves as innovative, but not from a blank slate; instead, they create new modes within specific liturgical traditions. Often, emergent religion involves a return to liturgical languages and forms unused by denominational or institutional practitioners. Rather than assign ritual planning and execution to ordained or paid professionals, there is a high value placed on the involvement of lay and volunteer ritual experts.

Emergents often combine theological conservatism with social progressivism, rooting commitments to equality, human dignity, the environment, peacemaking, and social justice in close readings of scripture. They often frame their faith and practice in the context of a world that is broken and hostile

toward them. One prominent example is the practice of hospitality, whether through community meals or through meals delivered to those in need (both crises and celebrations). A meal shared with neighbors connects faith and daily life into a meaningful whole.

Emergent religious communities move from location- and function-based institutions toward mission-based institutions. They do not build large buildings—many of them would rather meet in a café or a rented religious space. They also meet in homes, either regularly or to celebrate or mark significant events in the community. As such, they tend to define themselves by their actions in the world rather than by historic, internal rituals. While the specific forms and missions of emergent communal organizations vary according to the interests of the given community, many share a resistance to marketing their religion or religious institution to gain more adherents. Instead, they often position their organizations as countercultural correctives to commercial spirituality and reinvent “citizenship” by avoiding typical dues-based forms of congregational membership.

Emergent leaders exercise moral authority by modeling it rather than prescribing it; in this is a recognition that participants voluntarily join these communities—they are not born into them. Moreover, communal decisions and directions frequently are expressed clearly but without judgment against those who disagree or might not share the same priorities. A key example of this occurs in Jewish emergent communities, where communal standards of *kashrut* (food regulations) are stringent (to enable as many people as possible to eat) but implemented with the recognition that they are not practiced by all (to enable as many people as possible to contribute food).

Many emergent communities are led by groups of leaders, often without ministry training and without pay. Some emergent communities are led by charismatic leaders who wield as much power as, if not more than, the lay boards do in typical congregations. Nonetheless, they tend to avoid hierarchical models of executive leadership, preferring to act as spiritual directors or guides.

Ryan K. Bolger and J. Shawn Landres

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ENCYCLICALS

The term *encyclical* is used in the modern Roman Catholic Church to designate a formal pastoral letter written by, or under the authority of, the pope as the bishop of Rome and spiritual and administrative leader of the church, which includes the Latin Rite and Eastern Catholic Churches in full communion. In its etymology, *encyclical* is drawn from linguistic roots in Latin and Greek, meaning “encircling.” In the early church, an encyclical was a pastoral communication in letter form sent out by any bishop and spread to the churches functioning within a particular geographical region. The Eastern Orthodox and Anglican churches have retained this traditional usage. Beginning with Pope John XXIII (1958–1963), encyclicals were written not only for Catholics but for the consideration of the entire human community.

Encyclicals engage a variety of significant issues relating to Catholic faith and doctrine. They can be addressed to the Catholic bishops of a particular locality or to the bishops representing the universal church. The title of papal encyclicals is taken from the first words of the letter. Pope Benedict XIV issued the first modern encyclical in 1740 (*Ubi Primum*), and since Pope Pius IX (1792–1878), these letters have become the primary way for the pope to communicate authoritatively as a teacher and interpreter of the Roman Catholic tradition. Although the pope may write and is always given credit for the content of his

encyclicals, these statements are often the result of collaborative work. One of the most controversial 20th-century encyclicals was *Humane Vitae* (Of Human Life) by Paul VI, which reaffirmed the traditional church teaching against artificial means of birth control.

The social encyclicals have been particularly significant as globally relevant statements that treat vexing issues such as economic justice, human rights, and peace. Their method of instruction involves a combination of social critique and pastoral advice. The tradition of offering social encyclicals to the world community began in 1891 with Leo XIII’s promulgation of *Rerum Novarum* (On the Condition of the Working Person). This papal letter is concerned with the effects of the Industrial Revolution on individuals and their communities. It seeks to show the institutional church’s concern with the working class by applying Christianity’s traditional teachings to the problem of elimination of poverty in the working classes, the right of workers to form labor unions, just wages, and safe working environments. Major anniversaries of this encyclical have been marked by various popes with letters of their own reconsidering its major themes. *Quadragesimo Anno* (After 40 Years) is a 1931 encyclical by Pius XI that reflected on ideas of justice in relation to the world social order. Issued in the midst of the Great Depression and the advances made by communist totalitarianism, it questioned the basic ideas of both capitalism and socialism and promoted the principle of subsidiarity—the value of small-scale societal living and cultural expression over large-scale societal control and subsequent human alienation. *Mater et Magistra* (Mother and Teacher) is a 1961 encyclical of John XXIII that continues the discussion of the duties of the state in the economic order. In 1981, John Paul II addressed the theme of the dignity and spirituality of work, and in 1991, he marked the hundredth anniversary of *Rerum Novarum* with *Centesimus Annus* (The 100th Year), addressing the rights of workers, especially in light of the fall of communism in Europe.

Encyclicals do not always mark anniversaries but often reflect specific global concerns. *Pacem in Terris* (Peace on Earth) of John XXIII, issued in

1963, is a systematic social theory concerning the dignity and rights of the human person, including the duties of nations to each other as the keepers of peace on an international level in the midst of the Cold War. Paul VI addressed the theme of international relationships and how they can work for global development in his 1967 *Populorum Progressio* (Progress of Peoples). Benedict XVI's 2009 *Caritas in Veritate* (Charity in Truth) offers moral direction in the context of the global economic crisis.

Leonard Norman Primiano

See also Benedict XVI; Christianity; John Paul II; Roman Catholicism; Rome; Social Justice; Vatican City State and the Holy See

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ENGAGED BUDDHIST GROUPS

Engaged Buddhist groups constitute a diverse range and network of leaders and communities that have made significant contributions to contemporary Buddhist transnational activism through their espousal of social critique, nonviolent political action, charitable service, and fellowship. Also known as socially engaged Buddhism, the movement developed throughout Asia over the course of the 20th century and more recently in North America, Europe, and elsewhere. A popular idea among intellectuals in French Indochina after World War II was the philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre's theory of engagement, which championed the resistance hero as a prophetic redeemer who responds to oppression by charting a path toward emancipation. The Vietnamese monk and poet Thich Nhat Hanh likely drew on this idea for inspiration when he coined the term *engaged Buddhism* in 1963, after encouraging fellow monks and nuns to

take mindfulness practice out of the meditation hall and into the villages to aid those suffering from the ravaging effects of war.

What characterizes engaged Buddhism as historically unprecedented are the following features: the recognition that suffering (*dukkha*) has both internal (personal) and external (social) causes that are mutually dependent; "dual liberation," or the conviction that these two dimensions of suffering can be overcome through the observance of Buddhist precepts (e.g., to abstain from harming living beings), principles (selflessness and interdependence), and practices (mindfulness, loving kindness, and compassion) applied to the social field through service and activism; and the cosmopolitan embrace of Gandhian principles, including selfless service, nonviolence, and self-sufficiency in tandem with Western liberal democratic values (human rights, equality, civil rights, educational opportunity, and the advancement of social, economic, and environmental justice), as compatible with Buddhist aspirations for transforming suffering in the world. Linking the realization of inner peace with world peace to these core Asian and European American values is a distinctive feature of engaged Buddhist groups and their global appeal.

Today, engaged Buddhists are found throughout the world. *Sarvodaya Shramadana*, led by A. T. Ariyaratne in Sri Lanka, has developed thousands of self-sustainable, village-based communities. B. R. Ambedkar's *Dhamma Revolution* has brought education and social welfare programs to the Dalit community of South Asia. Humanistic Buddhism has revitalized modern religious life in Taiwan (*Tzu Chi Foundation*) and Japan (*Soka Gakkai*). Thailand's lay activist and social critic Sulak Sivaraksa founded the International Network of Engaged Buddhists in 1989 to promote the global integration of Buddhist spiritual values with social and environmental activism. In America, the Buddhist Peace Fellowship, founded in 1978, unites thousands of Buddhists around a common vision of liberation through social engagement.

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See also Buddhist Compassion Relief Tzu Chi Foundation; Sarvodaya Movement; Soka Gakkai; Thich Nhat Hanh

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ENGLAND

England has been a multicultural and multireligious country for more than two millennia. Throughout the centuries, new immigrants have arrived, bringing their own beliefs and practices. Battles, both political and bloody, have been fought on and beyond her land for religious supremacy. Laws have been passed, and continue to be passed, to control and protect those of opposing faiths. Today, England is host to literally hundreds of different religions. It is, however, still possible to say that it is a Christian country, although this may be more apparent at a cultural than at a practicing level, with only around 8% of the adult population attending a church service once a week. England dominates the United Kingdom, which also includes the countries Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland.

Archaeological evidence suggests that pagan cults, most notably Druidry, existed in England from at least the fourth millennium BCE. In 55 BCE, the Romans introduced their particular brand of paganism, to be followed by gods from Egyptian and other pantheons. Christianity may have crept into parts of the country as early as the second century; the Celtic church certainly existed by the fourth century, but gradually it came under papal control. With the Norman Conquest in 1066, Roman canon law became increasingly powerful and corrupt. The ensuing irritation and frustration culminated in Henry VIII's breaking away from Rome over the issue of divorce from the first of his six wives and declaring himself head of the Church of England (C of E) in 1534. Henry's daughter, Mary Tudor, attempted to restore Catholicism, but after her death, her half sister, Elizabeth I, definitively secured a Protestant future

for the country, and since 1559, the C of E has been "by law established."

The political predominance of the C of E has not, however, meant that all other forms of religiosity were eradicated. Expelled from England in 1290, Jews were readmitted in 1656 and have been a small but significant presence in English society ever since. Catholics have maintained a presence, supplanted by migration, primarily from Ireland and, more recently, Poland. From the 16th century onward, Puritans and other Protestants joined the religious scene, with some (e.g., Quakers and Methodists) being indigenous and others (e.g., Baptists and Unitarians) being predominantly from continental Europe and, later, North America. In the 19th century, several new sects arrived—some homegrown (e.g., the Salvation Army) and others (e.g., Seventh-Day Adventism, the Church of Christ, Scientist, Jehovah's Witnesses, and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints) from the United States. Around the turn of the century, Eastern ideas started to be popularized among a small section of the English population by movements such as the Theosophical Society.

The 1950s saw an influx of West Indian immigrants, who, finding the White churches staid and unwelcoming, started their own Charismatic and Pentecostal churches. Students from Nigeria and elsewhere in Africa brought their churches (including the Church of the Lord [Aladura], Cherubim and Seraphim, and the Celestial Church of Christ), then their families, and by 2007, 44% of those attending church in inner London were Black.

From the 1960s, successive waves of economic and political refugees have arrived from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and East Africa, which has led to the construction of Sunnī, Shi'a, and Ahmadiyya mosques; Sikh *gurdwaras*; and a variety of Hindu temples. Increasing globalization is further evidenced by the numerous places of worship where rituals are conducted in languages other than English, including Armenian, Brazilian, Hausa, Japanese, Filipino, Polish, Swedish, Taiwanese, Tibetan, Ukrainian, Urdu, and Vietnamese.

England also plays host to around a thousand of the New Religious Movements that have become visible since the 1960s. Most of these are imported, although several are indigenous (e.g., the Aetherius Society, Emin Foundation, Jesus Army, School of Economic Science, and a variety of Pagan and New

Age groups, especially in London, Glastonbury, and the West Country).

A voluntary question introduced into the 2001 national census asked, "What is your religion?" The results in percentages were as follows: None 14.6, Christian 71.7, Buddhist 0.3, Hindu 1.1, Jewish 0.5, Muslim 3.1, Sikh 0.7, any other religion 0.3, and not stated 7.7. Among the "others," 390,127 people declared themselves to be Jedi, surpassing Sikhs, Jews, and Buddhists. Although the number of non-Christians is relatively small, the percentage of the various migrant populations is almost certain to continue to grow due to differential birth rates, even with the increasingly strict immigration control.

English law has shown a steady progression away from separation and control toward increasing liberalism. The last heretics (two Anti-Trinitarians) were burned at the stake in 1612, and the last witchcraft trial was in 1712. The 1689 Act of Toleration accorded freedom of worship and the right to their own ministers to Nonconformists or the Free Churches, though not to Unitarians, and it was not until 1850 that the Roman Catholic hierarchy was restored in England. The Test Acts (denying public office to those who refused to take communion in an Anglican church) were finally repealed in 1829, and university religious tests were abolished in the 1870s and 1880s.

While discrimination on the grounds of sex or race became illegal in the 1970s, discrimination on religious grounds was not an offense until the Human Rights Act 1998 came into force in 2000, with the aim to "give further effect" in U.K. law to the rights contained in the European Convention of Human Rights. There is no requirement for religions to register in England, although they may apply for charitable status, which confers certain tax benefits. Generally speaking, legal restrictions on religious activity are confined to restrictions of the criminal code.

England has witnessed occasional outbreaks of anti-Semitism, some organized "anticult" activity since the 1970s, and some more serious tensions with the Islamic community since 1989, when Ayatullah Khomeini issued a fatwa ordering Muslims to kill the novelist Salman Rushdie following the publication of *Satanic Verses*. Islamophobia became further pronounced after 9/11 and the July 7, 2005, London Transport bombings.

Although established, the C of E does not have a complete monopoly of privileges or power. Prison, hospital, and military chaplains now include some other faiths. About a third of state schools are faith schools; two thirds of these are C of E and most of the rest Catholic, but there are a few other state-funded schools (mainly Jewish, Muslim, Sikh, and, since 2008, Hindu).

It has been argued that the C of E tended during most of the 20th century to provide a discreet cultural and ceremonial backdrop to English life rather than a strong religious presence. It was generally assumed that one's religious identity was C of E, unless one made a clear statement to the contrary. Toward the end of the century, however, a number of controversial issues resulted in the church becoming a more conspicuous part of public life. First, its theological credentials began to be questioned, with the publication of the Bishop of Woolwich's radical *Honest to God* in 1963. The questioning reached a crescendo in 1984, when, apparently as a sign of divine retribution, York Minster was struck by lightning 3 days after David Jenkins, well known for his allegedly heterodox beliefs, was consecrated there as Bishop of Durham.

In 1982, Archbishop Runcie annoyed Mrs. Thatcher, the then prime minister, by praying for the Argentinean as well as the British dead during a thanksgiving service at the end of the Falklands war. Furthermore, the church, popularly characterized as the Tory Party at prayer, began to concern itself with social reform. In 1985, *Faith in the City*, a report authored by the Archbishop of Canterbury's Commission on Urban Priority Areas, was accused of "Marxist theology" for blaming the policies of the Thatcher government for much of the spiritual and economic poverty of Britain's inner cities.

Meanwhile, gender issues have been dominating the C of E's internal politics. When the General Synod voted in favor of the ordination of women priests in 1992, several hundred clergy left the church in protest, many being accepted by the Roman Catholic Church, even if they were married. Subsequent disagreements over the role of women and homosexuality have been threatening to split the wider Anglican Communion.

Nonetheless, despite some very real challenges resulting from its religious diversity, when compared with other countries, England can be seen as

entertaining a relatively tolerant pluralism. One finds little of the fervent fundamentalisms and enthusiasm common in the United States and other parts of the world, and despite the existence of a National Secular Society, the British Humanist Association, and the widely publicized pronouncements of the biologist Richard Dawkins, neither does one find much of the fierce antireligious sentiments that exist in parts of continental Europe.

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See also United Kingdom

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modernity stems from the Enlightenment as well as the antirational Romantic movement that followed it. Many, if not all, of the processes of modernization, such as industrialization, urbanization, establishment of democratic governance and civic society, and social and educational reforms have their roots and legitimacy in Enlightenment thought. The French Revolution, with its stress on human freedom, equality, and fraternity, viewed itself as the daughter of the Enlightenment. However, so did the ideas of the absolutism of the state over the individual, centralism, and reforms enforced “from above”; the belief in the automatic progress of mankind; and the nationalistic, fascistic, and totalitarian evils of the 20th century.

Though the “enlightened” 18th century referred to itself as the Age of Reason, the later term *Enlightenment* (*lumières* in French, *illuminismo* in Italian, *die Aufklärung* in German) meant the spread of a new, rational, scientific, and humanistic light. Enlightened thinkers and rulers tried to transform the *ancien régime* through *revolution*, but the term originally signified more of an atonement or gradual process of reform than a radical shift in power. The confident, rationalistic rectification of past faults, “superstitions,” and “fanaticism” was to apply to everything, from political and economic reforms, to the reconstruction of “true” Christianity or a “natural” religion, and even to technical innovations.

Historians widely agree that there were two main sources for this reformism. First, whereas 17th-century thinkers like Descartes and Spinoza had established rationalism as a system of scientific thought, their disciples took it further and made it a tool for understanding and redressing the wrongs of society as a whole. Enlightened *philosophes* in France and elsewhere thus criticized despotism and the incompetence of the perpetual dominance, the brutality, and the religious intolerance of the confessionalist age, which in their eyes was conduct incompatible with “true” Christian ethics. Others criticized the social embeddedness of human institutions in the name of a “natural” law or religion: They wanted to liberate society from the influence of the church and the market from its artificial restrictions (reducing the impact of Adam Smith’s “invisible hand”). Second, criticism of the past grew stronger through evaluation

ENLIGHTENMENT

In the late 17th century and the 18th century, enlightened thought and reforms, which represented a sharp break with the preceding Baroque period and age of confessionalism, occurred in various European countries and worldwide and developed everywhere relatively undisturbed until the French Revolution (1789). Our concept of

of “other,” non-Western societies, distinct from anything known in Europe or the Mediterranean, the Bible, and classical antiquity. Chinese and Indian societies thus became (idealized) models of “how to do things better”—for example, positing a mandarin as the archetype of the virtuous atheist. For Enlightenment thinkers, reason alone, emancipated from all its historical and institutional restraints, was capable of judging what is the “right” form of social organization or ultimate course of development humankind should take.

Although cosmopolitan in nature and clearly led by the French, the Enlightenment was not one single movement. On the contrary, it was polycentric in nature and comprised various “national” streams that differed in both theoretical thinking and social applications. English, Scottish, and Dutch intellectuals and even immigrants to these liberal countries established learned societies and a free press, contributing to the rapid development of public thought. They called for the liberation of humanity, separation of powers, and establishment of a “true” religion. These new ideas were well suited to Protestant virtues and popular interests, so even though this type of radical freethinking died out early, it still had a significant impact on practical everyday life. In England and its North American colonies, and in Holland, the Enlightenment transformed itself into the struggle to achieve progress, industrialization, and democratic social organization from the bottom up, with an emphasis on individual endeavor. Even the American War of Independence, led by the enlighteners, can be seen as this kind of individualist, civic, and capitalist movement. With respect to religion, radical critics of the revealed religion (i.e., church-based Christianity) were not around for very long, and most societies followed liberal versions of Protestantism, which eventually led to secularization, though there were some counterrevivals, especially in the United States, known as the Great Awakenings.

The situation in most of continental Europe was altogether different. There was a large popular consciousness in France, but the prerevolutionary Bourbons pursued an absolutistic and centralist form of rule, and the Catholic Church opposed many reforms. Consequently, in France, the Enlightenment manifested itself in the form of critical intellectual and popular debates, in salons,

literature, and the media (influenced by Voltaire and Montesquieu and later by D’Alembert, Beccaria, Condorcet, Diderot, d’Holbach, Rousseau, and others), which challenged the top powers and ultimately culminated in bloody revolution. Religion was a crucial element in this, as reformers and revolutionists opposed Catholic dominance, even though the great majority of them were Catholics. During the Revolution (1789–1799), they established religious freedom and “reformed” the church in accordance with their own views (popularly elected priests and bishops, nationalization of church property, dissolution of monastic orders, etc.). During the most radical period of the Jacobin dictatorship, there was even an attempt to establish a new religion, the cult of the Supreme Being (*Être suprême*). However, this does not mean that the earlier years of the French Enlightenment were necessarily anti-Catholic. Although some thinkers, like Voltaire, were avowedly antichurch in attitude (but he himself also stressed the church’s role in upholding morals and disciplining the masses), there were many Catholic *abbés* among the contributors to the *Encyclopédie*, the grand synthesis of all human knowledge.

Other European countries, such as Austria, Sweden, Russia, and German and Mediterranean states tended to have a less developed public sphere, so new ideas were usually introduced by the rulers in cooperation with small cliques of intellectuals and bureaucrats. This was the case of Frederick the Great of Prussia (ruling 1740–1786), Maria Theresa and Joseph II of Austria (1740–1780 and 1780–1790, respectively), and Peter the Great and Catherine the Great of Russia (1682–1725 and 1762–1796, respectively). In the Catholic countries of southern and central Europe, the introduction of Enlightenment reforms was greatly inspired by L. A. Muratori (ethical Christianity) and I. Febronius (national Catholic churches). No radical antichurch attitudes such as those in revolutionary France emerged, but the vehemence of state rulers in these regions was such that it eventually led to the Pope’s dissolution of the Jesuit Order (1773) and to many changes in Catholic religiosity directed at the “ethicization” of Catholicism. Such reforms usually involved establishing religious tolerance and applying restrictions to religious orders, Baroque rituals, and feasts, which the reformers viewed as “superstitions.”

Throughout Europe, the Enlightenment led to the establishment or extension of religious tolerance and a reduction of the influence of the clergy and churches in general, excluding them altogether from a growing range of affairs that came to be perceived as purely secular, and to a growing sense that religion belongs mainly to the private sphere. At the same time, enlighteners established universal popular education, which led to a massive rise in literacy and a notable increase in the circulation of books and newspapers, wherein religious themes were replaced with secular topics dealing with the cultivation of knowledge and popular entertainment. Some historians believe that as a result, the Enlightenment widened the intellectual gap between rulers and the people, the educated and uneducated, but the numbers of the latter were greatly slashed by the spread of education, reading culture, media, and a general idea of progress driven by reason, science, and humanity. However, such progressivism also meant that society shifted from being “heteroreferential,” paying respect to the “other” (i.e., God and His laws, values, and norms), to being “autoreferential,” capable of establishing its own laws, rules, and institutions.

The Enlightenment has traditionally been seen as a starting point for European and subsequent worldwide secularization, with the probable exception of the United States alone. However, this assumption is nowadays widely questioned, as western Europe remains the only territory where an “out-of-church movement” occurred, according to some, compensated by other forms of religiosity/spirituality. Jose Casanova noted that secularization emerged as a self-fulfilling prophecy in Europe, legitimizing the “modern” knowledge regime, which in a global perspective was a unique situation. The sociologist Shmuel N. Eisenstadt has therefore espoused a “multiple modernities” thesis, which disputes the automatic connection between modernization and secularization and shows that while some versions of modernization involved secularization (as in post-Enlightenment Europe), others certainly did not.

Zdeněk R. Nešpor

See also Civil Religion; Civil Society; Modernism; Modernization; Multiple Modernities; Nation-State; Secularism; Secularization; Unitarians

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ENUMA ELISH

The Babylonian epic poem *Enuma Elish* (Akkadian, “When on high . . .,” the first two words of the text) is one of several creation stories from ancient Mesopotamia and describes how the principal city god of Babylon, Marduk, defeats a threat of chaos in the form of Goddess Tiamat (Akkadian “Sea”) and establishes his kingship over the pantheon. Although the historical and political circumstances under which the poem was composed are not entirely clear, many scholars date the *Enuma Elish* to the 12th century BCE under King Nebuchadnezzar I (ca. 1125–1104 BCE), a time of nationalistic revival. Indeed, the exaltation of Marduk to the head of the pantheon in the *Enuma Elish* is thought to have direct political parallels in Babylonia at the time of its composition; as divine patron of the city of Babylon, Marduk’s success in battle, ability to reorder the cosmos, and ascension to absolute kingship reflects the ideal image of the Babylonian king, and the many copies of the poem that have been discovered throughout Mesopotamia dating to the first millennium BCE attest to its importance in imagining both divine and human kingship. The *Enuma Elish* also apparently played a prominent role in the Babylonian Akitu festival, a 12-day New Year’s event celebrated annually.

The *Enuma Elish* is composed of six tablets. In Tablet I, we are introduced to the creatrix of the

gods, Tiamat, and her husband Apsu, who wants to kill their children. Ea foils the plan by killing Apsu, and a furious Tiamat responds with a threat to undo the established divine order.

Marduk, Ea's son, rises to face the threat in exchange for a place as the eternal, supreme leader of the gods/goddesses. The deities surrender their authority to Marduk, after which he is proclaimed king in Tablet IV and given the authority to create and destroy. The battle ensues, and Marduk inflates Tiamat with a gust of wind, pierces her stomach with an arrow, smashes her head with a mace, and divides her corpse in half—one part becomes the heavens, the other is fashioned into the earth. In Tablet V, Marduk organizes the heavenly bodies and the cosmos generally, and in Tablet VI, another deity (Qingu) is killed, and his blood is used to fashion a human being. The gods then build Marduk a temple, Esagila, in Babylon, and a celebration feast is held. Marduk's installation as divine king is complete, and Marduk is given 50 names, symbolizing a coalescence of divine power under Marduk. Many elements of the epic pattern in the *Enuma Elish* (e.g., defeat of threat/sea by a new, younger male deity; reordering of the cosmos; erection of a temple and a celebration feast, etc.) are also found in the Ugaritic materials (particularly the Baal Epic) and in the Hebrew Bible.

Brian R. Doak

See also Ancient Near Eastern Religions; Gilgamesh Epic; Middle East; Ugaritic Religion

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to and influenced by cultural and hence spiritual perceptions. Questions about the engagement of religious traditions with the environment have been triggered by what has been called the “spoliation of nature debate,” initiated by the American historian Lynn White. In a 1967 article, White argued that the Judeo-Christian tradition, in which God created nature for humanity's benefit, establishes the dualism of man and nature. Since then, in a context where the “environmental crisis” has gradually become a central theme in Western societies and a foremost issue in national and international public policies, all major religions have taken up the controversy by reexamining the relationship of humankind and nature in their respective roles and by questioning the utilitarian paradigm. In parallel, religious ecology has emerged as a new trend in environmental policy and as a field of academic scholarship.

The Dualist Paradigm

Even before the emergence of modern environmentalism as a mainstream movement in the West, late-19th-century American naturalists such as John Muir and Aldo Leopold challenged the notion prevailing in Western culture that humanity was apart from, and not part of, nature. Leopold claimed that certain biblical passages had a negative impact on the environment because conservation was incompatible with the Abrahamic concept of land regarded as a commodity belonging to man. One biblical text he quoted to support this view is Genesis 1:28: “God blessed them and God said to them: ‘Be fertile and increase, fill the earth and master it; and rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, and all the living creatures that creep on earth.’” The American poet Gary Snyder followed this stream of thought in the 1950s and was inspirational to the founders of the deep ecology movement of the late 1960s and early 1970s, in particular Arne Naess, a philosophy professor at the University of Oslo. Naess criticized Cartesian or scientific rational philosophy and the Judeo-Christian tradition, which he saw as justifying the subsuming of nature to man's destructive aims. Subsequent proponents of this approach, including New Age, neo-Pagan, and neo-Shamanist movements, have argued that the perception of nature as sacred is central to non-Western and non-Abrahamic traditions, especially

ENVIRONMENT

The environment, understood as ecosystems, does not consist only of physical attributes; it is subjected

indigenous cultures where people perceive themselves as part of nature and adhere to views of the cosmos where this split does not exist. According to this argument, traditional ways of living, including those that practice custodianship of the natural world, have been subjugated to a dualistic approach that in many cases accompanied colonialism. To replace the lack of critical spiritual connectivity between people, nature, and landscapes, radical ecology calls for a “new environmental paradigm” or an ecosophy—that is, a philosophical/ecological total view inspired by naturalism, Buddhism, and other nondualistic philosophies.

Alliance Between World Religions and Environmentalists

In the context of the dualist controversy, some Christian churches began to address growing environmental and social challenges. They also responded to a pressing call for involvement on the part of less radical environmentalists who sought to gain the support of moral institutional authorities in view of grounding environmental issues in ethics. As of the mid-1970s, the World Council of Churches was the first religious organization to articulate a theological reflection on environmental destruction and social inequities around the centrality of the notion of creation and life. In 1992, at the time of the U.N. Earth Summit in Rio, the World Council of Churches facilitated a gathering of Christian leaders that issued a “Letter to the Churches” calling for attention to pressing eco-justice concerns. In addition to major conferences held by Christian churches, several interreligious meetings have been held, and various religious movements have engaged with the issue of environment. Some of these include the interreligious gatherings on the environment in Assisi in 1984 under the sponsorship of the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and in 1986 under the auspices of the Vatican. For its part, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has established an Interfaith Partnership for the Environment. Since 1995, an Alliance of Religion and Conservation has been active in England, while the National Religious Partnership for the Environment has organized Jewish and Christian groups around this issue in the United States. Religious groups have also

contributed to the drafting of the Earth Charter. This new alliance of world religions and environmental conservation has resulted in culture-specific religious concepts of ecology and nature being increasingly mainstreamed in national and international environmental policies, in particular in the field of biodiversity conservation.

Religious leaders and laypersons have been increasingly speaking out for protection of the environment. Environmental activism is an important emphasis of the major new movements of engaged Buddhism in recent decades, particularly in Korea and Japan. In 1989, the 14th Dalai Lama proposed in his Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech that Tibet should become an “international ecological reserve.” Rabbi Ishmar Schorsch of the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York has frequently spoken on the critical state of the environment. The Greek Orthodox Patriarch Bartholomew has sponsored several seminars to highlight environmental destruction in the Black Sea and along the Danube River, calling such examples of negligence “ecological sin.” From the Islamic perspective, Seyyed Hossein Nasr has written and spoken widely on the sacred nature of the environment since the 1970s. In the Christian world, along with the efforts of the Protestant community, the Catholic Church has issued several pastoral letters since the 1990s. Pope John Paul II wrote a message for the World Day of Peace, on January 1, 1990, titled “The Ecological Crisis: A Common Responsibility.” In August 2000, at a historic gathering of more than 1,000 religious leaders at the United Nations for the Millennium World Peace Summit of Religious and Spiritual Leaders, the environment was a major topic of discussion.

Revisiting Traditions

With the aim of grounding environmental ethics in their respective faiths and traditions, institutions or individuals in various Christian churches and several streams of Judaism and Islam have undertaken to reexamine sacred texts, classical sources, normative legal traditions, historical precedents, and the writings of past religious thinkers. The concept of man’s “stewardship” over natural resources has commonly emerged from these undertakings. However, various currents among

each of the three Abrahamic faiths have expressed contrasting positions vis-à-vis the issue. In the Islamic world, Shi'ite scholarship on the environment developed as early as the 1970s based on reinterpretation and adaptation of traditions. Inspired by these precursors, in the 1990s, Sunnī scholarship on religion and environment took opposition to trends of political Islam that reject the environmentalist approach as West inspired. In Judaism, debates are ongoing about the compatibility of the position of classical thought with recent international or interfaith texts that refer to nature as sacred. Some scholars of Judaism and the environment argue that there is an irreconcilable difference between the environmental outlook of Hasidism, based on a view of God as immanent, and that of the Mitnagdim, who believe in the dualistic nature of God. Christian Creationists and other literalists, for their part, have refused to engage with the issue.

Academic scholarship has followed and accompanied religious scholarship. The most noted initiative has been a 3-year intensive conference series, titled "Religions of the World and Ecology," organized at the Center for the Study of World Religions at Harvard Divinity School to examine the varied ways in which human-Earth relations have been conceived in the world's religious traditions. From 1996 to 1998, the series of 10 conferences examined the traditions of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Daoism, Confucianism, Shinto, and indigenous religions. It brought together more than 700 international scholars of the world's religions as well as environmental activists and grassroots leaders. Since 1998, an ongoing Forum on Religion and Ecology has been organized to continue the research, education, and outreach begun at these earlier conferences.

Finally, grassroots environmental movements have developed in many Third World nations—some inspired by deep ecology, others by mainstream environmentalism. They have often stated that their claims for social and environmental justice necessitate a domestic and international recognition of their nondualistic visions of the cosmos and nonutilitarian views of the relationship between humankind and nature.

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See also Christianity; Engaged Buddhist Groups; Indigenous Religions; Islam; Judaism; Neo-Pagan Movement; Neo-Shamanisms; New Age Movements

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EQUALITY

Equality is a term used in the context of religion to describe fair treatment, personal rights, community membership, and privileges in a particular context. Equality is not a simple concept, since its definition and application vary between different countries and cultures. Equality in religion is intertwined with political, societal, and economic facets of culture as well.

Genders

Discussions about gender equality in religion typically focus on empowering and alleviating oppression of women in traditional religions. Feminist theologians in developed nations advocate for gender-inclusive language, equal leadership roles for women, and a celebration of feminine spirituality in traditional rituals. Many religious traditions—Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, and Judaism—face challenges related to women's leadership and involvement.

One example of the struggle for equality for women in Christianity is the battle over female ordination to the priesthood in Catholicism. Women are allowed to serve as nuns and lay leaders but cannot enter the priesthood. In evangelical churches globally, women are often prohibited from assuming public-speaking roles, preaching, or assuming pastoral roles, though, of course, there are

exceptions. Conservative scholars argue that women are equal in value but not equal in function in the Christian church. In China, however, women administer one third of the pastoral roles in registered churches. In Judaism, feminist scholars have advocated for the inclusion of prayers written by women and a reinterpretation of the Hebrew Scriptures to make women more visible within the traditional history.

Islamic practice and laws toward women vary depending on whether the setting is a Muslim-majority or Muslim-minority country. Islamic women in Cairo, Egypt, have for some time worked in professional offices and could choose whether to wear a veil. Women who are faithful to Islam in Iran have fewer legal rights and face increased restrictions in their daily lives. According to Leila Ahmed, women understand Islam from an oral, familial tradition that focuses on equality and mercy, while men follow a textual, rigid interpretation of the same sacred text. There are abuses and violence toward women that exist in tribal areas of Muslim-majority countries that are not consistent with Islam or the teachings of the Qur'an as a whole.

For the global population beyond the developed nations, women are more concerned about equity—that is, fair treatment and access to necessary resources for daily life. Groups such as the Circle for African Women represent the efforts of Third World women to work out feminism in order to address those needs that are most relevant to women in their context. Advocacy by women and for women in their own contexts, such as the Dalit women of India, is becoming increasingly common.

Ecofeminism is a burgeoning movement with strong female involvement. Balance and interconnectedness are words used in this philosophy to represent the concept of equality between people, nature, and all living creatures. Women's organizations in minority religious traditions, such as the Baha'i Faith, have worked to advance equality for women in the areas of education, literacy, and increased skills for income and greater attention to gender roles in indigenous communities.

Races

Equality among races exists to varying degrees in religious traditions and secular society. With the

advent of the civil rights movement in the United States, religious leaders had to confront obvious inequalities in racial participation. Christianity, according to the Bible, offers equality to all races under one church, although Christian history does not always typify this principle in practice. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. observed that the 11 o'clock hour for Christian worship on Sunday mornings was the time when Americans were most segregated. Many of the early activists in efforts toward the abolition of slavery were religious persons, driven by theological convictions for racial equality, a theme very important later in the civil rights movement.

Racial tensions exist in global settings, which also influence religious life. For example, the Pomaks, a religious minority of Bulgarian-speaking Muslims, are dispersed throughout various countries and have a complex identity as a community. Individuals may feel more affinity to Turks or to Bulgarians, Christians, or Muslims. There are significant political and social implications for this diverse identity. The struggles in the Pomak community represent racial dimensions of language, religion, and culture that have an impact on equal access politically and economically.

Classes and Caste

Classes and castes are a significant part of the discussion related to race and religious community. India is typically the center of discussion, with its highly structured caste system that exists in society, buttressed by traditional religious concepts of a stratified social order. Traditionally, persons of a lower caste in society may not receive equal benefits and privileges of citizenship in the country as a whole, though the government of India has gone to great lengths to promote caste equality, including the provision of reserved positions in government employment and university admissions and reserved seats in both state and national legislative bodies. Hindu religious groups in India have also removed their restrictions against allowing persons of lower castes to enter temples.

Issues of equality between economic groups in India parallel socioeconomic disparities in other global communities. Latin American religions struggle with issues of equality and social class related to land ownership, education, and general

income level. Resources are out of balance in countries such as Chile and Mexico, which affects religious institutions such as the Catholic Church. Political and religious power heavily influence each other in a society where inequality is the norm. Adherents of Liberation Theology within the Catholic Church have taken a strong stand in favor of economic equality in Latin America, whereas many leaders in the traditional hierarchy have defended the status quo.

Sexualities

Equality among sexualities may be one of the most controversial concepts in traditional religions in this century. Evidence for this claim lies in the heated religious debates related to same-sex marriage and ordination of homosexual priests. Protestant Christian denominations have experienced significant schisms from divergent theological views and their subsequent practical application. The Episcopal Church in America, with ties to the Church of England and the worldwide Anglican communion, selected an openly gay bishop, Gene Robinson, in 2003, and an openly lesbian bishop, Mary Glasspool, in 2010. The ripples of these decisions have led to major divisions in the tradition; many African Anglican churches, for instance, have adamantly opposed these choices. Other traditions are facing questions of equality for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered persons in their congregations and religious bodies. A highly politicized issue, gay marriage, is no longer controversial in certain European countries with a Protestant Christian majority—notably Denmark and the Netherlands. Strong Catholic countries, such as Italy and Spain, however, do not recognize the marriages of same-sex couples, given the strong prohibition from the church. Some Jews and Muslims believe that homosexuality contradicts teachings in their traditions as well. Battles regarding equality in the area of sexuality in traditional religions will continue to be fought in future decades.

Handicaps/Disabilities

Social equality for disabled persons in religion intersects with political and economic factors. One dramatic example in the United States was the

inclusion in the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act of persons with AIDS or those who are HIV positive. Faith groups of various backgrounds joined in support of the original bill, all fueled by a common compassion for suffering individuals. Religious bodies brought a great deal of support to the legislation. Similar to civil rights involvement, religious beliefs by traditionalists or fringe groups emphasize the equal value of all human life.

The World Council of Churches established the Ecumenical Disability Advocates Network to help churches and organizations that advocate for disabled persons in global contexts. They are particularly concerned with disabled persons in the midst of war and human rights violations. Religious leaders in Buddhism advocate for the equality of persons who suffer from disease or handicaps.

Judaism calls for compassion for all persons as made “in the image of God.” Older interpretations of Hebrew Scriptures attributed disability as retribution for sin. Islam also teaches equality of persons, despite any disability, since all of humanity is derived from one couple, Adam and Eve. Christianity is patterned after the example of Jesus Christ, who focused his ministry on the rejected persons in society. All three traditions emphasize mercy and compassion for all people, without prejudice.

Minority Religious Groups

Equality for minority religious groups involves the discussion of religious liberty. The United Nations issues international laws to protect the practice of any religion, whether majority or minority. Human rights conventions have prohibited religious discrimination but recognize that religions often fail to uphold international declarations of liberty. Even in as diverse a country as India, Muslims, the largest religious minority, claimed that the Hindu nationalist party, the Bharatiya Janata Party, discriminated against them during their years in power, when they led the national coalition government from 1998 to 2004. The continent of Africa has nations that are predominantly Christian and others that are predominantly Muslim. Nontraditional religions tend to be more accepting of plurality and equal practice of various faiths. Minority religious groups have an impact on traditional religions and continue to grow in almost every country in the world.

Conclusion

Historical accounts in traditional and minority religions demonstrate conflicting accounts of equality and inequality. From the perspective of disadvantaged persons, inequality precludes opportunities for equal access, while the privileged view equality as commonplace. Most religions hold values and beliefs that acknowledge the equality of all persons, irrespective of gender, race, sexuality, caste, or religious preference. As theologians observe, religious doctrine diverges at times in practice or interpretation. Battles for religious equality continue in a wide array of countries, traditions, and peoples around the world. Such battles demand analyses of different facets of complex political, economic, historical, and social issues.

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See also Christianity; Human Rights; India; Islam; Judaism; Politics and Religion; Religious Freedom; Religious Minority-Majority Relations; Roman Catholicism; Sexuality; Women's Roles; World Council of Churches

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EQUATORIAL GUINEA

Known as Spanish Guinea when it was a colony, Equatorial Guinea consists of three small islands and two larger islands alongside a small area of mainland West Africa. Two main cultural heritages exist within Equatorial Guinea: the Fang ethnic group residing on the mainland and the Bubi on the island of Bioko. The population is at least nominally 87% Roman Catholic, though syncretism is largely evident in the country. Protestant Christians and independent Christian organizations constitute another 6% of the populace, and adherents to Islam and the Baha'i Faith

constitute an additional 1%. The Muslim community of Equatorial Guinea was growing rapidly at the beginning of the 21st century, largely due to growing numbers of immigrants from West Africa and the Middle East. Much of the remaining population practices traditional African religious traditions, including ancestor worship and animist beliefs. Sorcerers are held in high esteem in Equatorial Guinea and are recognized as leaders of local religious communities.

Tribal wars that ravaged the area in the 12th and 13th centuries led to the domination of the Fang on the coastal mainland until they were pushed farther inland by the British, French, and Dutch slave traders. Bioko served as an important center for the slave trade and would be acquired by Spain in the 1700s from Portugal. Though ostensibly a Spanish colony, Equatorial Guinea was ruled by a British administration until 1858 when Spain's control of the islands began, followed by the country's governance of the mainland in 1926. Following the conclusion of the Spanish Civil War in 1939, the Spanish spent a great deal more energy developing the area of Equatorial Guinea. The country declared independence in 1968, and violence, economic devastation, and brutal dictatorship soon followed. During this time, the Catholic Church, already established in the country, became a vigorous voice of dissent for the beleaguered populace. This pursuit is more dangerous and important since the two dictators who have ruled Equatorial Guinea since its independence—Francisco Macias Nguema, until he was overthrown in 1979 by Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, who was in power at the time of this entry's writing—have been recognized as two of the worst civil rights abusers in Africa.

This historical association between the Catholic Church and the country's government has led to an unstable relationship between the two at the beginning of the 21st century. The church's role as a proponent of civil rights is recognized by the government, and it has responded by emphatically calling on religious leaders to stay out of politics. Still, the government has had to bow to popular sentiment and now recognizes Catholic holidays, and in a 1992 presidential decree, preferential treatment was granted to both the Roman Catholic Church and the Reformed Church of Equatorial Guinea. Even non-Catholic Equatoguineans are

expected to attend Catholic services, and Catholicism is encouraged for those seeking advancement in government positions. Catholic religious education is also a part of the public school curriculum.

At the beginning of the 21st century, a great wealth of oil was discovered in Equatorial Guinea, which led to its being considered one of the fastest growing world economies in 2004. Unfortunately, 70% of the population lives below the poverty line, and the existing government has used the newfound wealth to further entrench itself. The country is now one of the largest African oil suppliers south of the Sahara desert but is a classic case of the “resource curse,” where very few enjoy the benefits while the majority suffers.

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See also Africa; Economic Issues and Religion; Postcolonialism; Religion and State; Syncretism

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ERITREA

Eritrea is a nation in the Horn of Africa, bordered by Sudan, Ethiopia, and Djibouti and by the Red Sea. In Eritrea, the religious majority are Orthodox Christian, while the second largest religious population is Muslim. According to official 2002 census figures, the religious composition of Eritrea was as follows: about 64% Christian (58% Orthodox, 5% Roman Catholic, and less than 1% Protestant), 36% Muslim, and less than 1% traditional believer or ethnoreligionist. While the greater proportion of the country is Christian, with an estimated population of more than 3 million (3,250,849) in

2009, the Muslim population is almost 2 million (1,854,000).

Christians and Muslims are not evenly distributed geographically around the country. Christians are the majority in only two of the six administrative regions in the central highlands, while Muslims are predominant in the lowlands, the remaining four regions hugging the coastline.

The geographic distribution for the two predominantly Christian provinces is as follows. In Debub, Christians constitute almost 89% (about 85% Orthodox, 4% Roman Catholic, and less than 1% Protestant) of the population, while 11% are Muslims and less than 1% are ethnoreligionists. The population in Maekel is 94% Christian (almost 89% Orthodox, 4% Roman Catholic, and more than 1% Protestant) and 5% Muslim.

In the lowlands, Muslims are the majority. Anseba comprises about 61% Muslims, 26% Orthodox, 13% Roman Catholic, less than 1% Protestant, and less than 1% ethnoreligionist. In Debubawi Keih Bahri, the population is approximately 62% Muslim, 36% Orthodox, 1% Roman Catholic, less than 1% Protestant, and less than 1% ethnoreligionist. Gash-Barka is composed of 63% Muslims, 31% Orthodox, 4% Roman Catholics, 1% ethnoreligionists, and 1% Protestants. Semenawi Keih Bahri is composed of 87% Muslims, 12% Orthodox, and less than 1% of Roman Catholics, Protestants, and ethnoreligionists.

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church has had a strong influence on the country. Historically, these populations, many of which are from the Amhara of the Shoa and Hagerge regions of Ethiopia, have controlled the political structures of the region. From religious beliefs to calendars and land distribution, the Orthodox Church had a great impact on society from the 1500s to the 1800s. As it aligned with the Ethiopian monarchy in the mid-1800s, the Orthodox Church played a central political role by divinely ordaining emperors and exacting taxes. In the 1950s, the Orthodox Church played an important role in the country's efforts for political independence. During the 1970s and 1980s, both Christians and Muslims were highly involved in the struggle for liberation.

Muslim influence was felt beginning in the early eighth century CE. Trade and migration from the Arabian Peninsula built up the influence of Islam.

In the 19th century, missionary activity by Sufi brotherhoods extended the reach of Islam. By the end of the century, most lowland groups were Muslim. After enjoying a period of proliferation in cultural institutions and communal life in the earlier part of the 20th century, Muslims experienced oppression and disintegration under Ethiopian rule as Eritrean autonomy decreased. Since liberation in 1991, Muslim communal life has been revitalizing itself at a cautious pace.

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ESTONIA

Despite being a captive nation under the rule of the officially atheistic Soviet regime for nearly half of the 20th century, the Baltic country of Estonia (population 1.34 million) has historically been a Christian nation. Its first encounters with Christianity date to the 11th century, when Orthodox missionaries first appeared in the eastern areas closest to the present-day Russian state. However, it was the northern crusade of the 13th century, with the twin goals of territorial conquest and the conversion of Europe's last pagans, that brought Roman Catholicism to the Estonian lands. While German knights conquered the northeastern tribes, German priests baptized them and administered the faith during the later Middle Ages. In the 16th century, however, the region's rulers broke with the Church and embraced Lutheranism, which became the principal religious confession of both the German minority and the Estonian majority. While the

Germans who dominated the region left Estonia (and neighboring Latvia) during World War II, the Russians, who began arriving in large numbers in the 19th century, supplanted the Germans as Estonia's principal minority and brought the Orthodox faith with them.

For half a century, religious life in Estonia was suppressed by the Soviet regime, whose arrival in 1940 to 1941 resulted in the arrest, exile, or outright murder of thousands of people whom the new authorities regarded with suspicion and hostility—including dozens of Lutheran pastors. Partly as a result of the Soviet regime's draconian policies, church membership declined in Estonia, which today is one of Europe's most secularized countries.

The Estonian state today has no official church, and the constitution provides for full freedom of religion; yet only 30% of the Estonian population profess any religious faith at all. The main profession of the country's ethnic Estonians (who constitute nearly 70% of the population today) is the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church, with an estimated 180,000 members (less than 13% of the total population).

While most ethnic Estonian believers are affiliated with the Lutheran Church, most of the country's ethnic Russians, constituting about a quarter of the population, are Orthodox. In Estonia, Orthodoxy been divided since 1944, when the leaders of the autocephalous Estonian Apostolic Orthodox Church (EAOC), which was canonically subordinate to the Patriarchate of Constantinople, fled Estonia and settled in Sweden. Meanwhile, Orthodoxy in Soviet-occupied Estonia came under the control of the Moscow Patriarchate. With the restoration of Estonian independence in 1991, a struggle between the EAOC and the Diocese of the Moscow Patriarchate immediately ensued, with each claiming to be the legal successor to the pre-war Estonian Orthodox Church and, thus, the legal inheritor of its property. While the Moscow-based church, now registered as the Estonian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate, ended up being the loser of the struggle, there can be little doubt that the Russian-language Orthodox congregations are stronger and more influential than the Estonian congregations of the EAOC.

Among the other religious groups in Estonia are a small Jewish community of about 2,500 people,

residing mostly in Tallinn, as well as communities of Old Believers (an Orthodox splinter whose adherents fled to Estonia to escape tsarist persecution), Catholics, Baptists, Methodists, and other religious associations. American evangelical religious influence is felt in Estonia in the form of its small communities of Pentecostals and Jehovah's Witnesses.

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ETHICS

Ethics may be defined as the knowledge of moral values and duties or as the study of the ideal human character, actions, and ends. The term may also refer to a treatise on morals. Every religious tradition advocates high standards of human behavior, and in that sense, all religious communities have a moral component. The concept of “ethics,” however, emerges from the Western philosophic tradition. For this reason, this entry will first consider the development of this idea in Western philosophy and then explore the parallel forms of moral reasoning in the diverse religious traditions.

Aristotle, whose *Nicomachean Ethics* is surely one of the earliest treatises on the subject, thought of ethics as a “practical” science. In this sense, ethics is distinguished from “theoretical” inquiries such as physics as well as from “productive” sciences such as sculpture. In comparison with the former, ethics focuses on acts performed in view of a goal or an end (*a telos*). The acts chosen may hit or miss the mark; also, human beings are able to

choose better and worse goals. The distinguishing characteristic of the kinds of action of interest in ethics, then, is that these deal with things that “could have been different.” By contrast, the distinction between ethics and the productive sciences is that the goal is not to make a “finished” product. Rather, the goal is to live in a certain way, so that the end of ethics is itself found in the living of a good life.

This means that the science or knowledge sought in the study of ethics is, in some sense, a moving target. Furthermore, it implies that ethics cannot, or at least should not, seek to establish certainties of the type aimed at in physics. As Aristotle had it, a reasonable person does not demand more certainty than is possible, given a certain subject matter. The only thing certain in ethics is that one must grant the possibility that there is such a thing as good behavior; the inquiry is therefore about the ways in which human beings might distinguish this kind from other sorts.

Theories of Ethics

Textbooks in ethics often begin with a review of various theories about the nature of moral judgment. Given Aristotle's comments, one might understand these as attempts to generalize about the kinds of action that accord with a good life. All theories of ethics, including Aristotle's, rest on the notion that “good” actions are those that conform to the living of a good life. In this sense, all theories might be described as teleological—that is, they have to do with action that is purposive or intentionally aimed at attaining an end.

Nevertheless, some theories of ethics move from this descriptive point to various kinds of prescriptions. Aristotle himself proposed to think about moral action in connection with the cultivation of virtues, understood as habits or dispositions to act in ways that could be considered excellent. The presupposition of such thinking is that one has already been trained through living in a particular familial and social setting to make judgments about right and wrong. One can then proceed to think about the kinds of behavior that characterize courageous action, self-control, and the like.

Other theorists proceed in ways that differ from Aristotle's. “Consequentialists,” for example, advance a prescription of the following form:

Always act in the way that will bring about the best results. This suggests that the form of a good life is one in which human beings, over time, try to do those things that achieve a certain kind of outcome. In the most familiar forms of consequentialism, this outcome is one that may be deemed useful or in accord with a notion of utility. So Jeremy Bentham wrote that human beings should always seek to maximize pleasure and to minimize pain. This, he said, accords with the judgment pronounced by wise people, who say that the greatest happiness of the greatest number is the foundation of morals and legislation. Refined by John Stuart Mill and others so as to distinguish higher from lower pleasures, and thus to make the general principle less subject to manipulation, utilitarianism resonates with some of the most common modes of thinking characteristic of modern societies. For example, when one reads of policy makers who speak about the costs and benefits of certain approaches to health care or of committing a state to military intervention, it seems likely that a version of the utility principle is in play. Advocates of utilitarianism continue to debate the best ways of calculating costs and benefits; also, there is an important difference between “act” utilitarians, who urge that the uniqueness of every situation rules against any generalizations regarding right action, and “rule” utilitarians, who argue that norms such as “do not kill” or “keep promises” represent a storehouse of wisdom regarding those actions that normally correlate with the greatest good for the greatest number. Finally, it is interesting to note that some utilitarians argue that since the experience of pleasures and pains is not limited to human beings, their theory narrows the gap between human beings and other animals. A theorist like Peter Singer, for example, avers that, on utilitarian grounds, one might speak of animals as having rights and ground judgments in favor of vegetarianism or against the use of animals in at least some experimental procedures.

In contrast to the utilitarians, some theorists emphasize the performance of duty and argue that the consequences of our acts are largely beyond human control. Two terms are commonly used in classifying this perspective: One may speak either of “formalist” theories or, more commonly, of a deontological (from Greek *deon*, “duty”) approach to ethics. The former term reflects the fact that

theories of this type focus on the formal characteristics of acts: Certain kinds of acts simply have the character “right” or “wrong.” For example, to describe an act as “telling a lie” is to place it in a certain class or species; the acts in this species are wrong, and one’s duty is therefore to avoid lying, even if it seems that good consequences may follow. Immanuel Kant provides one of the best examples of this kind of theory, arguing that moral agents should always act in a way that is consistent with the highest standard. This standard, which Kant described as the Categorical Imperative, allows for no exceptions—though it does have several formulations, each of which proposes a somewhat different measure for human acts. “Always act, so as in your own person, to treat others as ends and not means only” is perhaps the most widely cited form of this ultimate norm. The emphasis on respect for the dignity of each and every person is widely held to articulate the basis for some of the most basic of contemporary moral standards—for example, that it is never right to use torture.

Just as utilitarians continue to debate a number of questions, so deontological theorists worry about various matters. For example, on the question “Are there ever exceptions to moral norms?” some advocates of a duty-based approach suggest that there are cases in which emergency conditions allow the use of torture or in which the possibility of saving lives allows for the telling of a lie. Those who take such an approach sometimes argue that the definition of torture or of lying actually builds in such exceptions. Others argue that the performance of duty requires one to acknowledge the importance of several different values and that these may come into conflict in particular cases. Thus, W. D. Ross suggested that there is a duty to avoid inflicting harm on other persons. At the same time, there is a duty to help others who are in need. These are best construed as *prima facie* obligations, meaning that they should always be considered in evaluating human acts. It is possible, though, that these duties come into conflict in a particular situation; for example, one might find it necessary to inflict bodily harm on a would-be criminal in order to protect a potential victim. In such cases, one’s *actual* duty involves overriding one of the *prima facie* obligations for purposes of dealing with specific circumstances.

Kant, it should be said, argued that no such conflicts ever occur and that speaking in the ways advocated by Ross leads to hopeless confusion. In particular, he thought that such reasoning is a way of allowing consequentialist considerations back into moral theory. For Kant, the problem is that once we allow consequences to determine our conduct, there is no clear way of establishing the limits of human behavior. Suppose we say that torture is allowed when necessary to protect the public interest, for example. Even if one argues that this is simply for exceptional cases or for extreme emergencies, “the public interest” seems an elastic category. Better to think like Bishop Joseph Butler, a British theorist, who suggested that God might be in a position to take consequences into account but that human beings are better off sticking with duty. Kant’s famous statement that the moral life consists in the performance of one’s duty as though it were a matter of divine commands expresses a similar notion.

Religion and Ethics

Comments by Butler and Kant raise another question of interest, not only to advocates of deontology but also to students of ethics generally. What is the role of religion in ethics? All religions engage in moral instruction. Whether one is thinking of the role of the notion of Torah (“instruction”) in Judaism, of the commandments to love God and one’s neighbor in Christianity, of filial piety in Confucianism, or of the “noble eightfold path” in Buddhism, we have ample evidence of the ways in which religious traditions attempt to guide human beings in matters of practice or “applied” ethics. Also, given that most religions tie good behavior to notions of flourishing or doing well in this world and to salvation or an afterlife, it seems clear that the great religious communities have an interest in motivating believers to do what is right. Perhaps the clearest examples of this interest are presented by religions in which a deity distributes rewards and punishments according to an individual or communal pattern of life. In the Gospel according to Matthew, those who failed to take care of persons in need “will go away into eternal punishment” and the “righteous into eternal life” (25:46). Or, in another biblical source (Deuteronomy 30:16), “If you obey the commandments of the Lord your

God . . . then you shall live and become numerous, and the Lord your God will bless you.” But even in religions that place less emphasis on divine beings, individual and communal well-being can be tied to proper behavior. For example, Confucianism lays stress on the connection between the righteousness of rulers and communal prosperity, which follows from the “Mandate of Heaven,” a kind of impartial law governing relations between the ruler and his subjects.

If the promotion of substantive moral teachings and practice is a general feature of religions, what shall we say about moral theory? Do religions develop distinctive theories of ethics? Or do they reflect options similar to those developed by philosophers like Aristotle and Kant, and Bentham and Mill?

Biblical Religions

It is often said that certain religions, which by dint of shared emphases might be described as biblical or Abrahamic, advocate a special theory of ethics, usually described as a divine command theory of ethics. For example, Christianity, Judaism, and Islam all provide examples of thinking that suggest that ideal behavior involves human conformity to the directives or guidance of God, the Creator and Lord of all that exists. To live rightly simply is to obey the command to love God and neighbor, to observe the 613 commandments of the Torah, or to exert oneself in the task of bringing oneself and one’s world into a pattern of behavior consistent with the Shari’a or path approved by God. Indeed, Kant’s comment describing the moral life as the performance of duty as though it were a matter of obeying divine commands suggests the importance of this idea.

At the same time, Kant’s statement indicates the resonance of the notion of obedience to divine commands with at least one of the moral theories already outlined in this essay. To obey God’s commands is to do one’s duty; in that sense, Christianity, Judaism, and Islam advocate a version of deontology. For example, consider the saying attributed to Jesus in the Gospel according to Mark: “Who are my mother and my brothers” (i.e., Who is a part of my community)? And the answer is: “Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother” (4:34–35).

The trend toward deontology in biblical traditions certainly is very strong. Nevertheless, one may find strands in scriptures and other sources of authority that resonate with other moral theories. Thus, the great al-Shafi'i, one of the principal figures in the development of Islamic jurisprudence, wrote that the "declarations" of God in the Qur'an and in sound reports of the Prophet's words and deeds point human beings to a way of living that leads to happiness in this world and the next. In emphasizing the connections between obedience and happiness, al-Shafi'i certainly spoke in ways reminiscent of the utilitarians. In later generations, some theorists wrote in ways even more suggestive of this tendency, saying that considerations of public welfare (*al-maslaha*) should be taken into account by scholars asked to render opinions regarding the duties of Muslims in particular cases. Finally, there are important examples of intellectuals in each of the theistic religions who describe the moral life as the cultivation of virtues and the avoidance of vices. In this, they may be described as developing the perspective of Aristotle, though they typically present this in connection with an emphasis on divine law. For example, Thomas Aquinas thought of moral virtues such as courage or prudence as dispositions to behave in ways approved by God. Such ways accord with the end or goal for which human beings were created—that is, to enjoy the vision of God in a condition of eternal bliss. In this way, Thomas and others could combine elements of various theories within an overarching account of the end or *telos* of human existence.

An emphasis on divine commands probably does not suggest a moral theory independent of deontological or other approaches, then. It may suggest a distinctive theory of moral obligation—that is, biblical religions typically do try to answer the question "Why be moral?" in connection with beliefs about the nature and destiny of human beings or regarding the ultimate purpose of the world. For example, the Qur'an declares that God did not make the world for sport but rather as a way of distinguishing truth from falsehood or right from wrong (21:16–18). In other passages, the point of the world is to provide a kind of testing ground for human beings, to see which of them will honor God through the performance of good works. All things come from God and to God all

will return—creatures act in accord with their nature when they give praise to their Creator; correlative, their destiny involves judgment by God, the merciful and compassionate Lord. If one asks, "Why be moral?" then the answer is "because this is the purpose for which you exist" or "because proper moral behavior accords with your nature."

This picture of human beings as creatures of God not only presents a distinctive explanation of moral obligation, but it also illumines another issue connected with theories of ethics—namely, "How do we know what is right?" For Kant, moral knowledge is derived from critical reflection on the phenomenon of practical reason itself—that is, the categorical imperative may be described as a necessary presupposition of any sort of thinking that distinguishes right from wrong. For other philosophers, moral knowledge similarly stems from reflection on some aspect of human reason and/or experience.

Biblical religions hold, by contrast, that human beings derive moral knowledge by way of a relation with God. God governs the world with wisdom. Human beings learn to distinguish right from wrong as they participate in or apprehend those parts of this wisdom appropriate to their existence. In particular, God speaks to or "addresses" human beings in a variety of ways, so that they are able to understand their obligations. The Bible, the Qur'an, and other texts indicate one mode of such speaking: God reveals God's will, so that human beings may know the right way to live. In this connection, biblical religions are often said to connect moral knowledge with special revelation, so that an ability to distinguish right from wrong itself involves a willingness to read and study sacred texts or to follow the teachings of religious authorities.

Remembering that these religions hold that moral obligation correlates with the nature of human beings, however, one has reason to look more carefully at this emphasis on special revelation. After all, if one answer to the question, "Why be moral?" is that right behavior accords with true human nature, then too much stress on sacred texts or teachings seems inconsistent, in that it restricts moral knowledge only to believers. And in fact, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam all insist that moral knowledge is not restricted in this way. Ideas of "natural law," general revelation, or

“common grace” all point in this direction and provide a way in which these religions connect with the claims of Kant and other philosophers. These ideas suggest that moral knowledge is available to all humans by way of reflection. As Thomas Aquinas put it, the natural law is a part of God’s wisdom that human beings are able to grasp through the use of “natural” means—in particular, reason. Divine law, meaning the teaching presented in scriptures and the tradition of the church, confirms, complements, and extends the natural law. But it does not violate or negate the value of simple reflection as a source of moral knowledge. To put it another way, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam hold that special revelation helps sharpen and clarify our knowledge of right and wrong. But this does not mean that such knowledge is only available to believers.

Religions of South and East Asia

If the biblical religions emphasize the notion of divine commands in matters of ethics, what about other traditions? The religions of India as well as those identified with China and more generally East Asia certainly put forth notions of deity and, in some cases, suggest that divine beings provide directives for human affairs. Nevertheless, scholars typically argue that divine beings in these traditions play a rather different role than in the biblical religions. And thus, discussions of ethics in Hinduism and Buddhism or in Confucian and Daoist traditions do not typically deal with questions about divine command theory. Rather, they focus on the way in which an impartial, even impersonal, cosmic system sets the context for human action. In some sense, the practical role of religions then has to do with providing or pointing to the kind of wisdom that will help human beings navigate, and perhaps eventually escape from or overcome, the necessities of the cosmos. Deities, divine or at least superhuman beings, may assist human beings with respect to wisdom. But ultimately, even gods and goddesses participate in and must deal with limits. As one very ancient Hindu text has it, the divine beings are more recent than the creation of the cosmos. If we ask who knows about cosmic origins, we are left with mystery. “He, the first origin of this creation, whether he formed it or did not form it, whose eye controls

this world in highest heaven, he truly knows it, or perhaps he knows not” (Rig Veda X:129; Griffith translation).

The religions of India speak about the impartiality of the cosmos in terms of karma, which here may be thought of as the insistence that one reaps what one sows. Actions inevitably yield consequences, and these have import for social and personal well-being. To live well, or to navigate the cosmos with success, means that one lives in accord with dharma, which may variously be translated as “law,” “teaching,” or (perhaps best for present purposes) “wisdom.” The idea that dharma provides guidance in dealing with karma suggests that ethics in the context of Hindu, Buddhist, and other Indian traditions will have a teleological cast, and scholarly treatments of these religions typically stress this. Thus, Max Weber’s famous work *Religion of India* emphasizes the importance of an otherworldly goal (or release from karma) in directing human action; similarly, the discussion of Theravada Buddhism in David Little and Sumner B. Twiss’s *Comparative Religious Ethics* describes the primary trajectories of moral thinking in this tradition in terms of a teleology focused on transpersonal (social) or intrapersonal (individual) welfare. The transpersonal or social elements in this tradition resonate strongly with the maxim of classic utilitarianism: Always act in ways that will yield the greatest good for the greatest number. At the same time, the intrapersonal or individual elements of the tradition seem to be in conflict with this aim, since these suggest that one must renounce or get beyond the attachments of family, community, and state if he or she is to attain the ultimate goal of release or salvation from the cosmic system.

Such interpretations run the risk of underemphasizing strongly deontological trajectories in Indian religions, however. Remembering Aristotle’s suggestion that all moral action is purposeful or goal oriented, we should not be too quick to take Hindu or Buddhist presentations as simple equivalents of utilitarianism; considerations of duty also play a role. An ancient Hindu text, the *Laws of Manu*, provides detailed indications of the duties appropriate for people of various castes or social classes, and the various prescriptions for laypersons, monks, and nuns in Buddhist teaching are all expressed in terms of duty.

One of the most interesting presentations of the importance of duty in the history of ethics occurs in the *Bhagavad Gita* or “Song of the Lord,” a short though often excerpted portion of the epic *Mahabharata*. The Gita presents the dilemma of Arjuna, a member of the warrior caste and thus charged with the duty of preserving and protecting social order. Arjuna’s duty is plain; he is to fight with honor in the service of established authorities. Yet on the eve of battle he falls into despair because he knows that fortune has brought him to a point where fulfilling the duty of his vocation will involve him in fighting against members of his own family, who are serving in the opposing force. The requirements of honor are thus in conflict. Should Arjuna do his duty as a knight, he will violate his obligation to his family. Should he honor the ties of family, he will violate his duty as a knight. As he broods over the issue, his attendant or servant begins to give him counsel. As we come to understand, this attendant is none other than Krishna, the avatar or incarnation of Vishnu, and thus a particularly significant figure in the pantheon of Hindu deities. Never fear, says Krishna to the brooding warrior. Karma has brought you to this place and also has brought your family and others to this situation of conflict. Your task is not to resolve the conflict but to soldier on and to resolutely carry out your duty as a warrior; your colleagues and your opponents, family members and others, will all perform their duty as well. The consequences are not your concern—at least not in any immediate sense. What is important is that as you fulfill your duty, you remain detached—that is, you must not yield to anger, hatred, envy, and other negative emotions. For as you fight, your actions contribute to the formation of a certain kind of character. And ultimately, that must be your concern. Krishna then proceeds to outline various approaches to the cultivation of character and ultimately to salvation: Arjuna and others may follow the path of action and service, meaning they perform their duties scrupulously, with compassion and skill. They may follow the path of knowledge, meaning they meditate on and achieve understanding of the ways in which the cosmic process works. Or they may follow the path of devotion, in the sense of attaching themselves to one or more of the divine figures in the Hindu pantheon, trusting that love of the divine will provide the proper

orientation to action in this world, enable forgiveness of one’s shortcomings, and lead to salvation or deliverance from the cosmic system.

The encounter between Arjuna and Krishna thus resonates with all the major theories of ethics discussed thus far, for we come to understand that the performance of duty yields consequences of great importance with respect to both social and personal welfare. And with respect to the latter, we are presented with a view like that of Aristotle or of Thomas Aquinas, in which the living of a virtuous life is itself a kind of excellence, leading to ultimate bliss.

In a similar vein, the moral perspective developed in the religions of China combines notions of duty, social utility, and virtue in a holistic perspective. Confucianism and Daoism do not emphasize adherence to divine commands in the manner of biblical religions. In this, the religions of China resemble those of India, so that the various texts and practices presented speak frequently of various deities while making them subject to the same cosmic system that constrains human beings. “Heaven” (*ti’en*) accomplishes its dictates in ways that are largely outside the control or grasp of human beings. By various means associated with the term *dao* (the “way”), persons and groups may order their lives in ways consistent with the workings of Heaven. These include, but are not limited to, observance of norms related to good conduct. Thus, Confucianism focused on the cultivation of filial piety in specific relations: the ruler and the ruled, husband and wife, parents and children, and teacher and student. To behave properly in these relations is akin to the proper performance of a ritual. Over time, those who perform the ritual correctly and with the appropriate attitude will develop the characteristic of *ren*, variously translated as benevolence, magnanimity, generosity, or “human-heartedness.” A ruler, for example, should seek the interests of the people in his realm, exercising the proper mix of mercy and justice in matters of policy. Citizens should show respect to the ruler, adhering to the law and otherwise following the ruler’s lead. Teachers should seek the welfare of their students, not the enhancement of their own reputations. Students should honor their teachers by attending to their lessons and acting in ways that indicate gratitude and devotion.

It is often said that Confucianism is a social or politically oriented religion, while Daoism developed in the interests of preserving a kind of mystical, personal devotion. And it is true that Daoist texts focus on the role of great savants—sages whose powers enable them to work miracles and otherwise overcome the normal constraints of existence. Nevertheless, Daoist discipline also included the observance of social norms, and over time, Chinese and other East Asian cultures seem to have viewed these traditions as complementary. Thus, one who follows the way of Heaven will observe the social proprieties advocated by Confucianism while at the same time thinking of Daoism in connection with an attempt to bring his or her self, beginning with the body, into a pattern of behavior consistent with the ebb and flow of the cosmic process.

The religions of India and of China, then, exhibit a relationship to the moral theories outlined at the outset of this entry that is rather similar to that of the biblical religions. They do not, in other words, represent independent or unique theories of morality. They do, however, provide an overarching perspective or context for moral conduct that suggests responses to questions about moral obligation, motivation, and moral knowledge. With respect to the first, the express intention of the religions of India and of China appears to be connected with the desire of human beings to navigate and eventually to overcome a cosmic system in which pleasures and pains, good fortune and bad, are largely beyond human control. One of the ways in which human beings manage to survive and even to flourish within an ambiguous environment is through cooperation, so that the moral life is in part motivated by the need to foster and preserve group existence. At the same time, persons have aspirations that are not entirely attained by means of participation in groups. Indeed, group life itself imposes constraints on the desires of human beings, and moral norms are to a large extent an expression of these. The idea that one who behaves properly will in the end develop a kind of character or obtain a standing that overcomes the world is a way of addressing such concerns. By answering the question “Why be moral?” the religions of India and China address such concerns, even as do the biblical religions.

With respect to moral knowledge, the biblical religions focus on divine wisdom, made known through special and general revelation, as we have seen. The religions of India and of China seem not to speak in this way, which follows from their rather different depiction of divinity. Instead, the characteristic way of thinking about moral knowledge appears to be reflection, particularly as illustrated by or represented in the teachings of exemplary persons—sages, whose insights into the cosmic process may be represented as providing the kind of wisdom indicated by the terms *dharma* or *dao*. One learns by attending to the teaching of masters; this teaching, in turn, has validity because of long experience. Generations of practice show that the teaching has merit in terms of the religious as well as the social and psychological needs of human beings. Thus, reading texts, commenting on them, hearing experts discussing them, attending to their role in ritual practice—all these are a part of the religions of India and of China, even as they are an aspect of biblical religions.

Here and Now

In 1918, just following Germany’s defeat in World War I, Max Weber delivered a lecture titled “Politics as a Vocation.” Among other things, Weber observed that contemporary moral and political discourse might be analyzed in terms of a conflict between advocates of an “ethic of ultimate ends” and an “ethic of responsibility.” By the former phrase, Weber pointed to a style of reasoning in which convictions about right and wrong as well as about the ultimate good for human beings and the world do not allow for compromise. They also do not admit the importance of considering the likely consequences of particular actions. Such an ethic is admirable, in the sense that it proceeds from a profound sense of duty. According to Weber, however, it is quite unsuitable to the practice of politics or, more generally, to modern social life. For politics, one must always consider the likely results of actions taken. It is always possible that adhering to a particular conception of duty will actually yield more harm than good. As an example, Weber cited pacifist convictions, by which no one could ever authorize the use of armed force; he also cited the idea that “tell the truth” is a norm that can never be compromised. An ethic

of responsibility requires that one consider the possible outcome of a course of action. Indeed, since there may be more than one possible result, a responsible agent must consider the variety of outcomes possible, and finding his or her duty will involve deliberation about the best way to achieve good consequences. One need not be a convinced utilitarian according to Weber's view—following the happiness principle might itself be a kind of ultimate end. But to be responsible, one must consider that finding one's duty may not be a simple thing. In modern settings, human beings not only deal with a variety of agents and relationships, but they are accountable for the fact that these agents include people whose convictions about ultimate ends may be quite different from their own, and it may be that sustaining the kinds of relationships necessary for social cooperation involves compromises between these.

In arguing in this way, Weber outlined one of the central problems of moral action in the modern world. As the processes associated with globalization proceed, people thinking about ethics become more and more aware of the fact of religious and moral plurality. The study of ethics thus involves a series of questions: What are the various beliefs people hold with respect to right and wrong? Where we find disagreement, how serious is it? How deep does it go? Is it the case that moral diversity suggests we must think of a plurality of values? Or is diversity simply a matter of human beings working out so many variations on an overarching set, or perhaps even a single value? If so, what would that (or those) value(s) be? Is some degree of disagreement reasonable or at least tolerable? If so, how much? And what is the role of religion in such matters? We have argued that religions typically do not advance distinctive moral theories but rather reflect the characteristic emphases of deontology, utilitarianism, and virtue identified in the history of ethics. At the same time, we have suggested that religions do provide a set of overarching beliefs about the world and regarding the nature and destiny of human beings. Insofar as these provide some distinctive answers to questions such as "Why be moral?" and "How do we know right from wrong?" religions may shape the ways in which persons and groups approach particular questions about moral judgment. When, if ever, is war appropriate? In particular circumstances, is it

appropriate to use torture in the service of preventing great evils or not? Is constitutional democracy, conceived as government of, by, and for a group of human beings, the best form of political organization? Or should government be a matter of applying divine law?

In this connection, some moral theorists have argued that the fact of religious diversity suggests the importance of limiting the sphere of government in ways that are characteristic of constitutional democracy. For example, John Rawls argued that limiting the role of government, so that it does not become embroiled in controversies over religion or other proposals about the "comprehensive" (Weber would have said "ultimate") good of human beings, is the best way to avoid the kind of violence typically associated with wars of religion. This means that when office holders, and in particular judges, make decisions about law or public policy, they must do so in terms of a framework associated with public reason—a set of terms and, behind those terms, beliefs that reasonable people either have or would agree to, given the fact of a world characterized by religious, and to some extent moral, plurality. This thesis of Rawls is often characterized as a "thin" theory of morality or of the good, in that it limits the lawmaking and policy aspects of social and political life to a very basic or limited set of norms. In particular, Rawls held that social and political life should be guided by (1) a principle of equal opportunity, in the sense that all people have an equal right to share in a system of basic liberties, and (2) a "difference" principle, by which the differential capacities of people to access basic liberties and the different outcomes obtained in terms of wealth or other social goods are to be regulated by the idea that differences should be considered just only insofar as they actually work to increase the possibility for those who might be described as disadvantaged to more effectively access basic liberties.

Rawls's two principles of justice, and in particular the difference principle, are certainly controversial. At this point, however, we are more interested in the overarching idea that social and political life should be governed by a thin theory of morality. This idea is criticized by Alasdair MacIntyre, among others. For MacIntyre, moral discourse cannot proceed unless a community of people

agree on an overarching notion of excellence or virtue. Rawls's thin theory of morality is not only impoverished, it actually leads to the kind of endless disagreement and even strife that Rawls wishes to avoid. For MacIntyre, the seemingly intractable conflicts modern societies experience with respect to issues such as abortion and euthanasia provide a case in point. And that is not even to mention the kinds of large-scale conflicts presented by the differing visions of political order offered by constitutional democracies and, say, militant or radical Islam. Human beings cannot hope to resolve such conflicts with an agreement on a comprehensive theory of the good. If, as MacIntyre says, we cannot currently see how such an agreement would be possible, that does not suggest that it is so. Invoking a figure important for leading the society of his day out of the rubble left by the decay of the Roman Empire and toward the establishment of Christian civilization, MacIntyre writes that we must wait on a new St. Benedict, a charismatic figure who will show the way.

In the context of globalization, then, we have a large-scale debate about the place of moral theory, about religions and their impact on moral practice, and about the ways in which human beings should deal with an increased awareness of religious, moral, and other forms of plurality. In this context, we could do worse than to direct our thinking to the proposals advanced by the great religions of the world and to further bring them into dialogue by considering the relations of their normative teachings to those theories developed in the history of ethics as ways of generalizing about the kinds of actions that accord with a good life.

John Kelsay

See also Bible; Dharma, Karma, and Samsara; Human Rights; Just War; Nonviolence; Politics and Religion

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ETHIOPIA

Modern Ethiopia in East Africa was formed with the conquest of today's southern Ethiopia by the Christian Abyssinian king Menelik II during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Christianity was introduced into the Axumite kingdom, which later became Christian Abyssinia, at an early date through its commercial and maritime relations with the Byzantine Empire, but the actual founders of the Axumite church were Syrian brothers, Frumentius and Aedesius, although those early Christian merchants gave them a foundation on which to build. Orthodox Christianity was imposed on the conquered peoples of the south, southeast, and southwest by force during and after Menelik's conquest and the subsequent creation of the Ethiopian empire state.

Islam arrived in Ethiopia in 615 CE, brought by a group of Muslims counseled by Prophet Muhammad to escape persecution in Mecca by the Quraish and travel to Abyssinia, which some consider the first Hejira in the history of Islam. Islam then expanded gradually throughout modern Ethiopia, especially in the country's low-lying

parts, with the expansion being more vigorous in the 19th and early 20th centuries as a resistance to the conquest by Christian Abyssinia. Nearly all Ethiopian Muslims are Sunni.

Religious Distribution

The Federal Central Statistical Agency (based on the 2007 Census) reported the following religious distribution: Ethiopian Orthodox Christians (EOCs), 43.5%; Muslims, 33.9%; Protestants, 18.6%; followers of indigenous religion, 2.6%; Catholic, 0.7%; and others, 0.6%. All religions are found in all regions, with variations in their share among the total population. For instance, EOCs are dominant in Addis Ababa, Amhara, and Tigray, while Muslims constitute the larger proportion in Somali, Harari, Afar, Oromia, and Benishangul Gumz. In the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and People's Region (SNNPR) and Gambella, Protestants have larger representations. Christian evangelical and Pentecostal groups continue to be the fastest growing groups.

Indigenous religion includes a variety of belief systems practiced by different ethnic groups, who in many instances practice their indigenous beliefs side by side with their "official" religions. Among some ethnic groups such as the Gamo and Tambaro, and in some parts of the Hadiya and Kambata zones, there is what Tibebe Eshete (2009) has called "the well-preserved heritage of a fascinating mix of Christianity and traditional religion" (p. 32). The Oromo, the largest ethnic group in Ethiopia, believe in one Supreme Being or Creator called *Waaqa* (God); their belief system is called *Waaqeffanna*, and a believer in *Waaqa* is called *Waaqeffata*. *Waaqeffanna* is solemnized by a high-ranking priest known as *Qaalluu*; these priests are referred to as the guardians of the laws of *Waaqa* on earth.

State and Religion

From its introduction to the kingdom until the fall of the last monarch in 1974, Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity was the official state religion. To describe the support Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity received from the monarch, Patrick Gilkes proposed the term *theocracy*—that is, religion was a major preoccupation of the emperors, and the

main function of the throne was to support the church. However, the Dergue's 1987 constitution, Article 46(3), separated state and religion, while the 1995 constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE), Article 11, not only reaffirmed the separation of state and religion but also declared that neither should interfere in the affairs of the other. Nevertheless, this does not necessarily mean that the state does not interfere in the internal affairs of religious organizations, nor does it mean that it always treats all religions in the same manner. Muslims, Protestants/Evangelicals, and indigenous believers accuse the state of being biased in favor of the EOCs. (For the suppression the Protestants/Evangelicals faced under the Dergue, see Eshete, 2009.)

Inter- and Intrareligious Tensions

Under the imperial regimes, Ethiopia used to be identified as a Christian country despite its multi-religious society. As a result, according to David Shinn and Thomas Ofcansky, the authorities always treated Islam as a secondary religion and discriminated against Muslims. In spite of this, Ethiopians of different religious traditions coexisted peacefully for centuries. Nevertheless, despite the long history of peaceful coexistence and constitutionally guaranteed equality of religion and religious freedom, recently, there are signs of growing tensions between the EOCs and the Muslims. In recent years, there have been conflicts that caused loss of lives and destruction of churches and mosques in some places. Reliable information on what triggered the conflicts is lacking, but reports indicate that disputes over sites of religious rituals resulted in violent conflicts. This is part of the bigger agenda of the two religions—namely, the Muslims' struggle to assert themselves as Ethiopians with equal rights as Orthodox Christians and the latter's determination to contest the status of Muslims as Ethiopians, invoking the old myth that "Ethiopia is the Island of Christianity" and drawing on the old Amharic adage, which can be translated as "Muslims' country is Mecca."

In Islam, the Wahhabis have been accused of intolerance for interfaith interaction between Muslims and Christians. This creates tension

between the Wahhabis and mainstream Muslims, who want to continue to have a good relationship with their Christian neighbors.

The EOCs, especially the Mahabare Kedusan (an ultraconservative Orthodox group) accuse the Evangelicals of attempting to dismantle the Orthodox Church because they actively engage in converting Orthodox followers. There are also tensions within EOCs—between the growing reformist group and the “Orthodox” EOCs.

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ETHNIC CLEANSING

See Refugees

ETHNIC NATIONALISM

Ethnic nationalism has come to mean nationalism based on membership through genetic and cultural inheritance—based on blood and often, though not always, consisting of members of the same religious group—as opposed to nationalism that is inclusive and open for outsiders to join. *Ethnic nationalism* is often understood in opposition to *civic nationalism*, which is conceived of as mass, civic, and democratic. Within this paradigm, ethnic nationalism is interpreted as a reactionary force among ethnolinguistic groups (or, more accurately, reactionary elites who mobilize such groups on ethnic grounds) that seek to either maintain or increase their power vis-à-vis emerging civic nationalist democratic states. The word *ethnic* stems from the Ancient Greek *ethnos* meaning “people” or “group,” but it has often been used to denote “out”-groups rather than reflexively and was used by the Greeks to denote those groups outside their own community. *Ethnic* is often still used in the same way, referring to groups outside or not quite full members of a nation. It is crucial, however, to emphasize that ethnic and civic nationalisms only exist as ideal types. A nation may appear to have more ethnic than civic characteristics, but there will be components of civic nationalism apparent in ethnic nations, and the opposite holds true for civic nationalism. As an ideal type, civic nationalism is more commonly associated with a top-down elite-led construction of democratic states (often described as citizenship) in the face of pressures from industrialization and modernity, whereas ethnic nationalism is seen as coming from below—a reactionary movement on the part of reactionary conservatives looking to block the progress of modernity and largely *volk*-centered in its appeal. As ideal types, these paradigms are often exemplified by invoking progressive British and French nationalisms against the regressive and brutally

violent nationalism in interwar Nazi Germany and Russia.

Prior to the last quarter of the 20th century, theories of nationalism were dominated by structural approaches to the emergence of identity within the state—that politics inspired by national identity were subservient to the needs of the state to create citizens, that nationalism was a temporary and reactionary response to class development or economic conditions, or that nationalism emerged where religious practice and belief were in decline. In Elie Kedourie's *Nationalism in Asia and Africa* of 1971, nationalism was portrayed as a return to the "Dark Gods," and in most of the writings on nationalism during this period, nationalism was considered a form of politics that was anti-Enlightenment, especially where it emerged as a movement to assert the rights of minority groups that challenged universal citizenship, essential to the coherent functioning of the liberal democratic state. In such cases, nationalism serves no point in contemporary economic and political development but is rather an attempt through an elite, which is either academic or politician led, construction of false consciousness to address the alienation of industrialization. False consciousness here refers to the manner in which these elites construct a way of thinking about issues of nationalism that were not "organically" present in the population but rather instrumentally introduced into political debate to try to subvert or manipulate political perception and discussion. In this way, nationalist politics, which eschewed class demands and were even potentially antithetical to them, were being interpreted as regressive and out of tune with the needs of an industrialized and interdependent world. This led to analyses of a bad Eastern (ethnic) versus good Western (civic) nationalism, where the one was typified by exclusionary membership in the nation based on blood and birth (German and Russian nationalisms) and the other by membership that was construed as inclusive and open, based on a willingness on the part of potential nationals to accept those who willingly took up essential national practices (often portrayed as French Republican nationalism, with an emphasis on the importance of *Francophonie*—literally, the willingness to adopt the French language as the universal and discrete means of communication within the French nation).

Why good civic and bad ethnic nationalisms? Within these accounts, causation has been drawn between perpetration of ethnic cleansing and ethnocide and the exclusive character of national identity. Put simply, the Nazis are alleged to have perpetrated the Holocaust because no Jew could ever be considered to be German. Similarly, in cases such as the Balkans and Rwanda, the impermeable and noninclusive nature of ethnic identity is construed as the rationale behind the high degrees of brutal ethnic violence. The exclusive nature of such ethnic nationalism was placed in relief by the apparently inclusive nature of civic nationalism, where even those educated in the farthest reaches of the French Empire—in Indochina or North Africa—would be taught the French language and culture and could be expected to benefit from and participate in the French nation and colonial project. This French form of civic nationalism was seen as being progressive, insofar as, to coin Eugene Weber's famous title, it turned "peasants into Frenchmen," taking a linguistically, culturally, and religiously disparate population and creating a unified workforce, ready to take the state and industry into a modern era—a citizenship inherently loyal to the Republican values of *liberté, égalité, and fraternité* (liberty, equality, and fraternity). To this extent, good civic states were meant to be populated by nations that were culturally (and often religiously and racially) homogeneous, a homogeneity born out of inclusiveness. This ideal type provided the foundation for the nation-state, within which nation and state were congruent, interdependent, and mutually reinforcing.

Yet the French and British examples are beset with problems. In the French case, the emphasis on a French form of secularism, the French language, and the glass ceiling of race and religion (apparent in the Dreyfus Affair, the experiences of North African immigrants, and recent debates on the wearing of the veil) all indicate that civic nationalism is being defined, at least partly, through an inherently ethnic identity. Furthermore, the experiences of exploitation, discrimination, and violence against Algerians in France during the interwar period were enough to convince some future members of the *Front de Libération Nationale* of the need for Algeria to separate itself, violently if need be, from the French nation-state. In this way, French nationalism can be understood to be inclusive on its

own terms—it demands assimilation for membership, yet the conditions for assimilation are being defined by the dominant French ethnic group. That is to say, French identity is not being constructed *ex nihilo* (neutrally, from nothing) but through an organic French perspective on the meaning of the nation and what membership should entail. Similarly, ongoing debates on the meaning of Britishness, in light of English, Scottish, Welsh, and (Northern) Irish nationalism, indicate the extent to which there is disagreement over whether Britishness has been defined in light of English nationalism. Does Britishness reflect the extent to which England has dominated the British state, or is it a category broad enough to include all manner of ethnic and national groups except the English? (Note the recognition of national holidays except the feast of England's patron saint, St. George.) In this case, there can be little or no doubt that elements of ethnic and religious identity matter greatly in the root definition of Britishness. In other paradigmatic examples, such as the United States, where a national identity is nominally being constructed and reinforced not out of a shared cultural heritage but from shared conceptions of an immigrant past, this identity reflects the concerns of White Anglo-Saxon Protestants (WASPs), who have held, and continue to hold, many of the most important political, economic, and cultural positions. The United States has seen an increasing emphasis on English as a national language as a bulwark against Latino immigration, and these culture wars have created new debates on how American identity should be defined.

If ethnic nationalism does not exist empirically and can only be understood as an ideal type, why is it important as an academic term? Despite the fact that it is only an ideal type, civic and ethnic nationalism often help indicate how nations came into being—that is, either through top-down or bottom-up processes—and may also help interpret and understand the foundations of contemporary immigration and citizenship policies. This can aid in interpreting how policies such as German nationality law, which had largely been based on *jus sanguinis* (lit. “right of blood”), whereby citizenship was acquired through the parental line, has evolved into one that is more open to accommodate long-term immigrants and their children. Within the accounts of scholars such as Rogers

Brubaker, the historical German use of *jus sanguinis* has been contrasted to French reliance on *jus soli* (lit. “right of the soil”) citizenship laws, whereby citizenship is conferred by place of birth rather than by heritage. Yet both examples are subject to significant change over time and, as illustrated above, really only indicate ideal types rather than a definitive indication of national identity in state policies. Another reason these ideal types are useful is the way in which they have been placed into theoretical dialogue with one another. This allows for highly pertinent discussions surrounding issues of democracy, citizenship, and nationalism. Scholars such as Habermas, Plamenatz, Miller, Horowitz, O’Leary, and many others have engaged in debates over the extent to which identity based on membership in the nation can unify democracies—which otherwise may be subject to intense competition for power and resources—or the extent to which nations defined by dominant ethnic groups come to antagonize and fragment such situations.

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See also Ethnogenesis; Politics and Religion; Religious Freedom; Religious Minority-Majority Relations; Religious Nationalism

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ETHNOGENESIS

In its basic semantics, the word *ethnogenesis* is composed of the Greek words *ethnos* (ἔθνος, “*volk*,” “tribe,” “group of people”) and *genesis* (γένεσις, “creation,” “origin,” “a coming into being”). The term *ethnogenesis* is first mentioned by the American poet Henry Timrod (1828–1867) in his poem of the same name concerning the birth of his own nation, the Confederate States of the American South.

As a scientific concept, ethnogenesis refers to the processes by which a group of people come into being as a definable group, aggregate, or category at some point in history. These people could then be understood or understand themselves as ethnically distinct from the wider sociocultural context from which their grouping emerges. The history and historicity of people are main points in the conceptual understanding of these processes. Other key features are language, appearance, religion, name, or the whole cultural context as distinct from other ones. The complementary dimension of ethnogenesis could be understood as ethnocide, which is the conscious effort by powers to obliterate a people’s lifestyle.

The process-related understanding of ethnogenesis could be studied under several aspects and in several ways. There are three main approaches—namely, the sociobiological, functionalist, and symbolical approaches.

The sociobiological approach has been considerably influenced by the theory of evolutionism. The processes by which a group of people came into a definable category are usually conceptualized as based in biology and determined by genetic and geographical factors. Explicitly within the Russian and former Soviet anthropology, the result of ethnogenesis was seen as a unity of “blood and soil.” This perception was derived from Herder’s neo-romantic concept of the *volk*. The processes of ethnogenesis were determined to be geographic and a combined effect of landscape and endogamy (a marriage rule in which marriages are only approved within a specific group, such as

one’s own caste, etc.). *Ethnos* is understood here as a group originating from successful genetic-biological reproduction and thus, over time and space, an expanded group of related families. In this primordial sense, ethnic groups are objective and homogeneous entities with certain inherent sociobiological characteristics, such as language, territory, mentality, and economy.

In the functionalist approach, the processes of creating ethnicity were defined in terms of the objective cultural structure and institutions of a given society. Ethnicity was a product of political myth, created and manipulated by sociocultural elites in their pursuit of advantages and power. The cultural forms, values, and practices of ethnic groups become resources for elites in competition for political power and economic advantage and in the dynamics of elite competition within the borders determined by political and economic realities.

The third and most influential approach, symbolical and constructivist in its theoretical foundation, could be understood as symbolic in verbal and nonverbal form. This means that these processes are value laden and can move people to action. The ethnogenetic processes could be interpreted as the dialectical negotiating of the objective and subjective within a set of sociocultural diacritics such as physical appearance, name, language, history, nationality, and religion. These sets define a shared identity by inclusion and exclusion. The signs always convey meaning, and therefore, they are to be understood as reference points of a cultural context—“webs of significance man himself has spun” (Geertz, 1973, p. 5).

There is always a relationship between ethnicity, religion, nationality, and cultural identity. All aspects are interdependent and overlap at certain points. This means, for example, that in religious movements, ethnogenetic processes can also be of major relevance, especially in their millenarian manifestations and realignment: For example, Jews are different from Christians because the former do not accept Jesus as the Messiah. The cultural and symbolic history of both demonstrates a flow of common cultural signs that differ from each other by ethnogenetic processes.

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See also Ethnic Nationalism; Politics and Religion; Religious Minority-Majority Relations; Religious Nationalism

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EUROPE

There are two ways of looking at the religious situation in Europe: The first considers the features that are common to Europe as a whole; the second looks at the differences across the continent. This entry begins by looking at a range of factors that can be found throughout Europe. The second section develops a series of variations based largely on the different confessional blocs—that is, Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant. It also considers the contrasts between what is commonly

known as West Europe and the parts of the continent that were under communist domination from 1948 to 1989. In the latter, the religious trajectory is noticeably different. The final section points to the current paradox: On the one hand, there are the relatively high levels of secularity in most if not all of Europe, but on the other, there is the marked resurgence of religion in public debate—a combination that was not anticipated.

Common Factors

There are six very different factors, which—taken together—contribute to a better understanding of the place of religion in modern Europe. These factors change and adapt over time. Currently, they are interacting in new ways to produce distinctive formulations of religion in Europe, some of which are unexpected. The six factors are as follows:

1. The role of the historic churches in shaping European culture
2. An awareness that these churches still have a place at particular moments in the lives of modern Europeans, though they are no longer able to discipline the beliefs and behaviors of the great majority of the population
3. An observable change in the churchgoing constituencies of the continent, which operate increasingly on a model of choice rather than a model of obligation or duty
4. The arrival in Europe of groups of people from many different parts of the world, with very different religious aspirations from those seen in the host societies
5. The reactions of Europe's secular elites to the increasing salience of religion in public as well as private life
6. A growing realization that the patterns of religious life in modern Europe should be considered an “exceptional case” in global terms—that is, they are not a global prototype

Cultural Heritage

The starting point reflects the undisputed role of Christianity in shaping European culture, bearing in mind that other factors (notably Greek

rationalism and Roman organization) must also be kept in mind. One example will suffice: The Christian tradition has had an irreversible effect on the shaping of time and space in this part of the world. Both week and year follow the Christian cycle, even if the major festivals are beginning to lose their resonance for large sections of the population. The same is true of space. Wherever you look in Europe, there is a predominance of Christian churches, some of which retain huge symbolic value. This is not to deny that in some parts of Europe (notably the larger cities), the skyline is becoming an indicator of growing religious diversity. Europe is evolving, but the legacies of the past remain deeply embedded in both the physical and cultural environment.

The Historic Churches

Physical and cultural presence is one thing, but an active role in the everyday lives of European people is quite another. Commentators of all kinds agree that, with very few exceptions, the latter is no longer a realistic aspiration for the historic churches of Europe. That does not mean, however, that these institutions have entirely lost their significance as markers of religious identity. The following terms are useful in understanding these ambiguities: first, the notion of believing without belonging and, second, the concept of vicarious religion.

Believing Without Belonging

One of the most striking features of religious life in contemporary Europe is the mismatch between different measurements of religiousness. There exists, first of all, a set of indicators that measure firm commitments to (a) an institutional life and (b) creedal statements of religion (in this case, Christianity). These indicators, moreover, are closely related to each other insofar as institutional commitment both reflects and confirms religious belief in its orthodox forms. The believing Christian attends church to express his or her belief and to receive affirmation that this is the right thing to do. Conversely, repeated exposure to the institution and its teaching necessarily disciplines belief.

No observer of the current religious scene disputes that these dimensions of European religion

are both interrelated and in serious decline. There is, on the other hand, considerable debate about the consequences of this situation. The complex relationship between belief (in a wider sense) and practice is central to this discussion, for it is clear that a manifest reduction in the “hard” indicators of religious life has not, in the short term at least, had a similar effect on rather less rigorous dimensions of religiousness. For the time being, the latter remain relatively strong (the data are clear on this point). It is precisely this state of affairs that is captured by the phrase “believing without belonging.”

It is important to remember, however, that many secular institutions have declined similarly, both in Europe and beyond. The most obvious examples are political parties, trade unions, and the wide range of leisure activities, which require “gathering” on a regular basis. In other words, believing without belonging is a pervasive dimension of modern European societies; it is not confined to the religious lives of European people.

Vicarious Religion

The connections between emergent patterns of belief and the institutional churches are complex. Not only do the latter continue to exist, but they quite clearly exert an influence on many aspects of individual and collective lives—even in Europe. The notion of vicarious religion is helpful in this context.

By vicarious is meant the notion of religion performed by an active minority but on behalf of a much larger number who (implicitly at least) not only understand but quite clearly approve of what the minority is doing. The first half of the definition is relatively straightforward and reflects the everyday meaning of the term—that is, to do something on behalf of someone else. The second half captures the legacy of the state churches of Europe and is best explored by means of examples. Religion can operate vicariously in a wide variety of ways: Churches and church leaders perform rituals on behalf of others (at the time of a birth or a death, for instance)—if these services are denied, this causes offense; church leaders and churchgoers believe on behalf of others and incur criticism if they do not do this properly; church leaders and churchgoers

embody moral codes on behalf of others, even when those codes have been abandoned by large sections of the populations that they serve; and churches, finally, can offer space for the vicarious debate of unresolved issues in modern societies.

One way of illustrating these features is to consider the place of religion and the continuing role of religious institutions in European societies when they face the unexpected or the tragic. Specifically, European populations still turn to their churches at the time of a death (whether individual or collective)—and even more so if that death is considered untimely. The reactions that followed Princess Diana's death in 1997 offer an excellent illustration. And if large numbers of people are involved (e.g., in an accident or natural disaster), the effect is cumulative.

From Obligation to Consumption

Rather different are Europe's diminishing but still significant numbers of churchgoers—that is, those who maintain the tradition on behalf of the people described in the previous section. Here, an observable change is clearly taking place, best summarized as a shift from a culture of obligation or duty to a culture of consumption or choice. What was once simply imposed (with all the negative connotations of this word) or inherited (a rather more positive idea) becomes instead a matter of personal choice. Europeans now go to church (or to another religious organization) because they choose to, sometimes for a short period or sometimes for longer, but they feel no obligation either to attend in the first place or to continue if they no longer want to.

As such, this pattern is entirely compatible with vicariousness: The historic churches need to be there in order that Europeans may attend them if they so desire. Their nature, however, gradually alters—a shift that is discernible in both practice and belief, not to mention the connections between them. There is, for example, an easily documentable change in the patterns of baptism in the Church of England. The overall number of baptisms has dropped dramatically in the postwar period, evidence once again of institutional decline. In England, though not yet in the Nordic countries or indeed in parts of southern Europe, baptism is no longer seen as a ritual associated with birth but

has become increasingly a sign of membership in a chosen voluntary community.

In other words, membership of the historic churches is changing in nature. They are becoming more like the growing number of free or independent churches that can be found all over Europe, though more in some places than in others. Voluntarism is beginning to establish itself de facto, regardless of constitutional legacies.

New Arrivals

The fourth factor concerns the growing number of incomers in almost all European societies. There have been two stages in this process. The first was closely linked to the urgent need for labor in the expanding economies of postwar Europe—especially in Britain, France, Germany, and the Netherlands. The second wave of immigration occurred in the 1990s and included, in addition to the places listed above, both the Nordic countries and the countries of Mediterranean Europe (Greece, Italy, Spain, and Portugal)—bearing in mind that the latter, until very recently, have been countries of emigration rather than immigration.

This is not primarily a religious movement, but the implications for the religious life of Europe are considerable and vary from place to place, depending on both the host society and new arrivals. Britain and France offer an instructive comparison. In Britain, immigration has been much more diverse than in France, both in terms of provenance and in terms of faith communities. Britain is also a country where ethnicity and religion crisscross each other in a bewildering variety of ways (only Sikhs and Jews claim ethnoreligious identities). The situation in France is very different: Here, immigration has been largely from the Maghreb, as a result of which France has by far the largest Muslim community in Europe—an almost entirely Arab population. Rightly or wrongly, Arab and Muslim have become interchangeable terms in popular parlance in France.

Beneath these differences lies, however, a common factor: The growing presence of other faith communities in general, and of the Muslim population in particular, is challenging some deeply held European assumptions. The notion that faith is a private matter and should, therefore, be proscribed from public life—notably from the state and from

the education system—is widespread in Europe. Conversely, many of those who are currently arriving in this part of the world have markedly different convictions and offer—simply by their presence—a challenge to the European way of doing things. European societies have been obliged to reopen debates about the place of religion in public as well as private life—hence the heated controversies about the wearing of the veil in schools, about the rights or wrongs of publishing material that one faith community in particular finds offensive, and about the location of “non-European” religious buildings. There have been moments, moreover, when a lack of mutual comprehension, together with an unwillingness to compromise on many of these issues, has led alarmingly fast to dangerous confrontations, both in Europe and beyond.

Europe’s Secular Elites

Such episodes raise a further point: that is, the extent to which the secular elites of Europe make use of these events to articulate alternatives—ideological, constitutional, and institutional—to religion. It is important to remember, however, that such elites, just like their religious counterparts, vary markedly from place to place.

Key in this respect is an awareness that the process of secularization has taken place differently in different European countries. For example, what in Britain, and indeed in most of northern Europe, occurred gradually (starting with a de-clericalization of the churches from within at the time of the Reformation), became in France a delayed and much more ideological clash between a hegemonic, heavily clerical church and a much more militant secular state. The result was “la guerre des deux Frances” (Catholic and *laïque*), which dominated French political life well into the 20th century. The legacies still remain in the form of a self-consciously secular elite and a lingering suspicion concerning religion of all kinds—the more so when this threatens the public sphere. The fact that these threats are no longer Catholic but Muslim does not alter the underlying reaction.

That said, Britain now plays host to some aggressively secular voices. Indeed, all over Europe, resurgent religion brings with it resurgent atheism. Two points are immediately clear in this respect: first, that this situation is qualitatively different

from that which preceded it and, second, that this was not anticipated. The latter is crucial: Resurgent religion has taken Europe by surprise—hence the vehemence of the reaction.

Europe: An Exceptional Case?

The final factor introduces a different perspective. Instead of asking what Europe is in terms of its religious existence, it asks what Europe is not. It is not (yet) a vibrant religious market, such as that found in the United States; it is not a part of the world where Christianity is growing exponentially, very often in Pentecostal forms, as is the case in the Southern Hemisphere (Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa, and the Pacific Rim); it is not a part of the world dominated by faiths other than Christian but is increasingly penetrated by these; and it is not for the most part subject to the violence often associated with religion and religious differences in other parts of the globe—more so if religion becomes entangled in political conflict. Hence the inevitable, if at times disturbing, conclusion: that the patterns of religion in modern Europe, notably its relative secularity, might be an exceptional case in global terms.

This point is all the more crucial given that the paradigms of social science emerge from the European case and are very largely premised on the notion that modern societies are likely to be secular societies. It follows that the traditional, European-based understandings of social science may be markedly less suitable for the study of religion in other parts of the world.

Regional Differences

Confessional Blocs

The preceding section described the factors that are common to Europe as a whole. Central to this story is the mutation in the historic churches of Europe as these once-dominant institutions come to terms with a very different situation. Common to all these churches are their historic attachments to political power—first in the form of empire and later in the form of the nation-state. A crucial legacy of these arrangements is the connection between Europe’s state churches and territory, a link expressed

at every level of society—supranational, national, and local. This last is important: The whole of Europe, literally, is divided into parishes—the core unit of administration, which for centuries had civic as well as ecclesiastical resonance.

This situation dates from the time of the Roman emperor Constantine, who in 325 convoked the Council of Nicaea. The Nicene Creed (promulgated by the council) included the phrase “the one holy catholic and apostolic Church.” By the end of the fourth century, this church—Orthodox Christianity—had become not only the state religion but a defining institution of the Byzantine Empire. This sharing of power was a world away from first-century Palestine and the beginnings of Christianity as a vulnerable sect. At its zenith, the empire stretched from central and eastern Europe into Asia and through much of North Africa. It lasted for 10 centuries, coming to an end in the fall of Constantinople (Byzantium) to the Ottoman Turks in 1453. Even now, Orthodox Christianity remains the dominant creed of much of eastern Europe: in Greece, Cyprus, Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia, and, of course, Russia.

The first major split in the Christian world occurred in the 11th century, when the continuing tensions between Western (Catholic) and Eastern (Orthodox) Christianity could no longer be contained. The reasons for such tensions were both doctrinal and ecclesiological: The former concerned the nature of the Trinity (specifically the *filioque* clause, which altered the relationship between the three persons of the Trinity); the latter reflected the preeminent role of the pope in the Western church, which contravened Orthodox teaching that all bishops were essentially equal—in other words, that every bishop is Peter’s successor in his own church. Events came to a head in 1054, the date generally accepted for the “great schism.”

The Western church was centered on Rome and stretched both to the north and to the west. Until the time of the Reformation, the Roman church and the Holy Roman Empire were the core institutions of western Europe and closely interrelated. Such links continued until the 16th century (Charles V was the last emperor to be crowned by the pope, in 1530). The relationship was not always peaceful, however, as secular power vied with the church for dominance, notably over the appointment of bishops. It was never entirely clear

who was dependent on whom. In the early-modern period, however, both these Pan-European institutions suffered as the aspirations of local rulers grew stronger, a movement that coincided with the growing criticism of the Catholic Church at the time of the Reformation. The movement took different forms in different parts of the continent, but a second upheaval in the politico-religious life of Europe became increasingly inevitable.

The term *reformation* is highly ambiguous: Does this imply innovation and the breaking of new ground, or does it involve a return to and rediscovery of primitive excellence? The political implications are equally hard to define. Were those who endorsed the theological changes taking place at this time looking primarily for radical change or simply for greater independence? It is clear that the motives were mixed. The latter, rather more conservative option was bound to appeal to political rulers anxious to establish independence from external authority (whether secular or religious) but with a careful eye on stability within. Both were possible within the Lutheran concept of a “godly prince.” Sometimes, the prince had jurisdiction over a whole kingdom or kingdoms. Such was the case in Scandinavia, where Lutheranism became embodied in the state churches of northern Europe. Elsewhere, the process was far more local and concerned relatively small patches of land. The German case illustrates the latter, leading to patterns that are not only extant but influential some 400 years later. Both examples embody the principle of *cuius regio, eius religio* (“whose realm, his religion”), established in the Peace of Augsburg, 1555—a concept that brings to an end the pre-Reformation concept of a unified Christendom.

The Reformation as such, moreover, was differently understood. In addition to Lutheranism, some Europeans—notably the Swiss, the Dutch, the Scots, some Germans, some Hungarians and Czechs, and a small but significant minority of French—were attracted first by Zwingli, then by Calvin, toward a more rigorous version of Protestantism. Calvinism was both more radical and more restrained than Lutheranism: radical in the sense of a new kind of theology based on the doctrines of predestination and redemption but restrained in terms of its stringent moral codes. The effect of this particular combination on the subsequent economic development of Europe has

provided inexhaustible material for continuing debate among historians and sociologists alike.

Broadly speaking, however, West Europe divided itself into a Catholic south (Spain, Portugal, Italy, France, but including Belgium and Ireland) and a Protestant north (Scandinavia and Scotland), with a range of “mixed” countries in between (England and Wales, Northern Ireland, the Netherlands, and Germany). Central Europe exemplifies similar categories, though the geography is rather more complicated. Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Croatia are firmly Catholic; Estonia and Latvia are Lutheran and relate closely to their Nordic neighbors (a commonality strongly reemphasized as the Baltic Republics regained their political independence in the early 1990s); Hungary and the Czech Republic, finally, are rather more mixed (primarily Catholic but with significant Protestant minorities). In other words, boundaries gradually emerged all over Europe, dividing one nation from another, one region from another, and one kind of Christianity from another. Boundaries, moreover, imply dominance as well as difference. Majorities and minorities were, and still are, created depending on the precise location of the line in question.

This, in essence, is the confessional map of western Europe that took shape in the early-modern period and that has remained relatively stable ever since. It would be a mistake, however, to assume that church–state arrangements necessarily follow suit. What emerges in the latter respect is a bewildering variety of arrangements dictated for the most part by particular historical circumstances and that change over time as political necessity dictates or as economic or social shifts suggest. These very individual histories continue to resonate in the 21st century as different European societies come to terms with the changes outlined in the previous section—including the arrival of new and different faiths—but each in its own way.

Communist and Noncommunist Europe

Europe was differently divided following World War II. In the immediate postwar period, not only Germany but Europe as a whole was divided between the Western allies and the Soviet Union. The Baltic States, Poland, East Germany, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Albania, and (until

1948) Yugoslavia fell under Soviet control. The implications for religion were considerable. The ideology that pervaded the Soviet bloc was aggressively secular—to the point of serious harassment and, in some cases, outright persecution of anyone who displayed almost any form of religion except entirely private belief. Public displays of religiousness were considered a threat to the regime and were suppressed, more brutally in some cases than others. Exactly what happened in each of the countries listed above varied; equally different were the effects of Soviet policies on religious vitality.

For example, in those countries that had embraced Lutheranism at the time of the Reformation and that found themselves under Soviet control after 1948 (i.e., Estonia, Latvia, and East Germany), there were undoubtedly countless acts of individual heroism. Institutionally, however, the church was less able to resist, leading to much reduced levels of religious activity in these parts of Europe—a situation that has not really changed since the fall of communism. The Catholic Church was in a rather different position and became in some places, if not all, a major bulwark against communism. This was particularly true in Poland, a situation that became all the more visible after the election of a Polish pope (John Paul II) in 1979. The Soviet authorities found it increasingly difficult to resist the forces of popular Catholicism, galvanized by a charismatic and globally visible pope.

The Orthodox countries display similar contrasts: Bulgaria, for example, became increasingly secular, while Romania did not. Indeed, in the latter, religious practice remains particularly high. As ever, the reasons for these different reactions lie in the specificities of each case. The Uniate, or Greek Catholic churches, offer a final example in this regard. These churches follow the Orthodox rite but remain in full communion with Rome. They are found on the eastern border of Europe, notably in Belarus and the Ukraine. The fact that they are more Western facing than either the Russian or the Ukrainian Orthodox churches is of significance in the political alignments of their members. This is particularly true in the Ukraine, a country that straddles the East–West divide.

One point is clear, however, and common to all these cases. In all of them, the collusions of religious and political power described in the previous

section were necessarily subverted. No longer were the dominant churches of this part of Europe dependent on the state for favors; they were, rather, victims of an aggressively secular ideology. Of course, some churches and some individuals were compromised, but in many cases, religious institutions became the natural and very effective carriers of an alternative ideology—providing space for gathering and for increasingly public debate. As we have seen, this was particularly true in Poland, where the protest was highly visible. Interestingly, an equally effective example can be found in East Germany, where—at the critical moment—a tiny, infiltrated, and seriously weakened Lutheran church became the focus of resistance. In the Nicolaikirche in Leipzig, for example, meetings for religious discussion became more and more political and gradually spilled out into the streets.

Such protests constituted one factor in the collapse of the Soviet bloc, which becomes a pivotal moment not only in the history of Europe but in the entire global order. The implications for religion are difficult to overestimate.

Levels of Religious Activity

It is important, finally, to look at the different levels of religious activity in different parts of Europe. The first and most obvious contrast lies between the notably more religious countries of southern Europe (both Orthodox and Catholic) and the less religious countries of the Protestant north. This variation holds across almost every indicator; indeed, they are interrelated. Levels of practice are markedly higher in Romania, Greece, Poland, Lithuania, Italy, Spain, Belgium, and Ireland (closer in its religious life to continental Europe than to Britain) than they are elsewhere. Unsurprisingly, one effect of regular attendance is a corresponding strength in traditional belief in both Orthodox and Catholic Europe.

There are, however, exceptions to this rule. France, for example, displays a very different profile from the other Catholic countries, a contrast that cannot be explained without reference to French history. Spain, moreover, looks likely to follow this pattern, in contrast to Italy, where practice remains relatively high. Other exceptions to a European pattern, or patterns, should be

looked at in a similar light. Conspicuous here are the two Irelands where high levels of religious practice endured for longer than they did elsewhere. Once again, the particular nature of Irish history accounts for this: Religion has become entangled with questions of Irish politics on both sides of the border. The persistence of religious practice as well as belief in both the Republic and Northern Ireland is both cause and consequence of this situation.

One final variation in the overall framework should be noted. In France, Belgium, the Netherlands, and possibly Britain (more especially England), there is a higher than average incidence of those claiming no religion or at least no denominational affiliation. It is quite possible that this may become the norm in other European societies.

Concluding Remarks

That said, it is the unpredictability of the present situation that is most striking. In western Europe, two things are happening at once. On the one hand, there are higher levels of secularity in many parts of Europe than there are in other parts of the world—a situation that leads inevitably to a decline in religious knowledge as well as in religious belief. No longer is it possible to assume a degree of religious literacy across the continent as younger generations in particular resist, passively or otherwise, the faith of their parents and grandparents. At precisely the same moment, however, religion has reentered the public square—creating a situation that demands attention. Religious issues are once more in the spotlight, provoking considerable debate in both the continent as a whole and in its constituent nations. The resulting discussion, all too often, is both ill informed and ill mannered as Europeans are obliged to reopen questions they had considered closed.

In eastern Europe, a rather different situation pertains as the postcommunist countries continue to work out their newfound freedom. Here, the religious indicators remain volatile and are not always easy to interpret. They are closely bound up with national identities—sometimes benignly, sometimes less so.

In both cases, Europe needs to be seen in its global context. New forms of religiousness are coming in from outside—that is certain. Equally

important, however, are the movements from one part of the continent to another. Poles, for example, are moving to the West—to the United Kingdom and to Ireland; Romanians are moving to Italy. In short, the patterns of religion in Europe continue to remake themselves as old boundaries dissolve and new ones arise.

Grace Davie

See also Eastern Orthodox Christianity; Enlightenment; European Court of Human Rights; European Union; Islam; Russian Federation; Secularization

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EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS

The European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) is perhaps the most important court in the world in terms of its impact on people and nations. It is the court of last resort for more than 900 million people from 47 member nations of the Council of Europe (COE). Established as the enforcement arm of the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, which was developed in the aftermath of World War II and signed by 10 nations on November 4, 1950, the convention took effect on September 3, 1953. The court has been operating since, serving an ever-growing number of nations and people with a court that allows individuals to make claims of human rights violations against their own government, a unique judicial innovation of great significance. A significant number of complaints involve issues of religious freedom for individuals and for various minority religions. However, it was not until 1993 that the first violation of Article 9 dealing with freedom of religion and conscience was found. Since then, a number of violations of Article 9 have been found, mostly associated with Greece or with former Soviet-dominated nations.

The court has one judge elected from each member country of the COE, and they must handle a huge workload of cases. There has been a dramatic increase in members of the COE since the fall of the Soviet Union, with many nations formerly dominated by the Soviet Union successfully seeking membership in the COE. This has increased the workload of the court significantly, increasing delays in getting cases reviewed and heard before the court. Just 10 years ago, there were 10,000 to 12,000 cases filed per year, but that figure has grown to more than 50,000 cases per year, leading

to a summary dismissal of most cases submitted to the court. A three-judge panel known as the “filtering committee” reviews all cases submitted and decides if the case should be considered further. Reasons for these decisions are not reported, and the process has been criticized for possibly allowing bias to enter the court’s deliberations. There have been concerns also about how the court enforces its rulings. Some nations apparently ignore the judgments or simply pay whatever monetary fines are awarded but do not change their laws or practices.

The ECHR was originally organized quite differently, with a European Commission on Human Rights reviewing all cases and making decisions on the seriousness of the claim and whether it violated the convention. If a case was deemed worthy, it was forwarded to the Council of Ministers made up of all the foreign ministers of the member states. If the ministers decided the case warranted adjudication, then it was referred to a much smaller, and even part-time, ECHR. In 1998, major reforms were undertaken, abolishing the commission and deleting the Council of Ministers from the process. Now the judges of the court handle all cases submitted directly.

The court is located in Strasbourg, France, which is also the home of the European Parliament, the entity that conducts the business of the COE. It has a remarkable library of materials dealing with human rights issues, and its adjudicated cases are compiled in a massive database, HUDOC, which is accessible to all via the Internet.

James T. Richardson

See also Europe; European Union; Human Rights

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EUROPEAN UNION

The European Union is a political supranational and intergovernmental organization *sui generis*, with characteristics of both a joint federation of countries and a federal state but not acting entirely as one or the other. More precisely, the label European Union (EU) applies to a system of interstate cooperation communities and treaties. The name currently refers to the overall framework consisting of the European Communities (EC and European Atomic Energy Community [EURATOM]—supranational), the Police and Judicial Co-operation in Criminal Matters (PJCC—intergovernmental), and the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP—intergovernmental). Following the passage of the Reformation Treaty of Lisbon, however, these three areas of cooperation merged to become the new EU and a single judicial entity. As of 2010, the EU spanned 27 European nations, almost half a billion people, and 23 languages, with one of the biggest GDPs in the world. It is a global hot spot of ethnic, economic, cultural, and religious interaction and integration. The EU is not to be confused with the Western European Union or the Council of Europe.

The main competences or powers of the EU are economy (common market; customs; trade of services, capital, and goods; currency policy; agriculture; and regional and structural development), environment and energy policy, infrastructure and traffic policy, and to some degree foreign policy, education, and social policy. The following sections review the history, structure, and religious profile of the EU.

History

Following the devastating wake of World War II, the remaining European nations pledged mutual cooperation, communication, and harmonization of national interests to overcome the vicious cycle

of the security dilemma. After the founding of the Council of Europe in 1949, a mere discussion forum, the first real breakthrough was reached in 1951/1952. With the Treaty of Paris, the age-old conflict between Germany and France over resource-rich border areas was finally defused. The new European Community for Steel and Coal (ECSC) created the first supranational organization in the world's history. An independent market for coal and steel, overviewed by an independent commission, judiciary, and representatives of the involved governments and ministers, was the first step for six nations (France, West Germany, Belgium, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and Italy) to conglomerate certain key areas of national sovereignty. The declared goals of this young organization were (and still are) peace and security, prosperity, a new self-concept, freedom and mobility, and to become a common international power.

Even as early as 1957 to 1958, the so-called treaties of Rome pushed for integration. The founding of the EURATOM and European Economic Community (EEC) created a three-pillar system that kept the EU operational. To achieve the goals of a customs union, common policies of agriculture and trade and free transportation of goods, capital, and services (in short, the creation of a common market), the Rome treaties established the European Commission, the European Parliament, and the Council of the European Communities. These institutions later became the core of the EU. The years 1965 to 1967 saw the merger treaty of Brussels combine the first three communities (ECSC, EURATOM, and EEC) into the European Community (EC) and confirmed another early goal of the six founding states: peaceful expansion to the rest of Europe. In 1973, the first northern expansion brought the United Kingdom, Ireland, and Denmark into the EC. Greece joined 8 years later.

In 1986 to 1987, the Single European Act set a deadline for the establishment of the common market and created the European Political Cooperation (the first foreign policy coordination and forerunner of the CFSP). In the same year, Spain and Portugal were admitted to join after they embraced democratic forms of government. The Treaty of the EU, signed in Maastricht in 1992 to 1993, established the pillar structure, enlarged the competences of the EC/EU, and

determined to create a common currency, the euro. Sweden, Finland, and Austria joined in 1995—the second northern enlargement. Two years later, the Treaty of Amsterdam established the European citizenship, significantly bolstered the rights of the European Parliament, and again confirmed the overall goals of freedom, justice, and security. In 2001, the Laeken Declaration expressed the will of the member states to extend European integration by constituting a convent for drafting a European constitution. Also in 2001, the Treaty of Nice was signed to amend the treaties of Maastricht and Rome and to prepare the EU for the upcoming eastern expansion. In 2004, the European Constitution was signed by all European heads of state but failed after referenda in France and the Netherlands (2005) and therefore could not be ratified. The first eastern expansion took place nevertheless, and the EU grew by another 10 nations (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovenia, Slovakia, Hungary, Malta, and Cyprus) in 2004. Three years later, with the second eastern expansion, Romania and Bulgaria joined the now 27-member-strong federation. Also in 2007, under the German presidency, the Reform Treaty of Lisbon was set up to reach essentially the same structural changes envisioned by the failed constitution: (a) the change of voting mechanism, (b) further reinforcement of the parliament, (c) abolition of the pillar system, (d) the establishment of a European President and a High Commissioner for Foreign Affairs, (e) provisions for further enlargement, (f) the creation of an EU public prosecutor and a withdrawal clause, and (g) declaring the European Charter of Fundamental Rights legally binding. The Lisbon Treaty was rejected by an Irish referendum in 2008, causing a major crisis in the integration process. Following renegotiation, a second referendum took place in Ireland, and Germany, Poland, and the Czech Republic have ratified the treaty as well.

Structure

The main EU institutions are the European Council, the Council of the EU, the European Parliament, the European Commission, and the European Court.

- The European Council brings the heads of state, the foreign ministers, and the president of the Commission together. It has no legislative power and is not integrated into the practical structure of the EU. It nevertheless sets the guidelines of the overall European policy; by this council, the presidency (changing every half a year by rotation between member states) becomes a powerful tool of integration policy.

- The Council of the EU is one of two legislative organs of the EU. It combines the area secretaries of member states and drafts laws in conjunction with the parliament. The voting mechanism varies depending on policy area. The president is the secretary of the leading nation in the European Council.

- The European Parliament is the second part of the legislative branch, and its constituents are elected directly every 5 years by all EU citizens, as they have been since 1979. It has 785 members. Nonetheless, the parliament remains weak regarding legislative processes since most of the laws are made by the council, causing heavy criticism of the deficiency of the democracy of the EU.

- The European Commission functions principally as the executive branch, but it also possesses the sole initiative right to propose laws and is therefore a key constituent of the legislative. It consists of 27 commissioners appointed for durations of 5 years by every member state. As in a national cabinet, every commissioner has his or her own responsibility. The commissioners are independent of national will and act according to their sole discretion. So the commission is a complete supranational institution. The commission elects the president.

- The European Court of Justice is composed of one judge out of every member state and nine general attorneys. It is the judicative branch of the EU.

The classical “checks and balances” procedure of federal states has been realized in the EU to a limited degree by means of this breakdown of power. For example, the commissioners are not elected by the parliament, which has no power in certain policy areas (PJCC and CFSP). Therefore, the national governments (the executives) sometimes override their home parliaments and pass laws

through the EU, which members have to ratify. This is the main concern of the Lisbon Treaty, which aims to strengthen the European Parliament.

Religion and Religiousness Within the EU

The EU combines a multiculturally diverse area containing all major religions. More than two thirds of the European population are followers of an institutionalized religion. The strongest faction numerically is Christianity (about 80%): Roman Catholicism (approximately two thirds), Protestantism, and Orthodox Christianity. But an estimated Muslim population of 25–30 million and about 2–3 million Jewish Europeans (declining) add to the religious landscape, as does the presence of followers of Buddhism, Sikhism, Hinduism, Baha’i, and Neo-Paganism to a lesser degree (less than 1%). According to the special *Eurobarometer* Nr. 225 of 2005, 52% of the EU population believes in God, and another 27% thinks that there is some sort of spirit or life force (countries with more than 50% of the population believing in God: Malta 95%, Cyprus 90%, Greece 81%, Portugal 81%, Poland 80%, Italy 74%, Ireland 73%, Slovakia 61%, Spain 59%, Austria 54%; countries with less than 40%: United Kingdom 38%, Latvia 37%, Slovenia 37%, France 34%, Netherlands 34%, Denmark 31%, Sweden 23%, Czech Republic 19%, and Estonia 16%). Of the later-integrated countries, 90% in Romania and 40% in Bulgaria profess belief in God, as does 95% of the Turkish population. Turkey has been an official candidate country since 1999 and has been negotiating possible admission since 2005.

Alternative beliefs are strong in major Protestant countries (Estonia 54%, Czech Republic 50%, Sweden 53%, and Denmark 49%) but also in some major Catholic countries (Latvia 49% and Slovenia 46%). Eurostat’s *Eurobarometer* shows that more women (58%) than men (45%) believe in God. Additionally, those who are 55+ years old (63%) and politically conservative (57%) associate themselves with faith.

Church attendance rates are generally very low. Only in Italy (55%) and Poland (71%) are the numbers significant. Similarly, in Italy (47%) and Poland (53%), many people say that they pray daily at the least. In most other EU countries, these rates are around 30%.

Regarding the status of personal belief and the condition of churches, one must conclude that the role of churches and importance of spirituality (church attendance and prayer) in Europe is weakening—except in Poland and Italy. Nevertheless, some form of individualized religion is clearly visible, for every other EU citizen professes a belief in God.

As an official state church/religion, Christianity can only be found in Malta (Roman Catholic), the United Kingdom (Anglicanism), Cyprus (Orthodox), Denmark (Protestant), and Greece (Orthodox), but many states have some special judicial treatment or relationship with certain religions. Laicism is the constitutional approach toward religion in France, Portugal, and the candidate nation Turkey. In all states, freedom of religion is guaranteed, but nonetheless, religious conflicts are still a major issue in and around the EU. Violent riots between Protestants and Catholics, for example, regularly erupt in Northern Ireland, and the genocide of Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1995, in the very backyard of the EU, proves the significance of ethnic-religious components in political conflicts.

The EU and Religion

The EU itself is a secular body and avoids direct involvement with religions as far as possible in accordance with the maxim of church and state separation. It is worth noting that although churches or religious groups played no significant role in its genesis, Catholics were visible among the founding fathers (i.e., Robert Schuman, Konrad Adenauer). The main competence of the EU still lies in economic issues, but the integration of European economics is complete, and therefore, a subsequent cultural integration is fast advancing.

Only rarely does the EU address religious issues directly. Guided by the principle of the subsidiary (according to which the EU can act only when the actions of individual countries is insufficient), the EU's ability to pass laws is restricted to its competences (as described in the European treaties) and by national capabilities.

- The EU Treaty states that “the Union shall respect fundamental rights, as guaranteed by the European Convention for the Protection of

Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms” (Title I, Article 6, para. 2).

- Declaration 11 in the Treaty of Amsterdam affirms that the EU respects the status of churches, religious groups, and other groups in every member state according to its national law.
- European Community Treaty, Article 13 provides that the Council of the EU has the competence to act against discrimination because of sex, race, ethnicity, religion or worldview, disability, age, or sexual orientation on all levels as it sees fit—a very controversial regulation because it gives the EC the power to pass laws against religious discrimination, such as those regarding employee selection in church communities or sexual discrimination in Catholic clerical policy.
- The Preamble of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU states that the EU recognizes the spiritual and moral heritage of Europe in affirming “human dignity, freedom, equality, and solidarity.”
- The European Social Charter, Community Charter of Social Rights of Employees, and Convention for the Protection of Human Rights affirm nondiscrimination and freedom of religion.

The complete body of European Community law (i.e., laws passed by the European Commission and European Parliament)—the so-called *acquis communautaire*—contains numerous laws regulating areas such as labor; privacy; culture; the treatment of animals; economics, finance, and customs; divorce; same-sex marriage; sexual education; and abortion. The *acquis communautaire*, which consists of approximately 85,000 pages of laws, codes, and regulations, must be implemented absolutely by every new candidate as a condition of admission to the EU. Although there is no law concerning religious institutions directly, the EU does regulate key issues concerning religion and personal life. Some of its policies on religion have been criticized, especially in Poland, Malta, and Italy, for failing to make appropriate exceptions or adjustments to various laws when applied specifically to religious groups. Examples include the requirements that sacramental bread for the Eucharist be printed with a use-by date; monasteries that produce milk or wine abide by laws concerning

quotas, production, and distribution; and priests, regarded by the EU as independent contractors, have a right to a pension, even if they worked outside the EU, for example, as missionaries.

A special case of European Law is the proposed European Constitution. It would have reformed the primary law had it not been rejected, yet the discussion about a reference to God in the preamble and the famous Article I-52 can only be seen as a clear indication of a European legal interest in religion. During the drafting process, for example, religious groups tried to implement specific Christian or religious references. As part of an effort to make the process transparent, all citizens could make proposals via the Internet and comment on every proposal. The Conference of European Churches and the Commission des Episcopats de la Communauté Européenne (Commission of Bishops of the EC), especially, proved to be very engaged. Discussion in a variety of religious and humanistic contexts led to an examination of European values. Different proposals, ranging from a total absence of any reference to religion (advocated mainly by France) to an invocation of the Holy Trinity (supported by Greece and Ireland), revealed the problematic nature of Europe's cultural diversity. In the end, the preamble called on the cultural, religious, and humanistic inheritance of Europe. Therefore, no direct invocation of God and no reference to the Christian heritage found their way into the draft. But Article I-52 (Status of Churches and Non-Confessional Organizations) recognized the importance of religion for the European integration process and therefore established an open, transparent, and regular dialogue with churches and non-confessional organizations. This development cannot be underestimated because, for the first time, it elevates churches and religious groups to the status of independent legal bodies, not merely subjects of law as they had been since the Treaty of Amsterdam. Other articles in the proposed constitution relate to freedom of faith, conscience, and creed; the right to education; nondiscrimination; and respect for the diversity of cultures, religions, and languages.

The EU's institutions have their own relationship to religion. The commission has established permanent contact with more than 150 religious organizations, churches, and nonconfessional groups (in 2006), more than 50 of which have their own

representation in Brussels. Since 1982, a special advisor to the president of the commission deals with religious questions via the Bureau of European Policy Advisors, formed in 2005. The European Parliament includes many members of various religious parties, and they have held monthly ecumenical prayer meetings and annual prayer breakfasts since 1980. An ecumenical prayer room in the parliament building is still a source of controversy. The Council of the EU has only seldom ever made contact with religion, and an institutionalized European religious dialogue has yet to be realized. The extreme heterogeneity of the EU caused a major identity crisis—resulting in the lowest voter turnouts in EU history in 2009—and an ongoing search for common values, moral integrity, and legitimacy.

Daniel Koehler

See also Europe; European Court of Human Rights; France; Germany; Italy; Poland; Politics and Religion; Turkey

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EVANGELICAL MOVEMENTS

Even though in the United States “Evangelicals” are often seen as supporters of the status quo, this religiously conservative Christian sector has started and joined movements, both religious and sociopolitical, of all kinds. Indeed, sociologist Michael Young has argued that the religious sentiments, rituals, and theology of American Evangelicals in the temperance and antislavery movements played the primary role in the development of the first national social movements in the United States by laying the groundwork for a “confessional protest” mixing public confession with strategic organizing. Evangelicals are no strangers to social movements.

A Global Phenomenon

Today, Evangelicals from Asia and the Global South are at least as active in social movements, if not more so, than their counterparts in North America and western Europe. In fact, the enormous growth of evangelicalism, especially in its Pentecostal and charismatic expressions, is arguably one of the most successful global movements of the 20th century. After all, Pentecostalism emerged from a tiny group of marginal religious enthusiasts in Kansas and California at the beginning of the century only to become a vast swath of global Christianity representing, by conservative estimates, approximately 250 million people, or 4% of the global population. Although a number of large denominations such as the Assemblies of God do exist, Pentecostalism has been a largely schismatic movement from its inception, aided in part by its institutional flexibility. Dissatisfied members or clergy who feel so moved by the Holy Spirit can separate to form new or independent congregations and denominations and tend to do so with great frequency and entrepreneurial zeal. Furthermore, Pentecostal congregations, both in North America as well as in the Global South, provide rituals of healing and a warm surrogate family that aid many in negotiating personal and familial crises—crises that are all too common in the barrios, favelas, and shantytowns on the outskirts of a globalized economy. But Pentecostalism’s

greatest vitality and a key factor in its attraction lies in its ability to tap deep emotions within the worship service, harnessing enthusiastic music, close physical proximity, and mutual focus of attention to generate moments of personal transformation, especially amenable to individuals (e.g., “exiting” gang members) eager to reconstruct a failed or stigmatized identity.

Traditionally, Pentecostals, who understand themselves as firmly within the evangelical tradition, have tended to embrace the conservative doctrine of evangelical Christianity and bear a decidedly sectarian approach to politics. They have thus preferred to focus on matters of the soul rather than get involved in the messy world of politics. But Donald Miller and Tetsunao Yamomori have argued that a new generation of “progressive Pentecostals” is emerging around the globe. Spurred to action by theological reflection and a “coming of age,” as more and more Pentecostal youth gain an education and become professionals, these progressives still tend to avoid direct political action but aim to address the social and physical in addition to the spiritual needs of the poor in their communities. Although the authors believe that progressive Pentecostalism is gaining momentum, they recognize that there are other forces within Pentecostalism that have led many in other directions, including a “health and wealth” gospel.

Brazil

Not all evangelical movements restrict their activities to meeting spiritual needs or engaging in charity. One of the more interesting movements among Evangelicals in Latin America is the Brazilian evangelical Black movement recently documented by John Burdick. Burdick, an anthropologist, provides evidence of a burgeoning antiracism movement spearheaded by African Brazilian Evangelicals. Beginning in the 1980s and gaining momentum in the late 1990s, this rapidly growing movement combines evangelical conviction with active efforts to combat racism and build a strong Black identity. In the decade from 1995 to 2005, Burdick documents the emergence of more than 30 such Black evangelical antiracism groups, culminating in the creation of a coordinating committee called the *Movimiento de Negros Evangélicos*

(Movement of Black Evangelicals). Especially significant is the fact that, in contrast to the preexisting non-Christian Black movements, the evangelical Black movement speaks a language well understood by a vast swath of the Brazilian population. Furthermore, Burdick's study seems especially prescient given the strong showing of support in the 2010 elections for Marina Silva, the Green Party candidate and the first African Brazilian candidate to make a strong showing in a presidential election. As an evangelical and an environmentalist who publicly opposed abortion, Silva and her presidential bid, which forced a runoff by grabbing nearly 20% of the vote, remind us that evangelical movements in the Global South today often break the conservative mold cast by 20th-century American Evangelicals.

Asia

In Asia, most Evangelicals face a vastly different cultural and political context than that experienced by their counterparts in the Americas. In some places within the region, it is not uncommon for local and national political leaders to oppose and even repress Evangelicals for their unwillingness to abide by restrictions of religious and civic gatherings. Nevertheless, evangelical growth has been strong for several decades, and authors such as David Lumsdaine argue that Evangelicals have contributed cultural and institutional resources that have helped move democratization forward throughout the region both through conscious mobilization efforts as well as through the indirect impact of a strengthened notion of individual agency and personal initiative among evangelical citizens. In the same volume, Young-gi Hong uses interviews with pastors and civic leaders (including a former president and evangelical) as well as polling data and historical documents to detail the extent of the contribution of Korean Evangelicals to democratization in that country. There, the contribution of Evangelicals has taken the form of direct organizing among congregations, clergy, and evangelical students and intellectuals who began organizing democratic activism as early as the 1970s, in spite of the repressive tactics of the military government of the time. These Evangelicals began gathering in Christian worship spaces (alongside Catholic priests and activists) to protest and

plan demonstrations, since the Korean autocracy was less likely to exercise repression on groups meeting in places of worship. Although many if not most rank-and-file Korean Evangelicals were not supportive at first of the Christian students and intellectuals at the forefront of the movement for democratization, that changed during the 1980s, especially in 1987, after a university student died from torture while in the hands of Korean police. The event helped crystallize the democratization movement and made active participants out of even the conservative evangelical denominations.

By June of the same year, the political pressure was so intense as to force the hand of an incoming president who conceded to holding autonomous elections, reforming the constitution, and establishing freedom of expression and of the press. Although the Roman Catholic Church played a crucial role in the movement, Hong argues that evangelical denominations played an outsized role in this key moment due to their (1) increasing numerical strength, (2) organizational capacity, (3) international connections, and (4) economic and financial resources. Since 1987, civic groups promoting social justice and democracy proliferated, and once again, Evangelicals have played an important role, with some estimating that as many as 70% of participants belong to evangelical churches. One such group, the Christian Ethics movement, grew out of a Bible study among professors of Korean Christianity at the national university in 1987. Today, as Hong notes, the Christian Ethics movement, which advocates noncoercive promotion of ideals such as economic equality and social justice as well as ethical leadership by example among the evangelical congregations, boasts a membership of more than 10,000.

United States

Evangelicals in the United States continue to participate in a variety of social and religious movements. Although lack of space prevents discussion of evangelical initiatives such as the evangelical environmental movement or the broadly supported evangelical efforts to fight AIDS in Africa, one movement that begs mentioning is the so-called emerging church movement. The term *emerging* (or *emergent*) was embraced by a loosely knit cadre of young pastors and theologians dissatisfied with

what they believe is a defensive, reactionary stance with regard to religious pluralism and post-Christendom in the West. The movement gained momentum in the early 2000s as its spokespersons sought to re-imagine both a theology and an ecclesiology that allowed for considerable ambiguity, welcoming, rather than defending against, the narrative turn in literature and postmodern philosophy. While the movement draws inspiration from its understanding of early Christian churches, its most active spokespersons tend to eschew theological shibboleths as alienating and uninspiring. Instead, leaders like Brian McLaren have advocated for a “generous orthodoxy” that draws on the strengths of a variety of Christian theological traditions and seeks to explore biblical themes as narratives rather than define and protect boilerplate theological doctrine. The emerging leaders, most of whom consider themselves firmly within the evangelical tradition, have riled many of the more traditional evangelical leaders and theologians. Furthermore, a number of emergent author-ministers such as McLaren, Robb Bell, and Greg Boyd—the spokespersons of the movement are almost all well-educated White males—tend to be highly critical of U.S. foreign policy and of capitalist consumerism, thus angering and alienating many evangelical rank and file. Finally, the movement’s openly critical stance toward institutionalization and formal leadership roles may have already undercut its longevity as a definable movement. Nevertheless, the fact that these authors continue to sell books and fill large venues in spite of the vocal opposition of prominent evangelical leaders seems to indicate that, whatever their status as a “movement” with a name and institutional

structure, their message continues to find an audience, especially among a younger cohort of educated Evangelicals.

Conclusion

Evangelical movements today exist in great abundance and variety. This fact should hardly come as a surprise, given Evangelicals’ long tradition of disestablishment and lack of a clearly defined governance structure for unifying or regulating action. Thus, they continue to adopt and adapt cultural and social movements according to the particular context in which they find themselves.

Robert Brenneman

See also Brazil; Latin America; Pentecostal Movements; United States of America

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FAITH TOURISM

Faith tourism—also known as religious tourism, special-interest tourism, knowledge-based tourism, and heritage tourism—is a form of religious travel that is motivated principally but not exclusively by the spiritual or religious content and associated services of the destination. It thereby covers a wide variety of both secular and religious purposes, including recreation, leisure, interest, intellectual edification, healing, and spiritual experiences. Faith tourism does not apply to a journey that carries a religious purpose, act, or practice in itself and therefore lies in the somewhat vague area between secular tourism and pilgrimage. The destination nevertheless must contain some sort of spiritual value for the visitor and can usually be broken down into five categories: (1) natural locales (sacred places, e.g., the Sea of Galilee), (2) religious buildings (temples and shrines, e.g., the Dome of the Rock), (3) buildings that incorporate religious content (museums, e.g., the Vatican Museum), (4) special events or festivals with a religious background (e.g., *Ganesh Chaturthi*), and (5) secular sites connected to a particular sacral happening or meaning (e.g., Lourdes, when it is visited outside the pilgrimage context). The visitor or visiting group is not obligated to spiritually identify with the religious background of the destination, nor need the sites necessarily be associated with current or existing religions. The travel must be voluntary, temporary, and unpaid for if it is to be considered a type of faith tourism.

Tourism is a constantly growing business, and its profitability has soared since the evolution of mass tourism in the 1960s. In economic jargon, faith tourism belongs to the category of *special-interest tourism*, which requires a particular set of management skills. Problems such as accessibility, noise protection, maintenance, and waste management must be solved without damaging the spiritual content (the “religious capital”) of the site. Thus, the atmosphere at the site is an essential part of faith tourism, but it is at the same time extremely vulnerable to contamination by the more mundane issues involved with its upkeep.

A relatively recent development in the realm of faith tourism is the attempt to commercially generate religious capital (e.g., religious theme parks, old or distinctive churches that attract tourism, etc.). Such capitalization on religious piety is a manifestation of a greater historical issue: whether spiritual value can be artificially created or managed like a secular product or service. This more contemporary phenomenon has yet to establish itself as a common characteristic of faith tourism.

With a growing amount of travelers motivated by religious attraction of some sort, religious organizations recognized the opportunity for connecting faith tourism to proselytizing; in other words, they discovered the public relations value of faith tourism. Therefore, religious sites that are especially famous have increasingly become assets to enhance the public image of the religion itself and to generate income. Furthermore, competition over both possible and currently existing sites is a problematic side effect that heightens tensions

between religions whose relations may already be heavily strained. Another issue is the perceived profanization or desacralization of the sites by tourists. Thus, the tourist and religious value of a certain site can be contradictory and raise an immense field of problems within the religion.

Daniel Koehler

See also Economic Issues and Religion; Environment; Pilgrimage

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FALUN GONG

Falun Gong, also known as *Falun Dafa*, is a new religious movement that draws on Chinese Buddhist, Daoist, and qigong traditions to promote a system of daily practice that aims at the transformation of one's "human flesh-body" into an immortal Buddha body. The movement's founder, Li Hongzhi, rapidly rose to fame amid the widespread popularity of qigong practices in Chinese society in the 1980s and 1990s, claiming that Falun Gong was distinct from and superior to any other practice or path. Having emerged in northeastern China in 1992, the group claimed as many as 70 million practitioners in China by the time the movement was outlawed by the Chinese Communist Party in 1999, when it was officially denounced as an evil cult. After years of reeducation programs for one-time practitioners in China, Falun Gong has reportedly been eradicated in that country. Over the same period of time the movement has spread around the globe, claiming worldwide practitioners numbering more than 100 million, though this number cannot be verified as Falun Gong maintains no records of membership. Li currently lives in exile in the United States, continuing to lecture around

the world as well as to disseminate his writings via the Internet.

Li's teachings can be seen to adopt and adapt many well-known concepts and practices found generally throughout China's myriad religious traditions, yet Li also eschews tradition, purporting to offer a highly individualized spiritual practice suitable for anyone regardless of personal income, background, or social standing. Through the daily performance of five physical exercises and adherence to the teachings of Master Li, adherents aim to transform themselves in an effort both to harmonize and to ultimately transcend this world. Falun Gong followers believe that Li has implanted invisible mechanisms within them to aid their spiritual and physical progress, including a *fa lun* or dharma wheel as well as more than 10,000 *qiji* or energy mechanisms. The exercises are intended to reinforce the work of these implanted mechanisms. Benefits of this process range from the achievement of perfect health to the development of supernormal powers such as precognition.

Practitioners around the world, including Taiwan and Hong Kong, Australia and New Zealand, Western Europe, Canada, and the United States, gather regularly at public parks, some daily, others weekly, to perform the Falun Gong exercises. Many groups also meet regularly to read and discuss the writings of Li Hongzhi. Since 1999, practitioners in some countries regularly maintain a presence at the entrances of popular tourist sites, handing out literature and displaying posters promoting Falun Gong as a method of cultivation practice as well as attempting to draw attention to what it says are the horrors of the Chinese government's campaign against the group.

Ryan J. T. Adams

See also China; Daoism; Mahayana Buddhism; New Religions; Qigong

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FARAJ, ABD AL-SALAM (1952–1982)

Muhammad Abd al-Salam Faraj was a primary figure in the formation of *Tanzim al-Jihad* (Jihad Organization), also known as Islamic Jihad, the militant Islamist group that carried out the assassination of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat in 1981. His pamphlet *The Neglected Duty* (*al-Faridah al-Gha'iba*), regarded as one of the most coherent statements of modern Jihadist ideology, builds on and further articulates the framework laid forth in Sayyid Qutb's *Milestones*. Most salient is his logical expansion of Qutb's doctrine that present society and its ruling authorities were directly comparable with the pagan state of pre-Islamic society, known in Arabic as *al-jahiliyyah* (the age of ignorance). Faraj, implicated in Sadat's assassination, was executed in 1982.

Faraj, an engineer by profession, was a member of the Muslim Brotherhood but was unsympathetic to the organization's gradual approach to Islamic revival. Faraj parted with the group, seeking more direct militant solutions to the perceived problem of secular government that prevented the implementation of an Islamic state ruled by Islamic law (Shari'a). He also disagreed with other radical Islamist groups, such as Mustafa al-Shukri's *Takfir wa al-Hijra* (Excommunication and Withdrawal), whose members physically separated themselves from society and lived in communes outside urban centers. Faraj regarded such approaches as ultimately succumbing to the tyranny of *jahiliyyah* and undermining the mandated duty of physically combating the non-Islamic state. As such, Faraj preferred infiltrating the security services and the military to take over the state machinery directly and then impose a Shari'a-based Islamic system. In the short run, Faraj's strategy was successful—Khaled Islambouli, Sadat's assassin, was an army lieutenant.

Jansen (1986) began *The Neglected Duty* with an emphasis on jihad as an offensive struggle (refusing to confine it to spiritual struggle or defensive struggle), which is fundamental to the revival of Islam:

Jihad, . . . in spite of its extreme importance and its great significance for the future of this religion, has been neglected by the *ulema*

(religious scholars) of this age. They have feigned ignorance of it, but they know that it is the only way to the return and the establishment of the glory of Islam anew. (pp. 160–161)

The ultimate end goal of his treatise is the restoration of the Caliphate, which, in turn, is only possible through the establishment of an Islamic state.

Echoing Qutb's radical reading of the Qur'anic verse 24:55, "Whosoever does not rule by what God sent down, those, they are the unbelievers," Faraj declares the Muslim administrators of a non-Islamic state to be infidels. This distinct theological position provides the basis for the legitimization of warfare against a Muslim leader and was used as justification for the assassination of Sadat. As an appeal to orthodoxy and tradition, Faraj grounded himself in the rulings (fatwas) of the revered medieval jurist Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328) and thus compared the present leaders with the Mongols, who after conquering Muslim lands, allegedly only nominally converted to Islam.

Abbas Barzegar

See also Egypt; Islam; Islamism (Political Islam); Jihad; Terrorism

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FAROE ISLANDS

The globalization of religious culture is confronted in the Faroe Islands, an isolated island cluster in the North Atlantic Ocean, north of Scotland and midway between Iceland and Norway. Its diverse Christian influences were imported and deeply integrated during the 20th century and more recently have been affected

by the movements for exporting evangelization overseas.

In this peripheral society of fewer than 50,000 Faroese, self-governing within the kingdom of Denmark since 1948, about 85% of the inhabitants belong to the Lutheran Church. This church was a diocese of the Church of Denmark until July 29, 2007, when it became independent and one of the smallest state churches in the world. Although registered in the state church, many Faroese attend other churches. Indeed, apart from this state church, three main influences have shaped the religious landscape of the Faroe Islands.

The Calvinist influence of the Plymouth Brethren was first introduced in 1865 by the Scottish missionary William G. Sloan and today reaches around 15% of the population, with more than 27 churches. Nineteenth-century Christian revivalist movements, such as Grundtvigian pietism from Denmark, established 30 churches and greatly influenced evangelical culture on the Faroe Islands. Finally, Pentecostalism of Norwegian influence made inroads after 1920. It now accounts for around 6% of the population and 10 churches. In addition, many free Pentecostal believers do not belong to any denomination and attend private religious services at home. Since the 1980s, a growing interest in charismatic revival focuses on the intimacy of relationship with Jesus and the theology of personal success, particularly among the youngest believers.

This unusually high rate of believers gives to the Faroe Islands a singular Christian status among the Nordic secularized societies. In recent decades, globalization has revitalized the internationalization of religious activity. The biggest charismatic churches frequently invite foreign preachers to perform “worship meetings.” Many Faroese travel abroad to attend Bible studies courses in Norway, Scotland, or North America. They generally come back with an increased legitimacy in their own church and sometimes found a new one. All the churches are also affiliated with Christian missionaries’ international networks that they actively support, both financially and by sending staffs. The Plymouth Brethren have about 50 missionaries in permanent positions worldwide, whereas Home Missions are known for annually sending young people to different countries. When they finish high school, these young believers often take

a break for several weeks or months and get new experience by spreading the gospel or doing volunteer work.

Thus, there is a strong religious culture in Faroese society. However, it can also be a subject of great controversy. At the local level of villages, two or three churches traditionally divide the community into distinctive networks of social and economic membership. At the national level, the distinction between born-again Christians (represented in parliament) and secular Christians asserts itself more and more, especially on issues such as abortion, homosexuality, gender equality, creationism, and Darwinism.

Christophe Pons

See also Denmark; Iceland; Missions and Missionaries; Norway; Protestant Christianity

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FATHER DIVINE AND THE PEACE MISSION MOVEMENT

Father Divine (1876–1965) was the founder of the International Peace Mission Movement, a new religious movement that sought to bring about racial harmony as well as alleviate the suffering of the poor and disadvantaged in inner-city America during the middle decades of the 20th century. At its height in the 1930s and 1940s, the Peace Mission movement claimed upward of 2 million supporters and 150 centers operating throughout the United States, Canada, Western Europe, and Australia. Since Father Divine’s death in 1965, the work of the Peace Mission Movement has been guided by Mother Divine (Edna Rose “Sweet Angel” Ritchings), whose vision has transformed the movement, for the most part, into a well-respected, albeit declining, charitable organization.

Little of certainty is known of the early life of Reverend Major Jealous Divine (born George Baker Jr.) before 1919, when he, his first wife, Peninniah (d. 1943), and a small group of followers settled on Long Island, New York. Lacking formal education, Father Divine worked as a gardener and itinerant preacher, his own brand of religion being a mix of New Thought (a late-19th-century spiritual movement emphasizing positive thinking) and a personal ethic that stressed hard work, good health, and responsible living. Father Divine's message had its greatest appeal among poor urban African Americans, whose lives Divine sought to improve, especially during the hard economic times of the Great Depression. During this period, Father Divine provided work for his followers and welcomed all who were in need to dine at sumptuously prepared meals for as little as 5 cents. He argued that it was work, not welfare, that gave worth to a man.

As early as 1912, Father Divine had claimed divine status, at first adopting the title "The Messenger" and later simply declaring himself to be God as well as the second coming of Christ. Divine taught that with his appearing, a new dispensation had dawned, one in which the peace and goodwill of God would spread throughout the world and war, sickness, hunger, hatred, social injustice, and despair would no longer plague humankind.

Despite his claims to being the incarnation of God, or perhaps because of it, Father Divine inspired donations from a number of wealthy individuals. One such donation, the 72-acre estate Woodmont outside Philadelphia, became the movement's headquarters and Father and Mother Divine's home after 1953. In addition to the belief in the divinity of Father Divine, the Peace Mission required and continues to require its members to observe a strict moral code, which includes bans on alcohol, tobacco, sexual intercourse, and other practices it regards as vice.

Jon R. Stone

See also New Religions; New Religions in the United States

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FÁTIMA

Fátima is a city in Portugal whose Catholic shrine has become one of the world's largest centers of pilgrimage, religious tourism, and Marian devotion. Although its resident population does not exceed 8,000, Fátima is visited every year by 4 million people, many of whom are walking pilgrims. Beginning with a series of apparitions of the Virgin Mary in 1917, devotion to Our Lady of Fátima has since spread worldwide and originated a network of sister shrines in several other countries, playing an important role in anticommunist and conservative Catholic movements and sensibilities. In spite of this global scope, religious practices in the shrine and along its pilgrimage paths remain largely an expression of Portuguese popular religiosity, revolving around the cure of physical and psychological ailments and the fulfillment of promises.

At the place where Fátima stands today, three young shepherds allegedly witnessed, from May to October 1917, several apparitions of the Virgin Mary. In October 1930, the Catholic Church officially declared the apparitions "worthy of belief," responding to the already massive popular devotion to regain its local power amid a period of strong republican and anticlerical feelings in certain strata of Portuguese society. Since then, the shrine has achieved a privileged status in the Catholic world through the personal commitment of Pope Pius XII, Pope Paul VI, and especially Pope John Paul II, who credited Our Lady of Fátima with saving his life following the assassination attempt in 1981.

Central to the history of Fátima's shrine is Lucia Santos (1907–2005), the only one of the three seers to live through adulthood, who after the apparitions became a Discalced Carmelite nun. In her original reports to the ecclesiastical authorities,

Lucia stressed the main points of Our Lady of Fátima's message: the importance of (a) praying the rosary, (b) performing acts of reparation, and (c) converting sinners; these are still the fundamental tenets that structure the "message of Fátima" promoted by the shrine. Later, in her published memoirs and correspondence with church authorities, Lucia articulated these tenets with the struggle against communism and the conversion of Russia, an effort that eventually influenced the consecration of Russia to the Blessed Virgin Mary by Pope Pius XII in 1952.

Insofar as an estimated 100,000 pilgrims arrive each year on foot at Fátima, the shrine stands, along with Compostela, as one of the last bastions of walking pilgrimages in Western Europe. Most pilgrims originate in the rural areas of Portugal, and their practices are modeled according to traditional *romarias* and the cult of saints; recent studies conclude that healing is still the main motivation that drives the Fátima pilgrim. However, the past decade witnessed a revival of interest among the young, educated, and urban population, largely due to the popularization of St. James's Way to Compostela and the encouragement of the Church for more contemplative and devotional pilgrimage practices, as against the penitential ones.

Pedro Soares

See also Compostela; Faith Tourism; Lourdes; Portugal; Roman Catholicism; Virgin Mary

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FATWA

Fatwa as a practical aspect of Islamic Shari'a law is a nonbinding legal response that is sought by an individual questioner (*mustafti*) from a jurisconsult (mufti) who practices the act of "fatwa giving" (*ifta*). Made infamous by events such as those

surrounding Ayatullah Khomeini's issuance in 1989 of a fatwa against the publication of the *Satanic Verses*, charging its author Salman Rushdie with blasphemy and pronouncing a death sentence against him, and the "Declaration of Jihad" (1996) and "Declaration of Jihad Against Jews and Crusaders" (1998), authored by Osama bin Laden (d. 2011) and Ayman al-Zawahiri, the fatwa is not limited to threats of punitive violence or warfare. Fatwas are used for confirming correct ritual practice and social behavior and are representative of the importance of continued *ijtihad* (independent interpretation of Islamic law and its sources) to the maintenance and construction of authority and practice within predominantly Muslim nation-states, minority Muslim diasporic communities, and discourses of formal schools (*madhabib*) of religious thought.

As an independent ruling, the fatwa is a synthetic result of the dialectical relationship between the questioner, the questioned, and the question itself. Any legal response by the mufti is delimited by the specificity of the presented question. A mufti is meant neither to investigate all aspects of the question nor to write lengthy disputations as a conclusion. When a question is presented, the mufti will use a process known as *taswir al-mas'alah* (the envisioning of the question) to bracket the particular elements necessitating a legal response. The mufti will then make an assumption (*takyif al-masalah*) about the act under question. This is a characterization of the action as permissible or impermissible without any biases toward legality or illegality. A ruling (*hukm*) completes the fatwa. The mufti is expected to express a ruling using clear, sometimes idiomatic, language that is germane to the situation and demands of the questioner. Once the fatwa is issued, the questioner will receive a copy of the question, and nowadays, the fatwa may be published as part of a redacted collection.

The term *fatwa* is derived from the trilateral Arabic root *f-t-w*, and in its 4th (*afta*) and 10th (*istifta*) derived verbal forms, it indicates the practice of asking and answering questions. Though the Qur'an does not contain specific reference to these terms as a legal enterprise, it does contain 500 verses of ascertainable legal proscriptions and sources for legislation. The Qur'an, intended as the final divine revelation of the will of God for

humanity, along with the sunna (the sayings and actions) of Prophet Muhammad, is the foundational element of Islamic legal and theological discourses. Early legal principles, such as consensus (*ijmā*) and analogy (*qiyas*), alongside other instruments, were formed by the ulema (religious scholars) as the foundations of Islamic legal theory (*usul al-fiqh*) so that all legal rulings (*ahkam*, singular *Hukm*) could be grounded within the two primary sources.

By the ninth century (the third century of the Islamic calendar), scholars discussing Islamic jurisprudential discourses were in open conflict about the utility of the concepts of *ra'y* (opinion) and *'ilm* (knowledge) for the practice of Islamic law. Fatwa rulings, as a form of *ijtihad*, were issued in response to rapidly changing social and political circumstances. The categories and boundaries necessary for authorizing the formation of legal opinions—and for determining those individuals permitted to issue fatwas—arose from debates between the partisans of *ra'y* and *'ilm*. The *Risalah* (thesis) of Abu 'Abdullah Muhammad Ibn Idris al-Shafi'i (767–820 CE) was among the initial articulations of formal approaches for the production and interpretation of new legal rulings and opinions. Al-Shafi'i felt that to qualify as a mufti, an individual must be a *mujtahid* capable of exercising *ijtihad* and possessing a deep knowledge of the sources and instruments of law (*usul al-fiqh*).

Though the mufti was required to be a *mujtahid* by al-Shafi'i, the qualifications were later transformed with the emergence of particular schools of interpretation. The conditions required for the exercise of *ifta* were *taqwa* (a pious belief in Islam), *'adala* (justice or integrity), and independent legal reasoning (*ijtihad*). A mufti possessing these characteristics could be either a freed person or a slave, male or female, and healthy or physically challenged. The advice of the mufti, who was to view the practice of *ifta* as an incumbent religious duty, was sought by high political authorities, local magistrates, judges (*qadat*, singular *qadi*), or individuals possessing neither public obligation nor duty.

Within Islamic legal and theological discourses, there coincided with the debates of the partisans of reason and tradition a gradual shift toward a coherence of legal authority, necessitating doctrinal and hermeneutical uniformity. Scholars such as

the Cordoban jurist Ibn Rushd (1058–1126) and the Shafi'ite scholar Abu 'Amr Uthman Ibn al-Salah (d. 1245) constructed typologies meant to locate muftis within a spectrum of jurists balancing the demands of independent legal thought with the demands of affiliation to a tradition. Often, the typological spectrum included, at one end, the *mujtahid*, an independent scholar using *ijtihad*, and, at the other, the *muqallid*, one who ruled on the basis of a *taqlid* (tradition) of a particular legal and doctrinal affiliation. These categories were often intermingled; a mufti was often either a *muqallid* or a *mujtahid*.

While the *mujtahid* was essentially an independent position, the position of the mufti gradually became associated with political authority. Collections of fatwas, representing an authoritative and edited corpus of an individual mufti's legal thought, were circulated throughout societies and increased the popularity of particular muftis. By the second century of Islamic government, the Umayyad Caliphate invited muftis to participate in political activities in an effort to control the use of the fatwa as a source of political criticism. Such associations later led to state apparatuses for licensing particular muftis. Within the Ottoman Empire, the fatwa (or *fetva* in Ottoman Turkish) proclaimed by the muftis of the Sunnī Hanafi school of religious thought were gradually brought under a central administration. The office of the *Shaykh al-Islam*, established during the reign of Murad II (1421–1451), became the focus of a network of imperial jurists located throughout the empire who were used to enforce the social order in varying capacities. Though the position of mufti is not as prevalent in historically Shi'a communities, currently the individual holding the authority of *marja'-i taqlid* (source of emulation) often issues legal rulings on particular social and political behaviors.

The contemporary practice of *istifta* is both a public and a private practice that occurs through a variety of media, including traditional physical encounters between the questioner and the mufti and, within the digital domain, through submitted e-mails and text messages. A number of nations, demonstrating the continued relationship of the office of the mufti to political authority, have an authorized bureau of fatwa issuance, such as Egypt, which established a state office of grand

mufti in 1895, Indonesia (1975), Jordan (1922), Lebanon (1955), Malaysia (1955), Saudi Arabia (1953), and Yemen (1962). Institutions such as Cairo University and Al-Azhar in Egypt, Dar al-Ulum Deoband in India, and Dar al-Ulum in Karachi are among many throughout the Muslim world that feature formal coursework on *ifta*.

Individual muftis unaffiliated with state institutions have also flourished in the present age due to the proliferation of media technologies of the spoken and written word, such as newspapers and printed texts, the radio and television, and cassettes, compact discs, and digital audio recordings. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, individuals such as Sayyed Abu al-A'ala Mawdudi (d. 1979) in Pakistan and Muhammad Rashid Rida (d. 1935) in Egypt authored a number of fatwas in their respective publications. Shaykh Yusuf al-Qaradawi (b. 1926), an Egyptian Muslim scholar and mufti who lives and works in Qatar, provides substantial legal advice on his Al Jazeera television program and a website, IslamOnline, that he cofounded.

Contemporary fatwas are issued in response to a variety of questions, many of which reveal both the worldwide nature of fatwa production and the attempt to adapt various ideals of an Islamic lifestyle to the perceived demands of modern society. Many fatwa collections and discussions emphasize particular discussions of social relations and social issues such as political ideologies (e.g., the permissibility of communism or democracy in an Islamic society); human sexuality (e.g., the permissibility of abortion, homosexuality, and transgendered living); religion and violence (e.g., punishments for murder or the question of suicide); alcohol and tobacco consumption; questions of marriage, divorce, and inheritance; and technological consumption (the permissibility of the Internet, television, music, and radio). While questions related to economic transactions are still present in some collections, many contemporary fatwas deal with issues of family law exclusively.

The broad social appeal of fatwas has led to the increasing popularity of muftis perceived to be "liberal" or "conservative." In an effort to seek out particular audiences, many muftis are controversially perceived as being too "populist" with the inclusion of comparative philosophy and religion in their rulings. These developments, however, do

not signal a departure from the fatwa tradition but just another historical transformation.

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See also Islam; Islamism (Political Islam); Khomeini, Ruhallah Ayatullah

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FELLOWSHIP OF RECONCILIATION

Since its founding in 1914, the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR) has been an outspoken advocate of pacifism, economic justice, and racial equality. The FOR has been an international organization with a global perspective from the beginning. Its membership and identity are rooted in liberal Protestant Christianity, and this strong religious identity distinguishes it from other pacifist organizations of comparable vintage, such as the War Resisters League. By the end of the 20th century, the FOR's culture had become considerably more interreligious, with Catholics, Jews, and Buddhists, as well as Protestants, ranking among its most prominent members.

The FOR began in Cambridge, England, during the first months of World War I. The next year saw the formation of an American branch, FOR-USA. Many of the FOR's early members had been missionaries overseas, and their experiences caused them to question the fierce nationalism that fueled the war. During the conflict, they spread their pacifist convictions through other Christian organizations such as the YMCA (Young Men's Christian Association), as well as in military camps for conscientious objectors.

Between the world wars, in the United States, FOR leaders such as A. J. Muste and Reinhold Niebuhr developed alliances with the labor movement as they began to see economic justice as an extension of the peace agenda. Revolutionary labor called into question some of the organization's core convictions; as World War II loomed, it stood nearly alone among its allies in opposition to the conflict. The International FOR sent "Ambassadors of Reconciliation" to world leaders in the hope of easing tensions. During the war years, its members in Europe smuggled Jewish refugees to safety and protested the Allies' practice of saturation bombing.

It was also during the 1930s that its leaders began to discover Mohandas Gandhi and his non-violent independence movement in India. FOR member Richard Gregg traveled to India to learn from Gandhi and synthesized his teachings in *The Power of Nonviolence*. After the war, the FOR promoted Gandhi's ideas amid the burgeoning African American civil rights movement. In particular, Bayard Rustin and Glenn Smiley worked closely with the movement's leaders to ensure that it would take a nonviolent form. Those turbulent years of civil rights and the Vietnam War witnessed the FOR's greatest prominence, counting Martin Luther King Jr., Dorothy Day, and Thich Nhat Hanh among its active membership.

At the start of the 21st century, the FOR continues its work around the world alongside a variety of other organizations, secular and interreligious. As tensions grow between the West and Iran, it has sent members to Iran to foster dialogue. The FOR facilitates nonviolence training for youth and maintains a program in war-torn Bogota, Colombia. In all, it has a presence in 48 countries around the world.

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See also Niebuhr, Reinhold; Nonviolence; Protestant Christianity; United States of America

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FENG SHUI (GEOMANCY)

Feng shui (風水, lit. "Wind and Water") is often referred to as "Chinese geomancy," or the art or science of divining by landforms. On the most basic level, feng shui is concerned with the ways in which wind and water flow through landscapes. By extension, it is concerned with the smooth flow of *qi* (*ch'i*), or energy, through places and structures, with *qi* having similar movement patterns as wind and water. Considered comprehensively, feng shui includes astronomical, astrological, cosmological, geographical, and topographical dimensions. It places primary emphasis on the energetic qualities of place, which are then correlated to human constitutions and architectural design, including actual site organization and interior design. In this way, feng shui may be seen as expressing a more bioregional or ecological perspective.

Like qigong (*Ch'i-kung*), *Taiji quan* (*T'ai-chi ch'üan*), and traditional Chinese medicine, feng shui is most often misidentified with Daoism. While Daoists have used feng shui, especially in choosing specific sacred sites as well as in temple compound and monastery design, feng shui is neither inherently nor originally Daoist. It is best characterized as a part of traditional Chinese culture. In contemporary Western societies, feng shui tends to be reduced to interior design for health and wealth. It has become increasingly visible through "feng shui consultants" and corporate architects, who charge large sums of money for their analysis, advice, and design. Traditionally speaking, feng shui has been employed to analyze the qualities of specific sites and to design appropriate buildings. It may also be used to "correct" problems in previously constructed structures.

Feng shui is sometimes divided into feng shui for the dead and feng shui for the living, although from a traditional Chinese perspective the two are not as separate as one may assume. Feng shui for the dead involves selection of appropriate burial sites (full-body interment) and the actual placement of the coffin. In addition to providing support for a happy afterlife for one's deceased relatives (ancestors), this form of feng shui also analyzes the way in which such placement will influence surviving descendants. There are many stories about family arguments over interment matters, with different

feng shui consultants providing different advice for specific relatives. This type of feng shui is less common, though it continues to be practiced in rural China and Taiwan.

Feng shui for the living is the more common form of feng shui practice. It parallels the above principles. This type of feng shui focuses on the contours and qualities of specific places, including landforms and compass orientations. It then considers how to place human structures within that landscape. This includes the actual design of the buildings, although the range of those choices was much smaller in a traditional context. The possibilities increase dramatically with the emergence of modern and postmodern architecture. In this respect, feng shui includes external and internal morphology, the materials used, furniture placement, and color choices.

With respect to specific principles and applications, feng shui identifies the “ideal site” as south facing (greatest yang). If the site does not actually face south, feng shui systems, nonetheless, discuss it in terms of “ritual south”—that is, as though it faces south. Feng shui also employs Chinese correlative cosmology or systematic correspondence, which centers on yin and yang and the five phases (Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal, and Water). The five phases have various associations, including Wood/east/azure dragon, Fire/south/vermilion bird, Metal/west/white tiger, and Water/north/mysterious warrior (snake-turtle). If the site is taken as oriented along a north–south axis, feng shui identifies the features in front as the vermilion bird (south), on the right as the white tiger (west), on the left as the azure dragon (east), and in the back as the mysterious warrior (north). This is basically the shape of a horseshoe. Ideally, there should be balance and beneficial influences from each of these. An example might be the following: a large rock formation in the rear (north), a strand of willow trees in the distance in the front (south), and rolling hills that surround the site (west and east). This ideal topography ensures that *qi* will pool in the center of the site and support the dwelling places and inhabitants. Although this is the ideal feng shui form, each place has its own unique characteristics, and each site is evaluated on its own terms.

With respect to interior design, the smooth flow of beneficial *qi* is seen as especially important. This

includes the way in which *qi* moves in and out of the structure and then through the various rooms. Sunlight and fresh air are major beneficial influences. From a feng shui perspective, the layout of rooms and the placement of furniture also create distinctive patterns. The aim is to enhance beneficial patterns and to remedy harmful influences. In the case of specific rooms, the corner farthest from the entryway is considered to be the “wealth corner,” or the place where *qi* tends to pool. Interior design also encompasses the specific materials and colors of furniture and decoration. The five phases are again applied, including actual materials (e.g., wood furniture, fireplaces, metal siding, etc.). The associated colors are as follows: wood/green, fire/red, earth/yellow, metal/white, and water/black. Different materials and colors exert particular influences on specific constitutions. According to its adherents, feng shui assists in accessing, using, and modifying certain energetic qualities.

Within a contemporary global context, feng shui has become a part of “alternative spirituality” as well as health and fitness movements. It has been incorporated into personal wellness programs and various forms of “New Age capitalism.” As is the case with the globalization and popularization of other Chinese cultural practices, such as qigong, there is a tendency to establish certification programs, which replace the previous model of apprenticeship. In such contexts, feng shui is most often presented as a way to design personal living spaces in order to increase health and wealth. The importance of place is eliminated from the system.

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See also China; Daoism; Taiwan

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FESTIVALS

Festivals are found in every known society, historical and contemporary. There are festivals for major religious commemorations and for relatively minor local ones. When many people hear the word *festival*, they immediately think of religious festivals. These festivals do play a major role in most religions and in the overall category of festivals. Certainly, religious festivals strengthen religious ties and beliefs while underscoring the importance of certain events and beliefs as well as seasons of the religious year. As is the case with all festivals, there are expected ritual activities and symbols associated with them. Some festivals celebrate joyous events, while others commemorate times of mourning and meditation. Moreover, all festivals serve to achieve major goals of human society. Among these goals is societal unity. Toward that goal, festivals provide an atmosphere favorable for the creation, preservation, and foundation of social solidarity. Festivals aid that unity in the midst of various types of diversity.

Unity and Diversity

Diversity has many sources. A society may have a diversity of people. There may be, for example, many immigrants present in a society. There may be conquered people who require incorporation into the group. Many religions may be at hand or political groups. The source of diversity may be economic, class based, or rank based. No matter what its source, there must be a means for uniting these diverse interests. Festivals play a significant role in forging a common or transcendent identity.

Underscoring the need to address both diversity and unity is the element of reversal found in festivals. Festivals are meant to transform people, to take them from one place to another. Thus, after World War I, when many immigrants came to the United States, the United States government issued a manual of activities to promote patriotic solidarity. A number of festivals were suggested. One festival had immigrant children being wheeled onto school stages in a shoe. Each child was dressed in his or her traditional clothes. Once on the stage, the children emerged from the shoe and shed their traditional clothes, revealing them

dressed in American clothing. This was a graphic example of shedding one identity and putting on another one.

Rituals of inversion or reversal are found in all festivals. By breaking the rules, performers draw attention to the rules, thereby reaffirming social unity and the importance of the rules. For example, in mummers' plays, which are performed in many English-speaking communities around the world, such as Newfoundland, Canada, and Philadelphia, participants in riotous pantomime provide a rollicking good time, when even the most staid of people engage in rule-breaking behavior. However, these times of simple fun not only provide a break from the tedium of everyday life, they also highlight problems within society. By burlesquing these problems, mummers and carnival performers hold these problems up to ridicule, not so subtly prodding those with the power to address these problems in order to fix them.

Another example lies in the Palio festival of Sienna, Italy. The Palio combines many different elements. It is a parade and horse race, linking political and religious aspects. These competitions are carried out on one level of the city's life. Without appropriate supervision, however, the various competing forces would get out of hand. Hence, there is a higher level of the city's life, the level in which final power resides, overseeing the competitions. Thus, the competitors are free to let their wilder instincts run rampant, knowing that if they stray too far out of bounds, they will be brought back to a safer place. This allows for the airing of all sorts of grievances and the calling to the attention of those in authority the need to address them and find solutions for them. Unity is thus aided by seeming chaos.

Festivals of the Dead exist in many societies and clearly demonstrate the unifying principles of festivals in general. The Dukawa of Northern Nigeria exemplify the great time and care that go into such festivals. It generally takes at least a year to prepare for the festival. The family must gather great amounts of food for the party, which is an integral part of the festival. The surviving contemporaries of the dead man prepare toasts for his party. They will sing his own song, which he composed for his wedding and which they helped him perform. There will be hired musicians to play for the festival, and villagers from the surrounding area will

attend, many to recount their memories of the dead. In the course of these celebrations, many other dead people are celebrated. Articles that are associated with the dead person are given away, thus spreading his memory and helping to keep it alive in the survivors. Such festivals renew ties among family, friends, and the wider community.

Festivals of Incorporation

Sometimes festivals serve to incorporate strangers, even enemies, into a society. The Iroquois of western New York never exchanged prisoners taken during their wars. They either killed a prisoner or inducted him into the society. Women played a major role in deciding who would live or die; those whom they deemed worthy husbands would generally be spared. However, the spared prisoner would have to go through a ritual of incorporation in which he would forgo his old identity and accept a new one. The prisoner had to run a gauntlet and then take a new name, signifying his identity change. At the next religious festival, elders would formalize this change by announcing the inclusion of the new names, families, and clans in the community.

The ritual was a rite of passage. The prisoner's capture was his separation from his former state. Running the gauntlet, in which the Iroquois beat or whipped the prisoner, signified his death, while his change of name demonstrated his rebirth as an Iroquois, replacing the dead whom his former tribal mates had killed. Therefore, the festival and its accompanying rituals served to maintain the stability and unity of the Iroquois people. Warfare threatened that unity, but the festival reaffirmed Iroquois identity and unity.

Basic Characteristics of Festivals

Each of the festivals mentioned so far exhibit and share certain characteristics. They share a certain sense of license and play, showing that things can be other than they are. Festivals also convey meaning; that is, they are a form of communication, employing many devices to do so. The iconographic level of meaning is one in which diagrams or pictures seek to express a deeper reality. Consequently, the icon or figure is not only what it appears to be, for instance, a bear or a young girl, but also a sacred bear or the Virgin Mary.

Festivals also share an aspect of mystery requiring interpretation. The festival may present a metaphor of the society itself. Perhaps an aspect of the group is represented. It may be tension within the group or between the group and other groups in the social environment. Whatever it is, it presents a mystery requiring interpretation for its solution. Hindu tradition, for example, has a large number of festivals. The 4-day New Year festival, *Diwali*, for example, comes in either October or November, depending on the lunar calendar. The *Holi* festival honors Krishna, a trickster god, in a free-for-all carnival atmosphere, while Rama is honored during the spring equinox, *Rama Navami*. Other deities are feted at different times.

Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Festivals

Judaism has various festivals, such as Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement), Rosh Hashanah (New Year's Day), Purim, Hanukkah, Pesach, and others. Hanukkah celebrates the victory of the Maccabees and is a time for gift giving. Christianity also has many feasts, the most important of which are Easter, commemorating the resurrection of Jesus, and Christmas, marking his birth.

Muslims have a large number of festivals. The *Id-al-Aadha*, or Feast of Sacrifice, is celebrated when the annual hajj or pilgrimage to Mecca (Makkah) is completed. It commemorated the founding of Mecca by Abraham and his son Ishmael. Another important festival, *Id-al-fitr* (meaning "fast breaking"), ends the Ramadan fast. Ramadan is the 9th month of the lunar year. Shi'a Muslims have a feast termed Muharram, after the 1st month of the Islamic calendar. On the 10th of the month, a play of heightened passion is performed, marking the martyrdom of Husain, the son of Ali and the grandson of Prophet Muhammad, at the hands of warriors of the Damascus Caliphate.

Social and Cultural Contexts of Festivals

It is crucial to remember that there is a social and cultural context to the festival performance itself. There is a physical and cultural location to the festival. There are participants in the festival. Other events precede and follow them. People bring their experiences and understanding to the festival, which color their interpretations of what

is occurring. Additionally, festivals have cultural functions in a society.

Festivals empower those who have little or no power in society, allowing them to express their grievances openly and safely. They also demonstrate that things can be other than they are, as identities change and the dead continue a kind of life. These and other aspects place them clearly in the realm of the ludic, play. Play includes aspects of imagination and creativity. This characteristic provides festivals with a frightening power, for it indicates that there is an antistructure for every structure. It intimidates those in power by suggesting that the world as it is can be replaced by the world that is yet to be.

African Festivals

African festivals, for instance, fit comfortably within this framework. Their songs, dances, and costumes are entertaining. Their playfulness facilitates the possible subversion of commonly accepted definitions of reality, reflecting and promoting changes within society. Furthermore, they guarantee that these changes will fit together with other cultural aspects of the group. Accordingly, they help keep society open to change and discussion of mores, customs, and traditions. They facilitate change in a structured manner as part of the tradition rather than as one counter to it.

It is important to be aware of the fact that as cultural conditions change, festivals may change their names and content while keeping their functions. The Hausa of northern Nigeria provide an example of just such a festival. During the modification of Hausa society under British colonialism, the *Wasan kara-kara* ceremony underwent significant changes, including a name change. Moreover, White colonial officials became the target of the humor in these festivals. Because it was impossible to find a White man who would portray a White official in a comic derogatory manner, Hausa put on new "White masquerades." The idea of satirizing officeholders was not new. Nor was the purpose of getting officeholders to amend their ways. However, the masks had to be new to fit the facts of new officeholders. Similar changes transpired in other parts of Africa. The Poro and Sande/Bundu secret societies maintained order through the use of festivals. The Yoruba Egungun masquerade

societies used spirits called on in festivals to establish and maintain social order.

Masquerades

It is necessary to point out that masqueraders are an integral part of African festivals. These dancers are members of religious societies. Most scholars agree that there are four kinds of masqueraders and that each has a particular role in society. There are entertainers who simply entertain. Others represent gods or nature spirits. Some masqueraders embody ancestral spirits, while some soothe the gods through dance. Of course, some of these functions may be combined. Entertainment, for example, is a fundamental characteristic of much African ritual.

There are also many different types of masks. For instance, animal masks are quite common throughout Africa. There are, of course, many styles of animal masks. These masks represent different forms of animals. Sizes of masks also may differ, ranging from small to very large ones. Some are delicate and graceful, while others are large and rather intimidating. Dancers adapt their styles to their masks. If one is wearing a raffia palm mask with a swaying waist fringe, the style of dance will be different from that of a person dressed in a small mask. The message will also differ from mask to mask.

Dance

Dance is an integral part of ritual and festival. Along with music and song, it helps define the role of groups and individuals within the community. For example, a ruler in a complex African society is obliged to perform a dance befitting his authority. Among the Yoruba of Nigeria, for instance, a ruler heads a parade of masqueraders through the town while dancing in his carriage. He is joined in his dance by his wives and subordinate chiefs. Each member of the society performs a dance commensurate with his or her rank—hunter, palace chief, woman market chief, and so forth. Each renders tribute through a dance.

Dance plays a large part in the Ox Dance Festival in Parintins, Amazonas, Brazil. This dance is performed during the final 3 days of June. Over time, it has emerged as the largest and most magnificent

folk festival of northern Brazil. Once again, there is the idea of finding unity in opposition. It asserts *caboclo* identity (or *mestizo*) through employing cultural and ritual themes. However, it asserts this mixed identity, namely, European and Indian, not as separate from but equal to Brazilian identity. It is a ritual of incorporation.

Festivals in the United States

Festivals in the United States are the equivalents of those found in traditional societies, seeking to unify apparent opposites and heal breaches within society. We find these festivals stressing the theme of reflecting community values and contemporary relationships, seeking to reinforce these values and relationships. The western United States celebrates a number of festivals similar to Wyoming's Cheyenne Frontier Days. We find the usual characteristics of competition, resolved in unifying events such as parades, rodeos, carnivals, and livestock shows. Tensions, of course, are released through the competition and resolved in the unifying events. A common heritage is fostered, and people take pride and feel unity through participation in such festivals.

New Year Festivals

New Year festivals are also found in numerous places. The most famous may be the Chinese New Year Festival. Because the Chinese observe a lunar calendar year, their New Year falls on a different date from that of the Western calendar. There are a number of rituals associated with the festival. There are anticipatory rituals beginning about a month before the festival. People purchase presents, special food, decorations, and clothing. They also undertake a massive house cleaning in preparation for the New Year. The cleaning serves not only to clean the material house but also to sweep away any bad luck in the home. People repaint doors and windows, usually in red, considered a lucky color. Moreover, they decorate doors and windows with paper representations of good things, including happiness, wealth, and long life. The festival's highlight is New Year's Eve. Special food is prepared, such as seafood and dumplings, representing good wishes. Symbolic value is also attached to other food. Prawns represent liveliness

and happiness. Fish salad leads to good luck and prosperity. Clothes of red color are worn to ward off bad spirits. In contrast, white and black clothes are avoided because these represent mourning and sorrow. The New Year's Eve festival ends with fireworks at midnight.

On New Year's Day, children and unmarried adults receive money wrapped in red envelopes from married couples. Family events predominate with visits, forgiveness of past slights, and requests that others forgive them for similar transgressions. There is a theme of restoration of harmony and peace in the community.

Food Festivals

Food is a significant part of every festival. Those festivals specifically labeled *food festivals* are not simply about the food; they may use food as a means for gathering people together. They also serve to unite communities, using food as a draw and common link among individuals and groups. Modern food festivals clearly draw on ties with traditional harvest festivals and even Thanksgiving celebrations, celebrating plentiful yields and the smile of a god. The celebration is a necessary homage to the powers above so that they may continue their blessings.

Conclusion

Festivals serve a community's needs. There are many different types of festivals, each meeting a specific need or needs. Included in these festivals is an entertainment function. Celebration facilitates the sense of unity that fosters social solidarity. Religious, social, geographical, and other groups find a sense of belonging and an increase in community identification through participation in festivals. Modern festivals, no less than traditional ones, serve to communicate a sense of belonging and tradition. We find that modern festivals in plural societies need to focus on ethnic and cultural sources of identity and incorporation. Now and in the past, festivals are times when elders provide a sense of continuity from generation to generation, sharing stories, traditions, and lore with one another and with descending generations.

Festivals are reminders of the fragility of human ties and the difficulty of forging and maintaining

them. They are reminders of death as well and the need to instill new generations with links to those who have come before, invoking ancestral memories to strengthen ties among those who remain to carry on the work and identity of the group. Entertainment helps ease the message and communication among group members. It encodes and surrounds the more serious communications in a pleasant wrapping, reaching the heart so that the brain may all the more willingly be open to the serious and significant messages of the festival. Resolving the contradictions of life is, after all, no easy task. Extracting unity from human diversity never is. Forging a common identity, often in the face of conflict and change, is an equally difficult task. Festivals nevertheless perform these difficult tasks with relative ease, allowing people to enjoy a certain license while establishing flexible but definite limits to that license. Festivals also provide a period in which people can expose the weaknesses within the community and bring them to the attention of those in power who could address and attend to them.

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See also Global Religion; Religious Identity; Rites of Passage; Sacred Places; Spiritualism; Symbol; Weber, Max

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FEZ

The fez is a piece of headwear, made from pressed wool, worn primarily by Muslim men in the regions of the former Ottoman Empire. The fez likely originated from the urban centers of the Balkans, where the fez-like hat has deep historical roots; it was subsequently adopted and refined by adding the tassel and red color by Ottoman Muslim Mediterranean sailors and merchants in port cities along the Mediterranean coast. Its name is derived from the Moroccan city of Fez, which became an important production center for the headwear. The fez afforded its users with several practical religious advantages over the ubiquitous turban: It was convenient (not necessitating the time-consuming wrapping), it allowed the forehead to be pressed to the ground during daily prayers, and it was accompanied by an air of fashion-forward respectability. The fez came into style, in earnest, in the late 1820s, when Mahmud II phased out the turban, in an attempt to distance himself from the specifically Arab influence in the empire’s religion. It was resisted heavily by the powerful conservative *Jannisaries*, but soon it won widespread, even enthusiastic, acceptance all across the Ottoman lands and became a symbol of Orientalism for the West.

In the Ottoman system, society was divided into *millet*s (the main *millet*s being Muslim, Jewish, and Orthodox) according to religious affiliation; each *millet* enjoyed considerable self-governance in return for loyalty to the *Porte* (the Ottoman administration). The fez was valuable as a distinguishing symbol in the *millet* system in the 19th century; it should be noted, however, that the fez was worn by many who wanted to enjoy the benefits of Islamic affiliation without conversion. Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the father of modern Turkey, banned the fez in 1925, after the dissolution of the empire, as a

key aspect of his Westernization program. Many in Turkey were profoundly offended when Atatürk singled out the seemingly innocuous fez as the symbol of Ottoman backwardness. Especially among community religious elders, the fez was central to Ottoman Islamic identity against European secular ways and its apostate “Western hat.” It is no surprise then that the ban resulted in riots in the eastern districts of Turkey, to which Atatürk responded with strong troop deployments, military tribunals, and a media flurry celebrating the advantages of the Western hat. Nonetheless, Atatürk’s attitude has prevailed in modern Turkey, where the fez is rarely worn and is derisively associated with being quintessentially Ottoman.

Today, the fez is worn by many in the former Ottoman Empire, most prominently among Balkan Muslims and Moroccans, whereas in other areas of the former empire, it is a symbol of Ottoman domination. The fez was a symbol not only of Ottoman affiliation but also of religious adherence to Islam. The fez became a more pronounced cultural symbol in 20th-century Morocco against French dominance and is still favored among the royal court of Morocco. Nonetheless, during the nationalist revolutions of the 20th century, the fez was more or less viewed derisively as monarchist and foreign. Even among Moroccans, and others fond of the fez, it is used less and less and is viewed as a relic of the past.

Christopher M. B. Allison

See also Albania; Islam; Morocco; Ottoman Empire; Turkey

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Fiji

Due to its colonial history, the South Pacific island country of Fiji has a variety of religious communities on its territory. Prior to the British colonial conquest, Fijians believed in the divine forces of earth and sea, which are now technically classified

as animist. Aboriginal Fijians did not have a unified system of beliefs or a hierarchy of deities, but they highly venerated personified forces of nature, their ancestors, and totems. They prayed to patrons of certain trades (fishing, canoe building). Certain types of fish, birds, animals, and trees were venerated and protected as ancestral totems. Both gods and ancestors were called *Kalou*. Various rocks, giant trees, and stones were venerated as *Kalou*. In their villages, native Fijians had temples called *Bure Kalou*. Priests (*Bete*) as well as Fijian chiefs played an important role in the social life of the aboriginal Fijians.

In the 19th century, British colonial occupation and economic activity led to the replacement of the local religion by Christianity and the introduction of Indian religions in the islands with the indentured labor from South Asia brought by the British to work on their sugar plantations. Christian churches of Anglican, Roman Catholic, and Methodist missions replaced the old Fijian *Bure Kalous*. Fijians chiefs converted to Christianity. The old beliefs mostly disappeared, though some places are still considered as the abode of old deities, and aboriginal witchcraft is still practiced by certain native Fijian magicians.

Today, Indo-Fijians, the descendants of the Indian indentured laborers and “the passengers” (free migrants), constitute about 40% of Fiji’s population of approximately 830,000. As such, they constitute the largest population group in Fiji. They are not, however, united in ethnic and religious terms. Many of the early Indian laborers were from Bihar and elsewhere in eastern India and from various parts of South India; later immigrants were more wealthy, and came from Gujarat and the Punjab. The major religions of the Indo-Fijians are Hinduism, Islam, and Sikhism. Hindus are represented by both the reformist *Arya Samaj* and the traditionalist *Sanatana dharmi* Hindus. The former are followers of the Indian religious reformer Swami Dayananda Saraswati (1824–1883). The reformist movement founded in 1875 in Bombay (now Mumbai) appeared to be more successful outside India, particularly in Fiji, rather than in the country of origin. The Arya Samajists advocate the revival of Vedic religion, though their interpretation of this religion is different from that of the traditionalists. The latter in the diaspora are united under the umbrella name of *Sanatana Dharma*, or the true religion. Both branches of Hinduism in Fiji have their temples, educational

institutions, missions, and charity organizations. The Hindu sect of *Kabir Panthis* also has its branches in Fiji.

Muslims of South Asian origin in Fiji are both Sunnīs and Shi'i, traditionalists (Barelvis) and reformists (Deobandis). The Ahmadiyya sect in Islam is also present in Fiji.

Sikhs represent one of the largest communities of Indo-Fijians. They have their worship centers (*gurdwaras*) in many Fijian cities. The *Sahajdhari* Sikhs are popularly known as “shaven Sikhs” because they do not maintain the traditional Sikh appearance of the beard and turban. This group is distinct from the *Keshdhari*, or “bearded Sikhs.” In Fiji, there is no apparent conflict between the groups despite their different styles of observance.

Igor Yurievich Kotin

See also Hinduism; India; Pacific Islands/Oceania; Sikhism

FINLAND

Situated in the northernmost part of Europe, Finland is a country of little more than 5 million inhabitants. Before its independence in 1917, Finland was from the 1320s onward a part of the Kingdom of Sweden and from 1809 to 1917 an autonomous grand duchy of the Russian Empire. Finland's religious history has been dominated by Christianity, with religious pluralism and multiculturalism emerging only at the end of the 20th century. The indigenous Finnish pagan religion was supplanted by Catholicism, spread by Swedish crusaders, from the 12th century onward. Catholicism, in turn, was replaced by Protestantism when the king of Sweden declared Lutheranism as the state religion in 1527. At the same time, an Orthodox Christian minority culture developed predominantly in the eastern parts of the country neighboring Russia.

Like the rest of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden), Finland has a strong Lutheran church. Although Finland became officially religiously neutral with the implementation of the Freedom of Religion Act of 1923, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland and the Orthodox Church retained a special status. For example, the churches are financed by a “church tax” collected

by the state from the members of the churches. Similarly, the Freedom of Religion Act's provisions concerning the legal status and registration of religious communities do not apply to either of these churches, whose legal standing is defined in other laws. These statutes remained unchanged in the new Freedom of Religion Act of 2003.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland currently claims a membership of 82% of the population, with roughly 2% belonging to the Orthodox Church and to other religious communities. The fastest growing group, constituting 16% of the population, has no religious affiliation. These membership figures, however, tell very little about the religiousness of Finns. Only a fraction of the members take part in weekly Mass, which implies that, for many people, membership is more a social custom than a question of devotion. In the context of different social rites of passage, such as baptism and marriage, the church is still seen as important, but belief in the central tenets of faith or traditional mores is increasingly contested or ignored among the membership. Balancing this are strong revivalist movements that, unlike in many other countries, have mostly remained within the Lutheran Church.

Contemporary Finnish religiosity has been described as “new popular religiosity”—that is, an individual faith practiced outside religious institutions. Recent years have also witnessed a pluralization of the religious field in Finland with the emergence of immigrant religions, especially Islam, the emergence of alternative spiritualities, and the growth of independent charismatic Christian groups.

Titus Hjelm

See also Eastern Orthodox Christianity; Protestant Christianity; Sweden

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FLOOD MYTH

Among the various world cultures, an account of a catastrophic deluge is almost ubiquitous, and these accounts are as varied as they are widespread. Yet this myth represents more than a mere anthropological interest to modern scholars. The presence of this myth in Genesis, part of the Hebrew Bible (and the Christian Old Testament), has meant that this narrative has a central place in Western religion. Moreover, a version of the story—based on the much older biblical account—has found a place in the Qur'an, the authoritative scripture for Muslims. Consequently, the most famous account of a primordial flood—the story of Noah and his ark—has a central place in the Western imagination and, more important, world religion.

The Biblical Account

This preeminent narrative is found in Genesis 6:5–9, 19. Here, the myth begins with the Lord observing the great wickedness of humankind, noting “every inclination of the thoughts of his heart is only evil all the time” (6:5). He, consequently, repents of having created humanity and determines to wipe it from “the face of the earth” (6:7), along with all the animals. Noah, however, finds grace (חן) “in the eyes of the Lord” (6:8). He is, therefore, commanded to build an ark to meticulous standards. On the ship’s completion, Noah and his family—his wife, three sons, and their wives—enter the ark, along with representatives of “all flesh” (6:19). In turn, a great flood (לִיְבֹהַב; LXX κατακλυσμός) covers the earth, rising “fifteen cubits” above the mountains (7:20) and destroying “all which had the faintest breath of life in its nostrils” (7:22). Eventually, the waters begin to recede, and the ark comes to rest “on the mountains of Ararat” (8:4). After waiting 40 days, Noah releases a raven—to serve as a type of primordial barometer. He then, in turn, sends out a pair of doves, the second one returning with “the fresh leaf of an olive tree in its mouth” (8:11). Cognizant of the fact that the earth is drying, Noah waits another 7 days before sending out a final dove, which, because the earth is dry, does not return. Eventually, the righteous shipwright leaves the

ark, together with his family and the surviving animals. He then builds “an altar to the Lord,” sacrificing from the clean animals (8:20). God, pleased by the odor of the offering, establishes a covenant with Noah, urging the patriarch and his three sons—Shem, Ham, and Japheth—to repopulate the earth: “Be fruitful and be great and fill the earth” (9:1). In turn, God promises never again to destroy “all flesh” (9:11) with a flood, and as a sign of this promise, he places his bow in the clouds.

In one sense, the narrative functions—like many biblical myths—as an etiological story. In this case, the presence of a rainbow in the sky after a thundershower is explained by God’s promise to Noah. The “bow”—a natural phenomenon observable by everyone—is, consequently, a reminder to God of the covenant he had created with Noah (known to scholars as “the Noachide covenant”). Biblical myths, like this one, frequently use narrative to account for the inexplicable features of the world in which the writers lived. For example, the account of the Tower of Babel explains the origin of the various language and ethnic groups. Likewise, in the flood myth, God also grants humankind the right to eat meat, the dispensation to slaughter animals being a channeling of the violent impulses that initially caused such displeasure in Him.

Sources

The centrality of this myth to ancient Israelites is witnessed, moreover, not only by its ability to explain the world but by the fact that the Bible actually records two different accounts of the same story. The narrative material found in Genesis 6–9 is actually a composite of two documents—the Priestly and the Yahwistic sources, known as P and J, respectively. While authorship of the Pentateuch has traditionally been imputed to Moses, for the past two centuries scholars have been aware that the Torah is actually the product of the combination of four different source documents. While these documents are hypothetical, the innumerable contradictions within the biblical narrative testify to their tenability.

More specifically, the flood narrative is rife with contradictions. For example, God commands Noah to take two of every kind of animal into the

ark (6:19), yet the Lord also commands the patriarch to bring with him seven pairs of all clean animals and a single pair of unclean animals (7:2). Later, the text mentions only one pair of animals entering the ark (7:9), which would make Noah's sacrifice to God a holocaust of the only animals left on earth. Additionally, there is chronological confusion: In the J account, the flood lasts 40 days (7:17, 8:6), while in the P version, the waters swell for 150 days (7:24). The epithets used for the divine name also differ, with YHWH (traditionally translated as "Lord") in the J account and *elohim* ("God") in the P. There are also significant repetitions, with God, for instance, twice seeing the corruption of the earth (6:5, 6:12) and twice warning Noah about the impending deluge (6:13ff, 7:1ff). Ultimately, these sources are divisible into two complete narratives, each of which is internally consistent.

Ancient Near Eastern Accounts

In addition to the existence of multiple versions of this story within Israelite scripture, in the past two centuries scholars have discovered that the Ancient Near Eastern (ANE) culture—in which the Bible was produced—was rife with versions of this legend. There are Assyrian, Babylonian, and Sumerian versions of the flood myth, all of which share a great many features with the biblical account(s). For example, George Smith's 1872 discovery of what he would term, in a lecture given to the Society of Biblical Archaeology, "The Chaldean Account of the Deluge" has revolutionized modern understandings of the flood myth. This account, contained on the 11th of the 12 tablets that were unearthed in the library of Ashurbanipal, is a part of the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, and its revolutionary importance stems not only from its incontrovertible similarity to the biblical story of Noah but also from the fact that it antedates the biblical myth by many centuries.

The similarities the Akkadian legend bears to the more well-known biblical myth are striking. In the context of the epic, Gilgamesh—the king of Uruk and protagonist of the tale—is searching for immortality. He encounters Utnapishtim, who has been granted eternal life by the gods. Eager to know how he can likewise become immortal, Gilgamesh persuades Utnapishtim to recount his story. The latter claims that, long ago, the god Enlil grew disaffected by the great clamor of humankind.

He, consequently, resolved to obliterate humanity. Another god, Ea, learning of this plot, warned Utnapishtim in a dream, commanding him to build a boat to predetermined specifications. Once the seven-story ship was seaworthy, Utnapishtim loaded his family, all types of animals—both domestic and wild—and craftsmen (the intention seeming to be the preservation of various skills) aboard. Rain fell so violently that even the gods were terrified by its fury. After the tempest, the boat eventually ran aground on Mount Nisir. To determine how dry the earth was, Utnapishtim sent out a series of three birds (a dove, a swallow, and a raven), and when the final one didn't return, he opened the ship. On the mountain, Utnapishtim immediately made a sacrifice, the smell of which drew the gods thither like flies. And, just as the rainbow serves as a reminder to God, the goddess Ishtar pledged never to forget the deluge. Finally, Utnapishtim and his wife were granted immortality by Enlil.

The similarities between the accounts are vast and obvious; moreover, they are shared by other ANE legends, such as *Atrahasis*. Although the exact nature of the biblical narrative's literary genealogy is undeterminable, its author was no doubt influenced by these older myths. Perhaps it is more interesting, therefore, to examine how the biblical account differs. While its monotheistic position warrants mention, the myth's focus on the moral excellence of Noah as the reason for his deliverance is more revealing. It was precisely this moral preeminence that would later captivate readers of the myth. In the Book of Ezekiel, Noah is held up as a moral example, with references made to his righteousness (צדקה; 14:14). Additionally, Christian writers would see in the myth not only an example of deliverance but a "type" (τύπος) of baptism (see 1 Peter 3:20–21). The cataclysmic nature of the flood also served as an analogy for their eschatological models (see Matthew 24:37–39, 2 Peter 3:5–7).

These later readings, especially, contributed to the literal interpretation of the myth that has been prevalent in Christianity. Although there is no archaeological or geological data to suggest a worldwide deluge, this narrative has retained a central place in contemporary debates about the relationship of the Bible to science. Additionally, the pervasiveness of the myth—and the discovery of astonishingly similar ANE accounts—was

initially perceived as evidence to support the historicity of the biblical account. However, the dissimilarity of these global myths makes it implausible that they are related, and the more ancient dates for the ANE accounts means that the tale of Noah and his ark is a product not of historical record but of a creative mind at work on traditional mythological material.

Brad Holden

See also Ancient Near Eastern Religions; Bible; Creationism; Gilgamesh Epic

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FO GUANG SHAN

Fo Guang Shan (lit. “Buddha Light Mountain”) is a Buddhist organization headquartered in Taiwan. It originated in a monastery founded in 1967 by the monk Hsing Yun (d. 1927) in southern Taiwan and has since grown into one of the largest and most visible Buddhist associations on the island and beyond. Inspired by the reformist teachings of the monk Taixu (1890–1947), Hsing Yun espouses humanistic Buddhism—that is, a Buddhism concerned with social issues rather than exclusively focused on monastic cultivation. He advocates social action as the creation of “pure lands” in the here and now, thus moving the focus of attention from the “pure land” as a feature of the afterlife to a utopian ideal in this world. His organization pursues this aim through the founding of temples and outreach centers across the world, as well as through the establishment of charitable and educational institutions. Fo Guang Shan is especially known

for the latter, including primary and secondary schools, colleges and seminaries, and three full-scale universities: Fo Guang University and Nan Hua University in Taiwan and the University of the West in California.

Hsing Yun modernized monastic education by adopting curricular structures similar to secular colleges in Fo Guang Shan seminaries. He has been an early adopter of new communication technologies in Fo Guang Shan educational ventures and in his approach to dharma propagation. While Fo Guang Shan is best understood as a monastic order consisting of hundreds of nuns and monks, since 1991 it has been complemented by the Buddha Light International Association (BLIA), which counts both monastics and laypeople among its members. BLIA has become an important fundraising and outreach organization with chapters on all five continents. The founding of international BLIA chapters and Fo Guang Shan temples and monasteries outside Taiwan is an important part of Hsing Yun’s endeavor to spread the dharma and usher in the globalization of Buddhism. Kaosiung remains the global headquarters, but the order maintains almost 200 other temples and practice centers in Taiwan and across the globe, with the Hsi Lai Temple in Hacienda Heights, California, as one of the best known and earliest international foundings (1988). While the geographical spread of the Fo Guang Shan network demonstrates the successful internationalization of a Taiwanese Buddhist order, it is not in itself indicative of the emergence of a globalized Buddhism, as BLIA chapters the world over tend to draw most of their membership from among overseas Chinese communities and thus remain closely tied to a culturally specific Buddhist tradition.

It is Hsing Yun’s ideal to progressively break down ethnic and sectarian borders within Buddhism. He is actively engaged in dialogues with leaders from other Buddhist traditions and has taken a lead in organizing multitransnational ordination rites, especially for nuns, thus aiding efforts to reestablish a female order in Theravada and Tibetan Buddhist traditions.

Philip Clart

See also Engaged Buddhist Groups; Taiwan; Theravada Buddhism

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FOLK SAINTS IN LATIN AMERICA

Although Latin America is considered to be a stronghold of Roman Catholicism, folk religious practices often differ from the official teachings of the Church. People are devoted to their saintly protectors or to one of the many apparitions of the Virgin Mary. Moreover, to cope with their problems, many Latin Americans have adopted their own folk saints or *animas milagrosas* (miraculous souls), who were never officially beatified or sanctified. Until the 12th century, most saints were freely chosen by the people in this way, but today sanctification is a serious process of the *Sacra Rota* (Vatican Court) in Rome.

Latin American animas usually died a violent death in an accident or were killed in action. In life, they may have been doctors or folk healers, humble peasants, or pious Christians. Others were criminals, Robin Hood types, drug dealers, or bandits who were shot by the police or during a revolution. They are always remembered in legends. Cults often start on the site where an accident occurred, and soon travelers stop to pray for protection on their journey. The graves of persons who were killed by the police are often visited by those who knew them in life. Ex-votos, candles, and flowers are placed on the tomb, and soon, a chapel is erected, where the beneficiaries sometimes leave precious gifts.

In Venezuela, José Gregorio Hernandez is the most popular folk saint. He was a medical doctor who died in a car accident in 1928. Among his worshippers are also many Spiritists. For this reason, Rome so far has not beatified him. Nevertheless, thousands of his devotees make pilgrimages to his native village and to other shrines. He is asked to cure the sick.

In Caracas, many students visit the tomb of Maria Francia, where they deposit their copy-books after successfully passing exams, thanks to the help of this anima. She was the daughter of a wealthy citizen, who forced her to marry a man she

did not love. On the day of her wedding, she was bitten by a snake and died. In 1970, a guerrilla leader by the name of Montenegro was shot by the National Guard. A shrine was built for this popular hero, who is invoked to free political prisoners. Juan Mata Silva used to revolt against the dictator Gomez in the 1930s; he stole from the rich to help the poor but was finally killed by the police. Machera was a drug dealer and the head of an urban gang in Merida in the 1980s; he died in his "war for the poor." Students ask his anima to help pass exams. His tomb is decorated with candles, bottles of rum, and flowers. His mother, who often sits there, receives monetary gifts from the devotees. On the tomb of Gabriela Matos, many ex-votos and plaques thank her for her help to conceive a child. There are at least 50 folk saints adored by Venezuelans of all classes. In recent years, the *animas de malandros* (souls of criminals who were killed recently) are frequently implored either by evildoers or by those who are fighting against crime. During their life, they committed murder, assaults, and kidnappings and were finally killed by the police. Today, their spirits are also invoked to take possession of Spiritist mediums, who can be consulted by the faithful.

Cults for animas are found in all Latin American countries. In Argentina, *la Difunta Correa* (the dead Correa) has many shrines and is implored to cure the sick or help in finding employment or a husband. She died of thirst and starvation while her baby still suckled her breasts. In Brazil, some of the animas were children who died in accidents or were killed by their parents. Others used to be spiritual healers, who may also possess mediums to give advice to the faithful. Romualdo Hernandez was a revolutionary in Chile; he died in 1893 and is still implored to help the poor and cure the sick. In Uruguay, Dionisio Diaz died in an accident in 1929. His anima is invoked to find lost objects. The anima of Terrine Duque miraculously cured her mother in 1957 and, since then, is implored to help the sick.

In the United States, a cult for Elvis Presley developed after his death. In Seradace, Sicily, in 1960, a young man driving his motorbike on a highway was killed by a truck. A few days later, his soul appeared to his uncle in a dream, and since then, he is invoked on his grave by the faithful to help them solve their problems.

In popular Catholicism, folk saints are venerated in the same way as ordinary saints. Daily prayers are said during a certain period of time. A vow is made; when the wish is granted, it has to be fulfilled immediately. As long as saints help their devotees, they are lavishly praised, but when prayers are no longer answered, they are forgotten.

Angelina Pollak-Eltz

See also Latin America; Roman Catholicism; Saints

FOUCAULT, MICHEL (1926–1984)

At the time of his death in 1984, Michel Foucault held the chair in History of Systems of Thought at the Collège de France, the country's most prestigious academic institution. This title seems an apt description of the breadth of Foucault's interests and influences. Written in the wake of Continental structuralism, his texts seek to refashion "the human" and, therefore, the human sciences, particularly discourses of psychology, medicine, epistemology, politics, and sexuality. Though he wrote very little that treats religion explicitly, his impact on its study has been and continues to be profound, especially in the contemporary attention it devotes to bodies, genders, practices, and power.

Foucault was born in 1926 and raised in Poitiers, the son of an eminent local surgeon. There he attended the Jesuit Collège Saint-Stanislas and passed his baccalaureate exams in 1943. He moved to Paris and attended Lycée Henri IV to prepare for entrance to the *École Normale Supérieure*, which he obtained in 1946. At *École Normale Supérieure*, he earned a *licence* in philosophy in 1948, a *licence* in psychology in 1949, and an *agrégation* in philosophy in 1951. He also earned a *diplôme* in psychopathology from Paris's *Institut de Psychologie* in 1952. This led to his first publication, *Mental Illness and Psychology*, in 1954. From 1952 to 1960, he held a series of short-term appointments at the University of Lille in France, University of Uppsala in Sweden, University of Warsaw in Poland, and French Institute in Hamburg, Germany.

During this time, particularly at Uppsala, Sweden, Foucault researched and wrote *Madness*

and *Civilization*, a massive tome that combines archival, historical research with philosophical erudition to construct an archaeology of madness in modern Europe from the 16th to the 18th centuries. In it, he charts madness's shift from a part of everyday life to an institutionalized condition, leading to the advent of the asylum and the physical and conceptual confinement of insanity. The mad, according to him, come to be regarded as inhuman, so that their confinement becomes a moral issue that society must police. Madness also becomes an epistemological issue, equated with unreason and therefore excluded from the civilized domain that reason constructs. Published in 1961, *Madness and Civilization* was quickly recognized and highly regarded by French academics—so much so that it earned Foucault his *doctorat ès lettres* (along with his secondary thesis on Immanuel Kant's *Anthropology From a Pragmatic Point of View*).

Madness and Civilization also provides a methodological template for his "archaeological" period. In it, he isolates a key social category and construct (in this case, madness) and performs a careful, historical analysis to uncover its constructed status and to chart the progression of its construction. Hence, his works wed conceptual and concrete examinations, moving from the archival data toward theoretical conclusions. His next text, *The Birth of the Clinic* (published in 1963), applies this method to medicine and the attention it gives to the human body. More specifically, *The Birth of the Clinic* focuses on the medical gaze as a new way of seeing body, disease, and pathology: Medicine turns its gaze to the body and to bodily phenomena and symptoms rather than to the individual. This gaze creates new modes of experience and new possibilities for knowledge that emerge from the cultural and political conditions in 18th-century Europe. It also results in a new understanding of life's and death's co-implications vis-à-vis disease.

Foucault's archaeological period culminates in *The Order of Things*, published in 1966 (the same year as Jacques Lacan's *Écrits* and 1 year before Jacques Derrida's *Of Grammatology* and *Writing and Difference*). This text, whose French title is *Les Mots et les Choses* (Words and Things), proposes "an archaeology of the human sciences," as its subtitle announces, taking "the human" as its object of investigation. Its thesis is bold: The

human is a recent invention. Foucault proposes that the human is an invention, an artifice, a construct, rather than a natural occurrence or emergence. This invention arises in modern Europe, as Foucault again turns his attention to the 17th and 18th centuries and a variety of their discourses, including grammar, taxonomy, currency, science, and other systems of signification and representation. All of these are part of an *episteme*, or an epistemological field that conditions and structures knowledge. Because an *episteme* is historically and culturally located—Foucault maintains that all knowledge is situated (in time and space, in language, in culture, etc.) and bound to a praxis—it is contingent and changes as knowledge changes. Hence, the *episteme* of the human that emerges in the 18th century is contingent and will change when knowledge morphs into new forms. This morphing owes to discursive changes, for the human *episteme* depends on a Cartesian cogito and a particular understanding of finitude. Consequently, Foucault suggests, the human might be nearing its end.

Despite its conceptual range and density, *The Order of Things* became a surprise bestseller in France. Foucault enjoyed this success while abroad, spending 2 years teaching in Tunisia. He returned to France following the events of May 1968 to become chair of the philosophy department at the newly formed University of Paris VIII at Vincennes. But he left that post a year later on his election to the Collège de France in 1969 (the same year in which he published *The Archaeology of Knowledge*). Foucault's inaugural lecture, *L'ordre du discours* (published in English as "The Discourse on Language"), focuses on the theme of "discipline," understood as a system of control in discourse production, with *discourse* understood as a practice or a violence imposed on things as a means of regularization via rules and procedures. This lecture marks the beginning of Foucault's genealogical period, pointing to the growing influence of Friedrich Nietzsche on Foucault's work. Instead of the archaeological focus on *episteme* and the conditions governing discourses, his genealogical focus is on *dispositifs* as articulations of discursive (and nondiscursive) practices. Accordingly, his genealogical analyses concentrate on power rather than on knowledge.

Discipline and Punish, published in 1975, was the first of these genealogical texts to emerge. This

groundbreaking examination of the prison stems in part from Foucault's leftist political activism concerning prison conditions and reforms beginning in 1971 and from his visit to New York's Attica prison in 1972. *Discipline and Punish* retains the rich historicity of his earlier works; in this work, however, Foucault turns his attention to practices of punishment and, more specifically, their effects on prisoners' bodies. These practices subject bodies to control while making them productive, according to a political economy of bodies. Here, the central concern is power, as Foucault now claims that power produces knowledge. Power is, more generally, a productive technology: It produces not only knowledge but also reality and truth. Discipline thus becomes a technique of power (or, as Foucault also calls it, power-knowledge) that subjects and normalizes. For Foucault, power names not a structure but an omnipresent, relational network of processes and strategies.

Foucault next turns his attention to sexuality. In the first volume of his *History of Sexuality*, published a year later, in 1976, Foucault seeks to define the regimes of power, knowledge, and pleasure through which sex is put into discourse as a technology of power and a will to knowledge. Foucault traces the genealogical roots of "sexuality as discourse" to the Christian confession, understood as a practice of permanent verbalization. This means that sex is constituted as a matter (or problem) of truth—one whose genealogy reveals a change from an *ars erotica* to a *scientia sexualis* in 17th-century Europe. Foucault goes on to explore the deployment of sexuality as a technology of power and, more narrowly, of political power exerted on bodies. In the final section of *History of Sexuality*, Foucault articulates this nexus of sexuality, politics, power, and body as a sovereign's power morphs from one of taking life to one of fostering life. As life and its management become political matters, politics becomes biopolitics, whose limit is death.

Though Foucault originally projected a multi-volume study that would include considerations of children, women, and "perverts" as sexual subjects, he abandoned this plan in the late 1970s. This abandonment coincides with his shift in political activism toward issues of human rights, including (for the first time) gay rights. Foucault's work now enters its third and final phase, focused

on ethics and on the problematics of subjectivity. He turns his attention away from modern Europe to ancient Greece and Rome and investigates historical technologies of subject formation in ethical terms, with particular interest in how sexuality becomes constituted as a moral experience. These investigations were published as the second and third volumes of *History of Sexuality* in 1984, the same year that Foucault succumbed to AIDS.

William Robert

See also Postmodernism; Prison Religion; Sexuality

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FRANCE

In 2006, an official report by Jean Pierre Machelon drew the following distribution of the religious population in France: 65% of the French people declare themselves Catholics, 25% Agnostics, 6% Muslims, 2% Protestants (including more and more of Evangelicals and Pentecostals), around 750,000 Historical Christians (Orthodox, Armenian, Copt, Syriac, Chaldean, Maronite, etc.), 600,000 Jews, 400,000 Buddhists, and a notable presence of “members of New Religious Movements.” However, some scholars believe that the reality of religious life in France is less Catholic and more Protestant than the statistics suggest.

History

France has been traditionally called the “eldest daughter of the Church” because of its strong Catholic tradition. This history has been marked by the conversion of King Clovis in 496, the king

who became Saint Louis in 1297, the patron saint Joan of Arc (who played a decisive role in the French victory against Britain, and in the restoration of the monarchy, during the Hundred Years’ War in the 15th century), and the consecration of France to Our Lady (the Virgin Mary) by Louis XIII in 1638. In addition, France housed official papal residences during the 14th and 15th centuries (the Papacies of Avignon); Avignon was home to both popes and antipopes (simultaneous with the contested popes of Rome, after a schism). Ecumenical councils of the Catholic Church also took place in France from the 4th to the 19th century.

The religious history of France has not been without conflict. French Catholics indeed experienced difficulties, due to politico-religious debates (e.g., the Jansenist debate and the banishment of Jesuits in 1763) or anticlericalism (e.g., the prosecution and the dissolution of the order of the Assumptionists, who were exiled in 1900). In the 13th century, a debate about the heresy of the Cathars led to political and religious repression, with the inquisition conferred on the Dominican Order of Preachers. Later, French Protestants (Walloons, Huguenots, and Camisards) were the main victims of religious persecution, with an escalation of violence during the St. Bartholomew’s Day massacre (1572) and after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1685).

The presence of Jews has been significant throughout French history, with Bordeaux as an important site for Jewish commercial and religious activity. Many major French authors, including Michel de Montaigne and Marcel Proust, were Jewish or part Jewish. There has, however, been significant persecution of Jews in France: Jews were banished from France in the 12th and 14th centuries and deported during World War II.

Muslims have been present in France since the eighth century. They contributed to the early French universities, especially in Montpellier and Paris, in philosophy (Averroism), medicine, astronomy, and sciences in general.

Separation of Church and State

Church and state are separated in France according to the principle of secularity (*laïcité*). As a heritage of the Bologna Concordat of 1516, of the French Revolution, and of the concordat of 1801,

the separation is now legally framed by the law of 1905, which states that

the Republic guarantees the freedom of consciousness and of worship within the limits of specified conditions concerning the interest of public order. . . . [The Republic] neither acknowledges nor gives salary nor financially supports any religion.

Nevertheless particular places such as Alsace, Moselle, and Guyanne remain under prior conditions. Controversial laws recently fixed more limitations on the freedom of religious expression: in 2004, a law forbidding the use of “religious signs” in public schools and, in 2010, the prohibition of the veil (*niqab*) in public. Despite this separation policy, the Central Bureau of the Religious Affairs depends on the French Ministry of Interior Affairs—replacing, since the early 20th century, the Napoleonic Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Shrines and Pilgrimages

One of the oldest shrines of France is the Neolithic Carnac Alignments. This megalithic ensemble inspired many myths and beliefs associated with Celtic Paganism. In the context of magic in Brittany, the Brocéliande forest is also known for the survival of druidic practices.

Because of its Catholic tradition, France has seen the rise of many forms of Marian devotions, visible through the presence of a quantity of shrines mostly related to apparitions, pilgrimages, and healing practices: The most well-known are Lourdes (1858) and the Chapel of Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal in Paris (1830). Other sites are also spread across the territory, with minor but more ancient and continuous activities. In southwest France, for instance, a few are remarkable: Verdels (11th century), Garaison (16th century), Our Lady of Buglose (16th century), Our Lady of Payragude (1000), and Our Lady of Betharram (17th century, with a statue that dates from the 13th). Several shrines are also highly popular: the Sacré Cœur in Paris (one of the most visited places of France), the Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer (a traditional pilgrimage destination for the Romani people), Vézelay (a departure point for the journey to Santiago de Compostela), Our Lady of Lorette (a

World War I memorial), and Mont Saint Michel. The ecumenical Christian Community of Taizé, founded in 1940, gathers visiting young people from all over the world.

People

Numerous French Catholics have been significant, including Pascal, Malebranches, Bossuet, Thérèse of Lisieux, Bernadette of Lourdes, Jeanne Jugan (founder of the Little Sisters of the Poor), Vincent de Paul, Bernard de Clairvaux, Francis de Sales (of the Salesian school), John Baptist de La Salle, Lamennais (priest and politician theoretician), Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, Jacques Maritain, François Mauriac, Emmanuel Mounier, Étienne Gilson, Maurice Blondel, Gabriel Marcel, and Georges Bernanos. Though not French himself, Thomas of Aquinas died in France and was buried in Toulouse. Scholasticism found a major ground in Parisian universities of the 13th century. The Jansenists Antoine Arnauld (the “Grand Arnauld”) and Pierre Nicole theorized logic frames known as “Port Royal Logic,” which gave rise to the modern study of logic and language (e.g., Noam Chomsky).

Jean Calvin was an influential Reformation theologian. In the Protestant area, Albert Schweitzer has been acknowledged as a missionary and a music analyst. Paul Ricoeur and Jaques Ellul share a French Protestant background as well. And the cofounder of the megachurch of Illinois the Willow Creek Community, Gilbert Bilezikian, was originally from France as well.

Other authors such as Henri Bergson and Simone Weil made influential contributions to the Christian thought of the 20th century.

In addition, Jewish people held key political positions: René Cassin as one of the drafters of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* and Léon Blum as a French president.

Congregations, Movements, and Nongovernmental Organizations

The congregations and orders of French origin include the Cistercian Order, the Sisters of Saint-Joseph de Cluny, the Spiritans, the Society of Mary Marianists Brothers and Priests, and the Vincentian Family (Congregation of the Mission, Company of the Daughters of Charity of Saint Vincent de Paul).

Several nongovernmental organizations originated in France: Caritas (started by Jean Rodhain, founder of the *Secours Catholique*, which became Caritas Internationalis), the Saint Vincent de Paul Societies (from the *Conférences de Saint Vincent de Paul*, founded in Paris in 1833 by Frederic Ozanam), the ACAT (Association of Christians Against Torture), and the Alliance Israelite Universelle.

Some new religious movements and cults rose in France as well, such as Raelism, a new religious movement based on the concept of UFOs (unidentified flying objects).

Religious Studies

The main French places dedicated to religious studies in the state educational system are the *École Pratique des Hautes Etudes*, the *École des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales*, and the University of Strasbourg. Many confessional universities and study centers exist too, with several *Instituts Catholiques* (in addition to the *Jesuit Centre Sèvres* and the *Dominican Centre du Saulchoir*) and Protestant Institutes of Theology.

The core religious studies scholars of the 20th century were Roger Arnaldès, Roger Bastide, Pierre Chaunu, Henry Corbin, Henri Desroches, Émile Durkheim, Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, Arnold Van Gennep, René Guénon, Robert Hertz, Yves Lambert, René Laurentin, Alfred Loisy, Louis Massignon, Jean Séguy, and Claude Tresmontant. Among the current most influential scholars are Jean Baubérot, Philippe Boutry, Erwan Dianteill, Sébastien Fath, Rita Hermon-Belot, Danièle Hervieu-Leger, Nathalie Luca, Marcel Gauchet, and Jean-Paul Willaime.

Sophie-Hélène Trigeaud

See also Dumont, Louis; Durkheim, Émile; Foucault, Michel; French Revolution; Girard, René; Lévi-Strauss, Claude; Lourdes; Martinique; Taizé

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FRENCH POLYNESIA

In the South Pacific island territory of French Polynesia, the two large historic churches, the Ma'ohi Protestant Church (*Église protestante ma'ohi*, or EPM) and the Roman Catholic Church, claim more than three quarters of the population as members. But the 1980s marked the beginning of a new religious era, with faster and deeper diversification in relation to social and economic changes. Following the establishment in 1963 of the Pacific Test Center (*Centre d'expérimentation du Pacifique*), French Polynesia moved to an economy combining massive imports, consumption, and rapid growth of the public administration. Migratory movements from the rural islands toward the capital island led to an increasing concentration of population in the urban zones of Tahiti. This mobility underlines the decline of a traditional way of life that closely linked membership to a territory and to bonds of family solidarity and community religious identity. It has contributed to the diversification of the population, leading to a great decrease of religious homogeneity in couples and families.

The census of 1951 listed only five religious organizations. A quarter of the population was then Catholic, and half was Protestant. The remaining churches were the Seventh-Day Adventist, Sanito (the local name of Community of Christ, formerly known as the Reorganized Mormon Church), and the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints, which together constituted only 6.41% of the inhabitants. Today, one French Polynesian in five belongs to neither the Catholic nor the historic Protestant Church, and within these two churches, the level of religious practice

is decreasing. New churches have developed strong communities in French Polynesia, especially Jehovah's Witnesses (officially established since 1960) and Pentecostalism, which first appeared in 1962 in the Chinese community and reached a larger audience in the 1980s, with the expansion of the Assemblies of God. Above all, two older churches have progressed significantly since the 1980s: The Church of Latter-Day Saints, whose first missionaries arrived in 1844, now constitutes 6.5% of the population; the Seventh-Day Adventist Church, established in 1890, has gained a similar influence (5.8%). Their progress, mainly due to converts from the EPM Church, testifies to a new religious mobility (intergenerational and individual) and a trend toward greater individual autonomy with respect to inherited religious identity.

The Catholic Church would probably have lost many more members to newer religious movements had it not been for the spectacular revitalization brought to it during the 1980s by the Charismatic renewal. About 40% of French Polynesians today identify themselves as Catholics, but the commitment of the Charismatics (approximately a quarter of the membership of Catholics) contrasts with the great mass of the nonpracticing. Despite its relative decline, the EPM still constitutes about 40% of the population and remains a strong identity reference. The EPM remains strong partly because of its long history in French Polynesia; it is the heir of the first Protestant missionaries who disembarked in 1797 from the ship *Duff* chartered by the London Missionary Society and established the first Christian church in Tahiti. Also, the EPM has retained much of its membership and has continued to attract new adherents due to its committed stance against nuclear testing and its consequences, in favor of political independence, and in defense of indigenous culture and language (*re'o ma'ohi*).

Gwendoline Malogne-Fer and Yannick Fer

See also Catholic Charismatic Renewal; France; Mormons; Pacific Islands/Oceania

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FRENCH REVOLUTION

Religion played a considerable role in the course of the French Revolution, and the revolution was a major milestone in the evolution of religious life in France. But that milestone had two very different sides to it.

The liberal side constituted the adoption of pluralism in France by means of Article X of the Declaration of Rights of 1789, which proclaimed religious freedom; the Constitution of 1791, which virtually established freedom of worship; and specific laws that guaranteed civil equality for Protestants in December 1789 and for Jews of the entire realm in September 1791. Such pluralism was completely exceptional: The longer term effects of French-style “emancipation” of the Jews have raised a lot of comments and controversies, but the immediate and complete civil equality that was offered to them was at that time completely unprecedented in Europe.

The other side was conflictual and violent. The revolution was, at the outset, in no way antireligious or anti-Catholic—in fact, quite the contrary. But the Constituent Assembly had recourse to the assets of the Church (only those not necessary for services) to resolve the public financial crisis, and it thought it could adapt the laws of the Church to the reform of the realm without touching strictly spiritual matters. This “Civil Constitution of the Clergy” would nonetheless be more difficult to apply than the deputies imagined.

Considered “recalcitrant,” this resistance was perceived as a form of political opposition, which was true in some but not all cases, inextricably intertwining politics and religion and thus provoking what historians have called the French “split,” a split not only between the political and religious leaders but also within the entire social body. Religion—all historical religions that henceforth appeared as a danger to the republic produced by the revolution—was rejected during a short but

brutal period that would result in the first attempt to separate church and state in France in 1795.

It is true that Catholics and even priests numbered among those who called for the harshest measures against the recalcitrants. For the revolution inherited so many ancient conflicts from within the French Church that we may speak of the “religious origins of the French Revolution.” Thus, the heritage of the revolution was twofold. We are most familiar with the “war between the two Frances” that resulted in French *laïcité*. But if the conflict actually had its roots in the revolution and the scars it had left behind and if the fathers of the republic, who were also the founders of *laïcité*, had always situated their actions in continuity with the French Revolution, that particular conflict would have had its own repercussions during the 19th century.

Less visible, the liberal path never disappeared, and the Vichy regime would be the only one that would really bring freedom of worship into question using the most violent means. The last assault against the authentic legacy of the French Revolution remains a major characteristic of France: In France, it was the state that imposed pluralism on a non-pluralistic society.

Rita Hermon-Belot

See also Enlightenment; France

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FREUD, SIGMUND (1856–1939)

Sigmund Freud was the founder of psychoanalysis, one of the great theoretical contributions to

20th-century Western modernity. Psychoanalysis is simultaneously a theory of mind and of psychopathology, a therapeutic method, and a theory of culture. In his works on culture, Freud wrote extensively about religion, but situating Freud within the context of global religion reveals certain contradictions. First, many of Freud’s writings are harshly critical of religion. Second, Freud’s work, often seen in the tradition of Enlightenment thought, propounds a universal theory of the psyche that implies psychological commonalities across cultures; yet it was conceived in the shadow of European imperialism and, like other disciplines that emerged at around the same time, can be seen to bear the marks of Western ethnocentrism. Nonetheless, both Western and non-Western students of religion have made significant use of Freud’s work to understand a variety of the world’s religions.

Freud was born in what is now the Czech Republic to a Jewish family that emigrated to Vienna 4 years after his birth. He trained as a neurologist before turning his interest to hysteria and studying with the French neurologists Jean-Martin Charcot and Hippolyte Bernheim. After returning to Vienna in the 1890s, he began to treat patients with his newly developing method of free association, and he engaged in his own self-analysis. In 1900, he published *The Interpretation of Dreams*, and by 1905, he had written several books that set out many of the elements that would remain central to psychoanalysis: the unconscious, infantile sexuality, the Oedipus complex, and the mechanisms by which the conscious mind defends itself against knowledge of the contents of the unconscious.

Although born into a Jewish family and in spite of his abiding identification as Jewish, Freud was himself not religious. He famously called himself a “godless Jew,” and his antipathy toward religion is central to many of his writings on culture. Starting with the essay “Obsessive Acts and Religious Practices” in 1907, where he traced the psychological analogies between obsessional neurosis and religious ritual, calling religion *a universal obsessional neurosis*, Freud’s cultural works detail the human and compensatory nature of religion, although they also display continuous revisions throughout his life. In *Totem and Taboo*, Freud set out his theory that religion, like civilization itself, arose from the murder of the leader of the first

human community—the primal horde—by the leader’s own sons. After this primal sacrifice, Freud argued, the sons were so filled with remorse that they internalized the very prohibitions their leader had enforced: prohibitions against the oedipal desires of incest and murder. This remorse also led to the worship of the slain father, creating the beginnings of religion.

In *The Future of an Illusion*, Freud condemned religion for providing illusions—wish fulfillments—unable to stand the test of reason. In *Civilization and Its Discontents*, he went on to accept religion as a necessary feature of civilization, one that provided compensation for the strains of living within civilization’s constraints yet increased personal guilt in so doing. Freud’s approach to religion took a final turn with the posthumously published *Moses and Monotheism*. This highly speculative and scientifically antiquated work represented religion as the traumatic, repressed events of a people’s history: Here, religion has for Freud a psychological history, validity, and function. The guilt that it creates is no longer simply pathological but is now seen to be linked to the production of greater ethical capacities.

Alongside these works, in which he forged a specifically psychoanalytic understanding of religion, Freud’s writings on dreams and myths and on the formation of subjectivity, gender, and sexuality have been of equal or greater interest to religionists. Freud analogized from dreams to myth: Myths are the dreams of human cultures. The mechanisms of dream interpretation, such as condensation and displacement, could thus be mobilized for the interpretation of myths, religious narratives, and religious symbolism, while the mechanisms involved in subject and gender formation could shed light on the development of religious personalities.

The first challenge set by Freud to the student of religion is his appraisal of religion as a human creation, as deriving from the oedipal complex, and as primitive, narcissistic, and illusory. This challenge was taken up by Western religionists in the church and the academy. As one of the towering intellectual figures of the 20th century, Freud’s was a challenge that needed to be faced by a theology that was equal to its time. The theologian Paul Tillich and the religious philosopher Paul Ricoeur both wrote major works that

acknowledged the power of the Freudian hermeneutic. Taking on Freud’s critique of religion directly, they aligned what Freud criticized in religion with idolatry, in this way making room both for Freud and for a religious dimension beyond Freud. In addition, the largely Protestant field of pastoral counseling made use of psychoanalytic theory to enlarge pastors’ capacity to help their congregants in distress. There also developed a literature and subdiscipline devoted to the relationship between psychoanalysis and religion, often seeking to understand the relationship between Freud’s work and the Christian faith or between Freud’s work and his Jewish background. Later generations of psychoanalysts modified Freud’s thought in ways that made it easier to find more positive relationships between psychoanalysis and religion, and recent theorists have begun to see in Freud’s own work spiritual possibilities not previously envisaged.

The second challenge to the student of *global* religion in particular is the question of universality: To what extent are Freud’s theories universal and to what extent ethnocentric? Freud proposed a universal psychological commonality across humanity, located in the primitive unconscious. But since, for Freud, this very “primitivity” of the unconscious not only lived on in the modern Western psyche but also referred to Europe’s dark-skinned others, it points to a hidden ethnocentrism, elements of which can be found scattered throughout his work. The question of Freud’s universality can therefore be formulated in two ways: (1) Do all humans possess an Oedipus complex? (2) Is Freud’s universality compromised by a covert ethnocentrism that designates full subjectivity to the modern Western subject alone? These questions are similar to those faced by feminist psychoanalysis, which has questioned the androcentrism of Freud’s work while also making significant contributions to the study of religion.

The complexity of Freud’s work has allowed for a range of responses to these questions. On the one hand, Freud’s universalism has led many to make use of his work to criticize colonial and racist conditions around the world. For example, Frantz Fanon, the Caribbean psychiatrist, who worked for the Algerian revolution, found Freud indispensable for his anticolonial and antiracist purposes. Others, however, used Freud’s universalism to understand (formerly) colonized peoples or African Americans,

with results that many would judge as racist and colonialist today. Freud's work was both a stimulus and a challenge to American cultural anthropology, which was discovering cultural relativism at the same time as psychoanalysis was making its inroads into the American scene. Some anthropologists embraced Freud's work as universal and integrated psychoanalysis into the school of psychological anthropology. Others, starting with Bronislaw Malinowski, challenged the universality of the Oedipus complex and argued that differing familial and social structures produce differing psychological structures. Both streams of thought—and many in between—have found their echoes in religious studies down throughout the decades. An especially fertile area for these discussions has been the religions of South Asia, where the possibilities and varieties of an "Indian Oedipus" have been explored by several scholars.

The use of psychoanalysis for the study of non-Western religions poses a double challenge. Since in the comparative study of religion and psychoanalysis both have connections with Europe's 19th-century colonizing enterprises, the risk of ethnocentrism is compounded. Many scholars of the world's religions have, nevertheless, used psychoanalysis productively to examine the unconscious signification of religious symbolism and of various religious practices and beliefs. While early psychoanalytic forays into this area employed a vulgar Freudianism (reducing religious symbolism and practices exclusively to genital particulars and/or judging religious patterns to be inferior or pathological when they didn't fit Freud's model of autonomous maturity), recent efforts by religious scholars have been hermeneutically sophisticated and sympathetically explorative, even if provocative. Both Western academics and non-Western academics (often studying their own culture and religion) have contributed to this literature. Western psychoanalysts, too, have recently begun drawing connections between psychoanalysis and non-Western religions such as Buddhism.

For some religionists, then, Freud's assumptions about religion can be ignored while his methods of interpretation are used to advantage, whereas others accept these assumptions as part of a larger religious framework. At times, however, the non-transcendental origins of religion and the sexual

dimensions of religious symbolism asserted by psychoanalytic theory have been found offensive by Western and non-Western religionists alike. In addition, non-Western religionists may see these assumptions not only as an offense to their religious sensibilities but also as a continuation of the epistemological violence that accompanied the Western colonialism by which they were governed not so long ago. In India, these questions have recently been absorbed into larger and more invidious cultural-political struggles, with the result that threats of physical violence have been directed at some outstanding scholars of Hinduism who have used psychoanalysis to probe their topics. In conclusion, the results of Freud's work can produce valuable insights into world religions, but it can also at times be sorely contested by those who are followers of the religion in question.

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See also Girard, René; Myth; Sexuality

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FULANI JIHAD

The Fulani Jihad refers primarily to the Usman dan Fodio Jihad, launched in present-day Nigeria from 1804 to 1810. This, however, was just the fourth in the series of Fulani Jihads. Others were those of Bondu, Futa Jalon, Futa Tooro, Massina, and Toucouleur. Usman dan Fodio, himself, was of the Fulani people, also variously known as Peul, Fulbe, Fula, and Fellata. Traditionally, the Fulani are nomads, but over the years, some of them have settled into urban and agricultural life. They are scattered in the West African countries of Senegal, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Nigeria, Chad, and Cameroon.

The word *jihad* is from the Arabic language and literally means “struggle.” In its ordinary sense, it could mean struggle of any kind. In its Islamic use, it could refer to the following:

1. *A struggle against aggressive evil*: Aggressive evil in this sense means an offensive attack against the Muslim or his faith. In such a situation, violent combat is permissible for self-defense; but even in this situation, women, children, crops, and animals must not be destroyed. Such a struggle is regarded as a *holy war*.
2. *A struggle within the mind or soul of a Muslim against sin in his or her life*: Prophet Muhammad praised this type of jihad above the first.

Many factors were responsible for the Fulani Jihad. These include religious, political, and socioeconomic factors. Before the launch of the jihad, the Fulani settled among the various Hausa

kingdoms. The latter were nominal Muslims and treated the Fulani as second-class citizens. The rulers of these states imposed heavy taxation on the populace, which was endured grudgingly. All these factors combined to fuel the fire of jihad when it was launched.

The immediate cause of the jihad was the treatment meted out to Usman dan Fodio, an Islamic cleric serving at the court of the ruler of Gobir. At Gobir, he taught Bawa, the ruler, and his nephew, Yunfa, who succeeded the former as ruler of Gobir. It is on record that Bawa had allowed Usman to establish an independent Muslim community. However, when Yunfa ascended to the throne, he not only undermined the authority of Usman over the independent community but also attacked it and threatened to assassinate Usman. Usman and his faithful resisted the attack at Degel, to no avail. He then fled to Gudu, where he remobilized and launched the Jihad of 1804 to 1810. The King of Gobir and the other Hausa rulers were defeated.

Following his victory, Usman established an Islamic empire with headquarters at Sokoto, which is known to this day as the Sokoto Caliphate. Usman's supporters were drawn mainly from his fellow Fulani and some disgruntled Hausas. It can therefore be concluded that apart from being a religious war, the Fulani Jihad was launched to address ethnic, political, and economic issues.

Godwin Nyijime Toryough

See also Burkina Faso; Cameroon; Chad; Guinea; Guinea-Bissau; Islam; Jihad; Mali; Niger; Nigeria; Senegal

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FUNDAMENTALISM

The 20th century saw the rise of conservative politicized movements in the world's religions. Those movements have often been categorized together under the label *fundamentalism*.

American Protestant Fundamentalism

In the North American context, there were at least three social forces that gave rise to the movement that took the name *fundamentalism*: (1) sweeping economic changes with the industrial revolution, (2) restructuring of gender roles and expectations with the move from rural-agrarian to urban-industrial lifestyles, and (3) the intellectual-theological challenges arising from biblical criticism, historicism, and comparative religion. Nineteenth-century evangelicalism split into two camps, often called modernist and fundamentalist, divided over the proper relationship between religion and culture. Modernists saw religion as a part of culture that changes over time with the changing needs of a changing culture. Fundamentalists, on the other hand, saw religion as fixed and revealed once for all time. For fundamentalists, culture should be measured by, and should conform to, the truths revealed in religion. While modernists developed critical, historicized readings of the biblical texts, the opponents launched a series of booklets, *The Fundamentals*, defending teachings such as the inerrancy of the Bible, the virgin birth, substitutionary atonement, and literal readings of the miracles described in the Bible. The books were sent to pastors and Bible teachers all over the country, and it is from those books that the movement took its name. It should be noted that while fundamentalists lay claim to a literal reading of the Bible, this is, in fact, impossible and is a rhetorical move made by fundamentalists to claim authority for their reading. Fundamentalist Protestants, for example, claim to be reading the Book of Revelation literally when they interpret it to explain present-day events. And substitutionary atonement, as another example, is an interpretation of the biblical texts.

This is a very complex movement, and it brought together various strains of antimodern Protestantism. There was the populist form discussed above, but there was also an elite, intellectual form that found its home in the Presbyterianism of the Princeton Theological Seminary. Theologians such as John G. Machen, Charles Hodge, and B. B. Warfield built a philosophically sophisticated, Calvinist theological system that rooted fundamentalism in historical Christianity and laid the groundwork for the new evangelicalism that was

to develop within fundamentalism a generation later. The populist form was overwhelmingly premillennialist. In fact, the historian Ernest Sandeen saw premillennialism as the point at which the strands of fundamentalism converged. But elite fundamentalism could be postmillennialist or amillennialist. Populist fundamentalism was also revivalist in character and decidedly separatist—some forms even advocating double separation (i.e., a believer must separate not only from nonbelievers but also from believers who don't practice separatism). This strong insistence on separation, coupled with premillennialism teaching that the world is about to end any minute, made the early fundamentalists opposed to involvement in politics. That opposition to political involvement, however, began to fall away by midcentury, after which the Religious Right became the public face of American fundamentalism.

Through the 1950s and 1960s, fundamentalists began laying the groundwork for a critique of American culture that led to the view that America had a special calling from God but that the country had fallen away from its special place in history as a Christian nation. Social changes in the 1960s and 1970s (integration, changes in the status of women, the sexual revolution, and the secularization of public institutions) led to the political mobilization of American Protestant fundamentalists. They first fought the Equal Rights Amendment, the Supreme Court's legalization of abortion, and the regulation of private Christian schools and home schools. Later controversies over the rights of gays and lesbians and battles over evolution and creationism in public schools anchored their political agenda and mobilized their followers. The political power of the Christian right ebbed and flowed into the 21st century, with the movement remaking itself every decade or so.

By the second half of the 20th century, a variety of movements developed around the globe in religious traditions other than Christianity, which scholars also labeled "fundamentalist." In the early 1990s, the University of Chicago launched a major research project under the direction of Martin Marty and R. Scott Appleby, *The Fundamentalism Project*, to examine the developing global movement. Because each of the movements is unique

and dependent on its own cultural context, there has been much debate about the use of a singular category as well as the use of a label that is so closely tied to the form as it developed in the North American context. Nonetheless, the movements do share some common characteristics, and it is undeniable that they have transcended their cultures of origin to become global phenomena in their own right.

Examples in Judaism

Among Jews, there developed in the 19th century a movement known as *Haredim* (lit. “tremblers”), rooted in the culture and history of Eastern Europe. The Haredim is a blending of two forms of contra-aculturative orthodoxy (*Hasidic* and *Misnagdic*); they actively oppose acculturation and assimilation of Jews and advocate separation from assimilationists. In the years following World War II and the Holocaust, diasporic Jews, seeing themselves as the faithful remnant on whom the preservation of Judaism depended, sought to re-create Eastern European Jewish life in ethnic enclaves in America, Western Europe, and Australia. By midcentury, there were a variety of Hasidic forms of Haredim, the most well-known of which are *Lubovitchers* and *Satmar*. In Israel, these Jews seek enforcement of Sabbath laws; exemption from military service, particularly for girls (boys could gain exemption by studying at a yeshiva); and other remedies to preserve tradition with public protests, sometimes ending in violence. Another important group of Haredim settled in Israel are Zionists, who believed that Haredim in other countries, including the United States, still assimilated too much and were no longer “real Jews.” These religious Zionists should not be confused with the secular Zionists in Israel. In fact, secular Zionists are, in many respects, the modernists against whom the orthodox Zionists resist, thus fitting the model of fundamentalists. Organizing in the 1970s, some of these religious Zionists took the name *Gush Emunim*, meaning the “Block of the Faithful.” The group is composed primarily of yeshiva students and graduates. Members of this movement seek to expand the boundaries of the state of Israel through a variety of tactics, most notably settling in

Palestinian territories—exacerbating global tensions between Islam and Israel (and the allies of Israel).

Fundamentalism in Islam

In the 18th century, Muhammed ibn Abd al-Wahab led a movement to cleanse Islam of influences he believed had corrupted it. In ways that followed closely the Protestant Reformation in Christianity, he advocated a return to the emphasis on the Qur’an (*sola scriptura*) and claimed that more recent developments had moved Muslims away from the true faith delivered by the Prophet. Foreshadowing later developments among North American Christian fundamentalists, he advocated that the Qur’an be read literally, opposing philosophical analysis of the text and efforts to place it in historical context. In the 20th century, Wahhabism underwent something of a revival during the early years of the establishment of Saudi Arabia. As Saudi Arabia became more powerful and wealthy, toward the end of the century, Wahhabism spread around the Muslim world by claiming to be the orthodox form of Islam; at the same time, it spread dimensions of Saudi Arabian culture.

The Egyptian writer Sayyid Qutb developed an Islamic critique of globalism and the influence of the West on the Muslim world and on Egypt in particular. In the 1940s, Qutb traveled and studied in the United States and came to see American culture as corrupt and racist and the American government as dominated by Israel and powerful American Jews. His view that Jews dictated Middle Eastern policy and his recognition of the influence of the United States on his own government led to his work *This Religion of Islam*, in which he argued that religion is the force that divides humanity, and he advocated a return to Muslim law and put forth the notion that violence in defense of religious truth is justified.

Examples Outside Monotheism

Some scholars have argued that monotheism, with its inherent dualism and textual basis, lends itself to fundamentalism, but scholars of fundamentalism have identified movements in Hinduism and

Buddhism as fundamentalist as well. The *Hindutva* movement links together the nation of India, the religion of Hinduism, and the language of Hindi (all of which share a linguistic root). This movement is a development from Vinayak Savarkar's *Hindutva: Who Is Hindu?* (1928), in which he argued that Christians and Muslims in India are foreigners and are both religious and cultural threats to Hinduism. Critical of the forces of globalization as corrosive to Indian values and culture, the *Hindutva* movement today has gained political power with the rise of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and seeks to establish India as a Hindu state.

Twentieth-century Theravada Buddhism gave rise to nationalist movements in Sri Lanka, Burma/Myanmar, and Thailand. As responses to the Christianizing and secularizing influences of British colonial rule, these movements developed simplified, moralistic Theravadan traditions, rooted in dualistic mythical histories and critical of Western immorality, and focused on restoring strong nationalist identities.

Conclusion

None of these examples is intended to be exhaustive of the movements that can be labeled fundamentalist in the world's major religions. They are, instead, presented as a sampling illustrating the presence of some commonalities as well as the diversity to be found within the movements around the world. While violent sects exist across religious traditions, religious justification for violence is not present in all movements that can be labeled fundamentalist. Furthermore, though scholars have grouped these movements together under the label fundamentalist, that grouping is not without problems. Most followers of these movements do not consider themselves as fundamentalist, and many of the components of fundamentalism as they exist in Christianity are not present here. That said, the opposition to modernity, an aggressive form of nationalism, political efforts to protect traditionalism (albeit a traditionalism rooted in a mythical past) and a gendered world, and a strict division between those on the inside and those on the outside are all present.

All these movements developed as critiques of modern culture and secularism. They engage in

political activity aimed at returning culture to what is envisioned as a time when it adhered more closely to the standards of religion; at the heart of that vision of the idealized past is typically a gender ideology that segregates men and women and subjugates women. While some scholars have seen the opposition to modernity as such a crystallizing force for fundamentalist movements that they have argued that antimodernism is the central unifying quality of fundamentalism, the fundamentalist's critique of modern culture and secularism is selective. Other scholars have pointed to the degree to which fundamentalisms can exist only in the context of modernity and how, in fact, fundamentalists are very modern in the ways they fight modernity—using the Internet and the global transportation system, for example, to launch a terrorist attack against the modern world. Paradoxical, also, is the effort to return to an imagined ideal time, sometimes called traditionalism or traditioning. In the United States, for example, there is a political effort to return to “traditional family values,” which are not really all that traditional since they refer to the nuclear family that emerged in the West in the 19th century. Finally, the gender ideology, shared by divergent fundamentalist movements, warrants comment and theorizing. Though the severity of the limitations on women varies greatly, fundamentalists of all stripes exhibit concern over the status and roles of women; issues of purity and defilement, like those of order and chaos and the sacred and the profane, figure centrally. While Christian fundamentalists in the United States battle over women in leadership positions in religious institutions and advocate women's submission in the home, the Muslim Taliban in Afghanistan prohibited education of girls, barred women's presence in public when unaccompanied by an appropriate male, and enforced the most extreme form of women's veiling, in which the burka includes even a mesh covering over the eyes so that no part of the body is exposed.

Opposition to globalization as a form of colonialism divides fundamentalists in the United States from those in other parts of the worlds. American fundamentalists have opposed aspects of globalization such as multiculturalism and pluralism, but

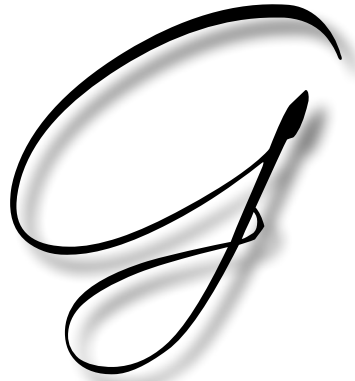
other aspects have been seen positively as the spread of American values. Around the world, however, that spread of American values has been the impetus for the rise of fundamentalist movements as it has been interpreted as cultural imperialism.

Julie Ingersoll

See also Christianity; Evangelical Movements; Gender; Hinduism; Islam; Judaism; Mahayana Buddhism; Pentecostal Movements; Politics and Religion; Popular Religion; Protestant Christianity; Sexuality

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GABON

Almost 75% of the 1.5 million population of the African country of Gabon are Christian, a legacy of the country's French colonial heritage. The remainder—largely immigrants—are Muslim or profess no faith. Christian practices are merged with traditional Bantu tribal beliefs and customs. At the turn of the 21st century, the country has been influenced by a dramatic rise of conversions to Pentecostal Protestant Christianity and by syncretic new religious movements.

The Gabonese Pentecost, like similar movements in other African countries, is characterized by a variety of conversion techniques. Evangelism is a requirement of its members. Signs are posted announcing Pentecostal recruitment activities, including crusades, international conferences, seminars, and Christian films shown in public places. New churches and prayer groups have been created, and some cinemas and nightclubs have been transformed into churches.

A chapel of the Assemblies of God of Gabon was installed on the site of a temple where a syncretic cult called Spiritual Science of the Heart of the Holy Spirit was formerly located (studied by Stanislaw Swiderski). Its founder, Michel Nez-Mba “the Cross,” born in 1914, established the movement after he claimed to have received several calls from God to serve others. He responded to a dream in which he saw Christ on a huge cross inclining toward him. Religious ceremonies (Ngozi) show the syncretic nature of the ritual.

According to Swiderski, this cult was an example of various attempts to search for the true face of African spirituality, which was called into question by the colonial era. The movement was poised between the ancestral past and the Western Christian present, and it tried to guide people toward a “de-Westernized” Gabonese culture. The religiosity is fully expressed by the cult of the cross of Christ and the Blessed Virgin. It focuses on eschatology, the final trial, and the eternal life.

After the death of Michel Nez-Mba in 2001, the temple and its objects (the rituals elements) were still in place. But the Pentecostals, in a spirit of defiance, occupied the place. The Assemblies of God of Gabon set out their objectives in the Pastoral Gamba in May 2000, which they called “the quinquennium of the harvest.” Prior to that date, the number of members was in the tens of thousands. The quinquennium of the harvest proposed that the number of members should double by 2005 and that there would be three worship services every Sunday in all the assemblies. Following this plan, a missionary group went to survey the neighborhood at Lalala Libreville, and after they contacted the head of the district, the eldest son and heir of the estate of Michel Nez-Mba, the movement's quarters were given to them. The widow of Michel Nez-Mba, and priestess of the rite of Ombouiri, was opposed to the transfer of property and claimed that if the site was not protected, misfortune would fall on the village. During this confrontation, a member of the missionary team was seriously injured, and some of the family

fell ill. But the Pentecostal mission was able to begin its activities on the site.

This case may be seen as an example of the process of religious change affected by the forces of cultural globalization in Gabon and elsewhere in Africa.

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See also Africa; New Religions in Africa; Pentecostal Movements; Syncretism

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GAMBIA

The Republic of the Gambia is a small, narrow West African country with a largely Muslim population, located on the Gambia River. Almost all sides of the 4,361 square mile (1 square mile = 2.59 square kilometers) country are surrounded by Senegal. The majority of Gambia's 1.7 million residents (2010 United Nations estimate), according to the 2003 census, belong to the Mandinka (42%), Fulani (18%), Wolof (16%), Jola (10%), and Serahuli (9%) ethnolinguistic groups. Nationally recognized languages include the official language, English, and the locally spoken Mandinka, Wolof, and Fula. Gambia gained independence from Britain in 1965 and briefly was involved in the federation of Senegambia with Senegal from 1982 to 1989. Today, Senegal and Gambia are on mostly cooperative terms, engaged in trade agreements with occasional infighting over chosen policy. Gambia has been a multiparty republic since the 1996 constitution reinstated presidential elections following a 2-year military regime run by Yahya Jammeh. Jammeh has provided an ironfisted stability to the country as president since 1996, instituting a tightly watched press as well as establishing his own HIV/AIDS (human immunodeficiency

virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome) clinic, which was internationally denounced in 2007, after Jammeh claimed to have personally "cured" AIDS patients through his scientifically unproven, dream-inspired healing methods.

The nation's religious makeup is 90% Muslim, 8% Christian, and 2% indigenous practitioners. Muslims in Gambia have traditionally combined local Sufi forms of *marabout* divination, community ceremony, griot storytelling, and rituals of protection with tenets of the Islamic faith. Marloes Janson notes that the Indian-derived Islamic missionary movement, Tablighi Jamaat, which stresses purification of practices, prayer, and moral standing, is on the rise for youth in Gambia, creating an odd imbalance between traditional views of elder knowledge being deferred to and the younger generation's perception of "true" faith requiring proselytization to the masses. This cultural mix of religious themes is increasingly apparent and the basis of some controversy, as variations in the mix differ from locale to locale.

Today, rural citizens are most likely to find work in agricultural industries, particularly in fishing, animal husbandry, and the farming of groundnuts, rice, cassava, palm kernels, cotton, and sorghum. Due to the capital's strategic waterfront location and the country's affordable pricing by European standards, in recent years, vacationers have used Gambia's beaches for rest and relaxation, with a booming tourist market catering to British nationals. Because the predominantly Muslim nation dresses conservatively, with females wearing long and loose Dutch African prints and batiks, the exposure to British bikinis, alcohol consumption, and more open displays of public affection have led to cultural clashes with many Gambian residents. This, however, has been tolerated because of the nation's reliance on foreign aid and the struggle to financially progress as Gambians seek improvement in literacy, health, transportation, and education.

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See also Africa; Islam; Local Religion; Senegal

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GANDHI, MOHANDAS (1869–1948)

Mohandas Gandhi was a leader of India's independence movement and a global icon of nonviolent protest. Though he was a devout Hindu, Gandhi's religious background is complex, and his influence stretches far beyond the borders of his religion. A number of his ideas illuminate current discourse on religion not only in India and within Hinduism but also elsewhere in the world, notably the West. They include the nature of religion and its relationship to the scriptures, to the discipline of prayer, to the state, and to social action. His thoughts on the phenomena of religious pluralism and secularism have also been significant.

The Nature of Religion

Religion according to Gandhi is that which disposes humans toward the quest for Truth or God and, in doing so, gives them a deep sense of their identity and the ultimate purpose of their being. He recognized two distinct but related aspects of religion: (1) religion as a social organization (dharma, as in "Hindu Dharma") and (2) religion as a means of spiritual transcendence (moksha). Religion, like the family, has its specific social structure. Through its scriptures, belief system, rituals, moral codes, art, architecture, and an intricate array of symbols, it provides for a deep sense of cultural identity and group solidarity. At the same time, it provides its individual members with the means of true self-knowledge, self-purification, self-reform, and ultimately self-transcendence, which in Hinduism is called merger into the Absolute (Brahman) or union with God (*Ishwara*)—depending on doctrinal understanding. He acknowledged the validity of the three traditional paths to spiritual transcendence—those of (1) knowledge (dhyana), (2) devotion (bhakti), and (3) action (karma). His own preference, however, was for the third. Likewise, he

acknowledged the validity of the six systems of philosophy that clarified the nature of the liberation process, namely, Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika, Samkhya, Yoga, Mimamsa, and Advaita.

He did not posit any natural incompatibility between religion as organization and religion as the means to spiritual transcendence. He saw organized religion and spirituality as being in a symbiotic relationship: Underlying every organized religion there was a spirituality that beckoned transcendence. He was aware however of the possibility of a rupture between the two. The rupture occurred when religion as organization became corrupt. The way to cure corruption was to restore spirituality to its rightful place.

Religion and the Scriptures

Gandhi regarded the scriptures as the revealed sources establishing the spiritual validity of religions. According to him, the Vedas and the Upanishads (*Sruti*), the Dharma Shastras (*Smriti*), the *Mahabharata* (which includes the Bhagavad Gita), the *Ramayana*, and the Puranas constitute the Hindu scriptures. Since the canon of these scriptures was formed over a millennium, since corruption of the texts occurred due to interpolation and poor editing, and since social institutions such as caste and gender inequality were justified in terms of the scriptures, the criteria for interpreting them correctly became critical to him. His search for the correct criteria of interpretation led to the following result: Only those truths that appealed to any conscience could be considered revealed truths. Nothing could be considered part of divine revelation that could not be tested by reason or experienced spiritually. Learning was necessary but not sufficient for the correct interpretation of religious truths. In addition to learning, holiness of life and the actual experience of the truth to be interpreted were also needed. Applying these criteria to the interpretation of the Hindu scriptures, he reached the practical conclusion that the caste system and gender inequality had no scriptural sanction. Their validity was purely historical, not scriptural.

Religion and Prayer

Prayer according to Gandhi is a mental activity that related human consciousness to Truth or God.

It is the religious activity par excellence. He distinguished between prayer as worship and praise, congregational prayer (as in his famous public prayer meetings and daily ashram prayer, morning and evening), and individual prayer (in the form of self-analysis and contemplation of religious truths). Music was an important part of his prayer life. He edited the *Ashram Hymnal* (1930), a collection of 253 religious hymns gathered from different parts of India and later translated into English and published in 1934. His prayer schedule had an ecumenical flavor, Cardinal Newman's "Lead, Kindly Light" being his favorite Christian hymn. Daily recitation of and meditation on the Bhagavad Gita formed the heart of his ashram prayers. Prayer was instrumental in deepening his self-knowledge as a finite and fallible human being; in increasing his trust in divine guidance, especially in moments of personal doubt and inner crisis; and in releasing the spiritual energy that accounted for his prodigious outer activities.

Religion and the State

In Gandhi's political theory, the state remains neutral toward religion. He rejected the traditional Hindu theory that tended to identify sacred monarchy with the state. He was totally in favor of the movement that saw the replacement of the traditional Hindu monarchy by the modern secular republic. The republic itself was to be neither hostile nor partial toward religions, including Hinduism. The de-linking of Hinduism from state patronage is a major historic innovation in both traditional Hindu political theory and Hindu religious practice.

In addition to the above, Gandhi strongly supported the theory that the state (though sovereign in its relation to other states) was morally limited by the fundamental rights of its citizens. Because of the priority of fundamental rights to state sovereignty, the citizen had the right and the duty to resist the state nonviolently when it was in violation of those rights. The practice of the celebrated satyagraha is based on this theory. The fundamental rights of citizens included the right to the freedom of conscience and the right to the free choice of religion. Gandhi saw no inconsistency between his deep Hindu religiosity and the neutrality of the state in religious matters.

Religion and Social Action

One of Gandhi's major contributions to religious thought has been to bring to an end the historic alienation within Hinduism of contemplation from action. As his *Autobiography* makes clear, he made nonviolent action in the field of *artha* (politics and economics) the path to moksha (spiritual liberation). He justified this innovation in light of his interpretation of the Bhagavad Gita. To attain spiritual transcendence, it was no longer necessary to leave the real world of politics, economics, and social reform. Modern Hindu spirituality is to be expressed through nonviolent service (*seva*) to fellow human beings and not through adherence to outmoded rituals. Drawing on the Vaishnava tradition, he battled against the social evil of untouchability. The term *Harijan* ("people of God") was coined to refer to the erstwhile untouchables; the same term was given to the weekly he founded in 1933.

Religious Pluralism

Gandhi has made significant contributions to the field of religious pluralism. He has two explanations of this phenomenon. The first is the theory of "the many-sidedness of reality" (*anekantavada*): Humans tend to perceive religious reality differently. Second, even though religions in their origin had divine inspiration, the way the inspiration was expressed varied according to the diversity of languages and cultures. Differences between religions therefore are natural and deserve respect.

Certain practical consequences follow from the de jure character of religious pluralism. First, at the popular level, pluralism calls for an attitude of toleration toward all religions, based not on skepticism but on the strength of the two explanations given above. Second, on a more informed basis, one should go beyond mere passive toleration toward active respect for religions. Gandhi called this attitude one of "equal respect for all religions" (*sarva dharma sama bhava*). Third, pluralism calls for an intellectual effort to learn from religions other than one's own. Such effort can lead to mutual understanding and to a lessening or even the elimination of prejudices and past hatreds. Fourth, pluralism calls for dialogue between religions. Ethics, Gandhi believed, will be a better starting point for dialogue than would be religious

doctrines. The one emphasizes what is common between religions, while the other tends to emphasize what is different. Finally, the object of inter-religious dialogue is not the creation of a new religion out of the existing religions but a deepened appreciation of the potential religions have to promote truth, nonviolence, and justice among humans.

Secularism

While Gandhi contributed toward the secularization of Hindu society, he was opposed to the ideology of modern secularism. His interpretation of the theory of the four *purusharthas* guided him here. According to this theory, striving for wealth and power (*artha*), ethical and religious integrity (dharma), pleasure (kama), and liberation (moksha) is equally necessary for human well-being and compatibility with one another. *Artha*, embodying secular values, is as indispensable for human well-being as are dharma and moksha. However, modern secularism seeks to eliminate dharma and moksha in the interest of *artha*. Here, as Gandhi sees it, the role of religion as the means of transcendence is to cure the ensuing malaise of secularism.

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See also Hindu Nationalism; Hinduism; India; Nonviolence; Violence

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GANGA

The river Ganga, known in the Western world as the Ganges, is one of the most important rivers in India. The history, geography, ecology, food production, and economic fortunes of India have all

been closely connected to the river, and millions of Hindus hold it to be sacred. Culturally, it is a symbol, standing for Mother India, a synecdoche for home, and for Hindu religious traditions. It is closely associated with the many North Indian towns and cities on its banks, especially Haridwar, Allahabad, and Banaras. The river flows south from the Himalayas and enters the plains at Haridwar and then flows east to Bengal in parallel with the Himalayan mountain chain. In Prayag (Allahabad), it joins the river Yamuna and, according to tradition, the mythical Sarasvati River, to form a sacred confluence of three rivers (*triveni sangama*). Banaras, whose traditional name is Kasi, or the "city of light," is also on the banks of this river and is a holy place for Hindus. Millions of Hindus bathe in the river every year, with special crowds making the pilgrimage on holy days, such as Makara Sankranti (in mid-January), or during festivals such as the Kumbh Mela. Hindus are given waters from the river Ganga on their deathbeds. Most Hindus are cremated at death, and sometimes families immerse the ashes of the dead in the Ganga River.

Ganga is a goddess, a celestial and earthly river. She is said to have been in the heavens and at the prayers of the legendary king, Bhagiratha, came down to earth. Since the force of the descent to earth would have been more than the planet could bear, it is said that the Hindu god Shiva caught the river in his head to break her fall; he eventually let a drop out to flow as the river in India. Ganga is also a beloved consort of Shiva in some traditions; ninth-century inscriptions in Cambodia refer to Shiva as the husband of Uma (Parvati) and Ganga. Headless images found in the temple of Bakong, Hariharalya, the ninth-century capital of the Angkorian kingdom, are said to be of Shiva with his arms around Parvati and Ganga. Sculptures of the personified rivers Ganga and Yamuna are found outside Hindu temples, including in Singapore.

Water from the river Ganga is used in rituals. It is now commercially packed and sold in stores that sell Indian groceries around the world. While bathing in the river is said to purify one of all sins, the waters, in whatever measure, are considered to be ritually purifying. The packaged water is thus used for domestic rituals, especially death rites. Temples use larger quantities, mixed with waters from other rivers of India and the country where the

ritual is to take place, to consecrate new towers or to bathe the deity.

While the waters drawn from the river Ganga are used in rituals, many Hindus believe that the celestial Ganga can be invoked in or be present in almost any waters around the world. People from South India, for instance, believe that the Ganga is present in all waters on the sacred festival day of Divali, the festival of lights that is celebrated on the new moon that comes between November and December. The traditional greeting for Divali in South India is “Have you bathed in the Ganga today?”

Hindus who live outside the subcontinent have, over the centuries, considered local rivers to be as sacred as the Ganga and, in some inexplicable way, to be the real Ganga itself. The celestial Ganga manifests itself thus in many countries. The Siem Reap River, near Angkor in Cambodia, was identified as a sacred river, and hundreds of lingas and icons of Vishnu were carved in its bed. The Ganga Talao, a lake in Mauritius, is said to have been created from a few drops of the Ganga that fell from Shiva’s head. In 1976, Sri Ganapati Sachchidananda Swamiji, a guru from India, declared the river Aripo in Trinidad to be a sacred tributary of the river Ganga. When the first major Hindu temple was built in Pittsburgh, devotees of Sri Venkateswara (a form of Vishnu) deemed the city to be particularly holy because there were two rivers there with a third subterranean one joining them, similar to the sacred confluence of the Ganga, Yamuna, and Sarasvati in Prayag (Allahabad). Through worship, through rituals, and through the re-creation of the sacred cosmos, therefore, Ganga remains strong in the lives of Hindus around the world.

Vasudha Narayanan

See also Hinduism; India; *Kumbha Mela*; Sacred Places; Shaivism

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GAUTAMA, SIDDHARTHA

Siddhartha Gautama (Pāli: *Siddhattha Gotama*) is the name of the man who came to be known as the Buddha in ancient India approximately 2,500 years ago. His charisma, in part, provided the stimulus for the formation of the religion now called “Buddhism.” Siddhartha is his personal name, while Gautama refers to his family’s clan name. The term *buddha* is an honorary epithet literally meaning “awakened” and refers to a fully enlightened being who has attained perfect knowledge and full liberation from the cycle of death and rebirth (*saṃsāra*). In discussing events prior to his enlightenment, Siddhartha is frequently referred to in sources as the bodhisattva (Pāli: *Bodhisatta*), a term that refers to a being on the path to enlightenment.

Few today seriously question Gautama’s actual existence; however, debate continues over the dates of his life due to the lack of irrefutable evidence. Traditional accounts place the date of his death anywhere from 2420 to 290 BCE. However, some scholars have narrowed this range to roughly 486 to 360 BCE, with newer literary, archaeological, epigraphical, and cultural-historical evidence suggesting an even narrower—although not definite—range of 420 to 350 BCE. The Buddha is held to have been approximately 80 years old at the time of his death, though again the dates cannot be historically verified with accuracy.

No single biography or hagiography about the Buddha Gautama exists. The life story of the Buddha is part of a larger biographical process that is both complex and multilayered. Although the varying Buddhist traditions have much in common with regard to the life of the Buddha, they also differ, sometimes considerably, in many ways. Nevertheless, by weaving together events from a wide array of sources—both canonical and noncanonical, and from a variety of languages including Pāli, Sanskrit, Tibetan, and Chinese, a general and chronological narrative does emerge.

Siddhartha Gautama came from a line of *kṣatriyas* (“noble warriors”) belonging to the Śākya tribe who resided in Kapilavastu (Pāli: *Kapilavatthu*), a town at the base of the Himalayan mountains near the present-day India-Nepal border. His father was the *kṣatriya* Śuddhodana, and his mother was Māyā. The commonly used epithet *Śakyamuni* (“Sage of the Śakyas”) reflects Siddhartha’s heritage. In hagiographical accounts, royal designations such as *king* and *queen* are often employed in descriptions of Siddhartha’s parents, and Siddhartha himself is frequently described as a prince coming from the wealthy ruling kingdom of Kapilavastu. However, one of the Indic terms for kings, *rājā*, need not imply anything more than that his father was the head of a clan. Scholars have argued that the Śakyas were part of a republican system in which the *kṣatriyas* governed through regular public assemblies composed of members from the leading clans. Therefore, when sources mentioning Śākya assemblies speak of *rājās* in the plural, they may merely indicate that each representative *kṣatriya* at the assembly was honorifically referred to as a *rājā*, a “king.”

According to commonly accepted accounts within the Buddhist tradition, Siddhartha was born just outside Kapilavastu in Lumbinī Park in the present-day area of southern Nepal. Here, his mother, Māyā, is said to have given birth standing while holding on to the branch of a tree. Twenty years after his consecration (248 BCE), the Mauryan emperor Asoka visited Lumbinī to pay homage to the birthplace of the Buddha and erected a pillar documenting his pilgrimage. Lumbinī and nearby Kapilavastu continue to be one of the four main pilgrimage destinations in Buddhism, the other three being (1) the bodhi (Enlightenment) tree at Bodh Gaya, where Siddhartha is believed to have attained enlightenment; (2) Deer Park at Sārnāth, where the Buddha gave his first instruction in the Dharma; and (3) the village of Kuśinagarī, where the Buddha passed away.

The legend recalls that Māyā died soon after giving birth, and Siddhartha was entrusted to be raised by her sister and Śuddhodana’s second wife, Mahāprajāpatī Gautamī (Pāli: *Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī*). Siddhartha later married Yaśodharā, who bore him a son named Rāhula. As the scion of a well-to-do *kṣatriya* family, young Siddhartha is frequently described as living a luxurious lifestyle

in which every need, desire, and wish was provided for. Eventually, however, Siddhartha became dissatisfied with his life. The Sanskrit *Lalitavistara* (ca. fourth century CE) illustrates the hagiographical event in which Siddhartha’s dissatisfaction arises in part from encounters during a chariot ride outside the confines of his home. During this outing, Siddhartha is said to have witnessed four signs: an old man, a sick man, a corpse, and finally a composed mendicant (*bhikṣu*). These four signs brought about the uncomfortable realization that, like all beings, he was subject to old age, sickness, and death. Therefore at the age of 29—inspired by the composed mendicant who did not seem to be bothered by the surrounding old age, sickness, and death—Siddhartha is said to have abandoned his home and family to become a wandering mendicant in order to resolve the dilemma of suffering.

According to the legendary accounts, for the next 6 years, Siddhartha peregrinated in the area of northeastern India. He studied under two meditation masters—Ārāḍa Kālāma (Pāli: *Ālāra Kālāma*) and Udraka Rāmaputra (Pāli: *Uddaka Rāmaputta*)—and later undertook the practice of extreme austerities. Neither the meditation masters nor extreme ascetic practices, however, provided the solution to old age, sickness, and death arising from the cycle of death and rebirth. Siddhartha, therefore, abandoned such practices. Realizing that neither extreme sensuality nor extreme austerities provided the solution to his problem, he decided on a middle way. Siddhartha is then said to have partaken of a reinvigorating meal and bath and retreated to meditate under a fig tree (*ficus religiosa*, later called a bodhi tree). Under that tree—which is said to be the very one that is still standing, located in present-day Bodh Gaya in the Indian state of Bihar—Siddhartha attained perfect enlightenment.

After deciding to share his discovery of liberation, according to the legendary accounts, the Buddha (as he was then called, for now he was “awakened”) traveled to Deer Park at Sārnāth, located just outside present-day Banaras. Here, he gave the first recitation of his teachings (the Dharma) to five mendicants he had previously practiced austerities with for a short time. During this sermon, the Buddha expounded the Four Noble Truths

(*āryasatya*) and the doctrine of No-Self (*anātman*). This important event is referred to as “Setting in Motion the Wheel of Dharma” or “Turning the Wheel of Dharma” (*dharmacakrapravartana*), and it marks the beginning of the Buddha’s teaching career, which would span the next 45 years and spread the Dharma throughout the middle Ganges region.

The legendary accounts recall that during this peripatetic period of teaching, the Buddha also established a monastic order. Undoubtedly, the monastic community was formed very early in the history of the Indian Buddhist community, and to this day, Buddhism has one of the oldest continuing monastic traditions in the world. Initially only monks (*bhikṣu*) were accepted, but eventually nuns (*bhikṣunī*) were ordained into the monastic order as well. The nuns, however, had to adhere to an additional set of rules. From the beginning monks and nuns were only a part of the greater Buddhist community known as the Sangha. In addition to monks and nuns, the Sangha is composed of lay men (*upāsaka*) and lay women (*upāsikā*). The relationship between these two communal spheres—the laity and the monastic community—is one of symbiosis in which the laity provides material support to the monastic community, which, in turn, reciprocates the laity’s generous support with the gift of Dharma.

According to the legendary accounts, at approximately the age of 80, the Buddha, lying between two trees in Upavarta Grove just outside the village of Kuśinagarī (present-day Kasia), passed away amid a group of devoted disciples. His body was cremated, and the surviving bodily relics were divided among eight ruling families, which then placed the sacred remains in commemorative reliquaries called *stūpas*, which were erected back in their respective home countries. The urn and ceremonial ashes also constituted relics and were said to have been enshrined in *stūpas* by the Brahmans Droṇa and Pippalāyana, respectively. Today, relic veneration continues to be an important practice in Buddhism.

According to the account of the Buddha’s life given in the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-Sūtra*, the Buddha declined to appoint a successor or leader to the monastic community prior to his “final extinction” (*parinirvāṇa*). Instead, he is said to have instructed the monastic community to abolish negligible disciplinary precepts, be islands unto themselves,

and let the doctrine and discipline be their principal guides. This left the possibility of varying degrees of ecclesiastical interpretation, which could be potentially disastrous for the monastic community. Thus, a series of periodic communal recitations, or councils, were convened to arrive at a general consensus regarding matters of doctrine and discipline. The first of these councils is said to have been held shortly after the Buddha’s death by 500 enlightened monks in the city of Rājagṛha. The number of councils held, the dates of the councils, and the actual historicity of the councils all remain matters of dispute among Buddhists and academic scholars alike.

Phillip Scott Ellis Green

See also Asoka; Bodh Gaya; Dharma, Karma, and Samsara; Mahayana Buddhism; Sārnāth; Theravada Buddhism; Vajrayana, Tibetan

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GAY AND LESBIAN THEOLOGY

Gay and lesbian theology is a growing body of thought that brings the experiences of same-sex-loving people into conversations about ultimate meaning and value in a range of religious traditions. It began in the late 1960s in Christianity and Judaism and is now emerging in most of the major world religions. Though they do not necessarily use the term *theology*, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Chinese religions, and indigenous groups are dealing with the impact of people from a variety of sexualities on ways of being religious. Those are properly discussed under the rubric of

religion and same-sex love, while this theological focus is narrower.

The experiences of bisexual and transgender persons and of those who use the more generic term *queer*, meaning anyone who transgresses the heterosexual norm, are more recent additions to the conversation. A common way to refer to this work is as LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer) theologies, emphasizing both the variety of starting points and the plurality of conclusions. It is controversial and contested but a dynamic part of contemporary theology and religious studies. Some seminaries, rabbinical schools, and departments of religion offer courses on gay and lesbian theology. The Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies in Religion and Ministry (<http://www.clgs.org>) at Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, California, is dedicated to promoting scholarship and practice in the field. The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Religious Archives Network (<http://www.lgbtran.org>) is a resource center and clearinghouse for the historical records of LGBTQ religious movements.

Scholarship, religious practice, and the composition of communities are all influenced by this new and challenging dimension of religious experience. Scholars in virtually every tradition are looking at same-sex issues because they raise foundational questions about the anthropology and ethics of the group and the nature of its belief. If same-sex love is healthy, good, natural, and holy, then certain basic assumptions about the normativity of heterosexuality and heterosexual marriage, the confining of sex to heterosexual marriage, and matters related to the gender constellation of parents with children—concepts that have religious roots—are all in question. For example, if two women or two men can love one another in a divinely sanctioned way, then presumably they, like their heterosexual counterparts, would be eligible for religious as well as civil marriage. Moreover, concepts of the divine shift if same-sex love is considered good since God or Goddess is no longer thought of as prescribing one way of being human.

Religious practice and membership issues are also in the balance. If “good sex” is not simply heterosexual, then same-sex-loving people can be full members in good standing of their religious communities. They are eligible for election to leadership,

ordination, and membership in religious congregations. In short, they are full and equal members.

These matters are by no means settled. They remain areas of controversy that have become prolonged struggles in many religious groups. For example, the Presbyterian Church (United States) has spent decades debating and voting on the ordination of openly LGBTQ people before voting to accept them in 2011. The worldwide Anglican Communion has approached schism over the question of same-sex-loving clergy. New configurations of Anglican churches are emerging to express opposition to the American Episcopal Church’s installation of gay and lesbian bishops, an expression of the disjunction between pro and anti gay and lesbian positions.

Gay theology began with the spiritual dissonance of persons who were discriminated against religiously because of their sexuality. It emerged in the late 1960s, when the gay liberation movement challenged the norm of heterosexuality and claimed that homosexuality was equally valid and should be equally licit. Religious beliefs, especially in Christianity and Judaism, were used as the foundation of social and legal prohibitions. For example, sodomy was prohibited by laws based on biblical texts and religious teachings. Thus, critical exploration and deconstruction of those religious aspects was a necessary strategy for societal change.

Religious people took on the task, engaging in serious scholarship to make counterproposals. Religions are dynamic entities that change, however slowly, as each generation brings its insights to bear. Scholars including John Boswell, Mark Jordan, and Jose Cabazon opened up the field of inquiry in religious traditions as diverse as Christianity and Buddhism.

Many early proponents of gay liberation claimed that it was precisely their religious commitment to “love thy neighbor” that prompted their actions for change. They included ministers like the Reverend Troy Perry, who gathered a dozen worshippers in his living room in San Francisco in the fall of 1968, well before the Stonewall riots in New York City in June 1969, which are seen as the beginning of the gay liberation movement. That small group of worshippers later became the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches, a church explicitly for LGBTQ Christians and their friends. It is now a thriving denomination

of more than 40,000 members in 300 churches in 22 countries worldwide.

The Reverend John McNeill, a Jesuit priest, pioneered the Catholic work by arguing that homosexuality ought to be morally acceptable because God created gay and lesbian people to be loving human beings like everyone else. He was eventually forced to leave his religious order and became a well-respected therapist and spiritual director in New York City. McNeill helped found Dignity, a Catholic lesbian and gay support/advocacy group that continues to flourish. He helped open the conversation about homosexuality in Catholicism, a religious tradition that has same-sex religious orders and all-male clergy as well as teachings against all forms of same-sex expression.

Jewish scholars took on similar issues in their teachings, exploring scripture and rethinking traditional teaching in light of the new social-scientific data about same-sex love. Progressive Jews, mostly from the Reform tradition, established LGBTQ-friendly synagogues. Congregation Beth Simchat Torah founded in New York City in 1973 and Bet Mishpachah founded in Washington, D.C., in 1975 were prototypes for others around the country.

Lesbian theology flowered as part of the feminist awakening in the field from the 1970s onward. Women's experiences in general and lesbian women's experience in particular were left out of most theological reflection. Early gay work followed the same pattern, focused on men by men yet making sweeping claims that alleged to include women. Hence, the early work in gay and lesbian theology was predominantly male. Feminist scholars unmasked these dynamics throughout the field and developed their own constructive work as well.

Sally Miller Gearhart offered the first critical lesbian perspective in the early 1970s, bringing together feminist theological arguments with lesbian sensibility. Scholarly work by Bernadette Brooten established that lesbian women in the early Christian period were oppressed not simply for their sexual acts, but rather, they were subjected to criticism because in their attempts at sex between equals, namely, women, in a culture that saw all women as inferior to men, they transgressed the boundaries of top-down sexual dynamics that characterized men's sexual lives whether with women or with men who were younger, weaker, or poorer. Carter Heyward, Judith

Plaskow, Mary E. Hunt, and others focused on lesbian women's experiences as a source for theological thinking.

Lesbian women far outnumbered gay men among the first openly same-sex-loving people ordained and otherwise engaged in public leadership roles in religious organizations. Virtually all of them experienced a severe backlash. Christian Lesbians Out Together (CLOUT) was formed to provide support and nurture for its members. The Conference for Catholic Lesbians was another such group concerned with the specific needs of women that were not addressed by male-led groups.

As bisexual and later transgender persons claimed their full rights as religious people, scholarship and practice were challenged again. Few documents exist on the spirituality, much less the theology, of bisexual persons, but there is work in progress. Transgender persons are making strong claims about their rights and therefore their religious lives. Their most powerful challenge is to static notions of sex and gender and all the complexities that the deconstruction of those categories involves. For example, if an ordained man becomes a woman in a tradition that does not ordain women, is he then a woman ordained? Such questions remain to be resolved, but they are now part of the broader theological conversation.

At issue in most of the same-sex debates is not so much homosexuality but heterosexism, the normative assumption that everyone is heterosexual. So contemporary scholarship on the religious roots of heterosexism rather than a continued focus on homosexuality is gaining a wide audience. The search continues for a level ethical playing field for all regardless of sexuality orientation. The work is now done in broadly interreligious terms, with insights emerging from one tradition that can be useful in another.

Gay and lesbian theology remains a relatively new field. Its impact can be seen most readily in pastoral counseling, spiritual direction, and ethics, where the new insights are lived out. There is no consensus either on the issues of same-sex love or on the acceptance of same-sex-loving persons in religious groups. But there is recognition of the importance of such foundational theological discussions and hope for their eventual resolution.

Mary E. Hunt

See also Equality; Liberation Theology; Men's Roles; Sexuality; Tolerance; Women's Roles

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GAZA

Gaza is an Israeli territory fronting the Mediterranean Sea and bordering Egypt, populated almost entirely by Palestinian Muslims and Christians. A mere 25 miles (1 mile = 1.61 kilometers) long and 4–7 miles wide, what is now known as the Gaza Strip might aptly be likened to a large metropolis, yet its miniature dimensions belie the area's global political and religious significance, past and present. The early history of the Gaza Strip is still being written, and relatively little is known about some periods even as new archaeological discoveries are continually being made, some extending as far back as the Early Bronze Age. As the control point of an ancient route between Asia and Africa, the narrow strip of land has been fought over by numerous powers from the Egyptian pharaohs to the Philistines, the Israelites to the Assyrians, Alexander the Great to Herod the Great, and Napoleon to Hulagu Khan. Since the 1948 war, Gaza has been a major locus of struggle and contestation between Arabs and Israelis, Muslims and Jews, and, presently, Palestinian Islamists and

Palestinian nationalists. It is bordered on the north and east by Israel, on the south by Egypt, and on the west by the Mediterranean Sea. The population numbers approximately 1.5 million, many of whom are refugees, although no accurate census has been taken for many years. Seventy-five percent of Gazans are under the age of 25 and 99% are Sunnī Muslim.

The religious history of the strip is rich and complex and cannot be separated from its political history. Gaza's denizens have included Jews, Christians, and Muslims as well as adherents of Semitic religions about which we know relatively little today, including that centered on Dagon, which figures in the biblical story of Samson, the blinded Israelite who wreaks revenge on the Philistines by bringing down their god's temple in Gaza. Numerous archaeological sites, many of which feature large, impressive mosaics, attest to a long tradition of Christian monasticism in Gaza and the vicinity, a movement that began perhaps as early as the third century CE and flourished with the Christianization of Gaza in the beginning of the fifth century CE. Gaza was captured and held by the Arabs from the 7th century until the 12th century, when it was taken by the Crusaders. For the next three centuries, the city was destroyed numerous times and was fought over by the Ayyubids, the Mongols, and the Mamluks. From the 16th through the mid-20th century, it was controlled by the Ottoman Turks.

The modern presence of the Jews in Gaza began during the Ottoman Empire, when Turkish authorities encouraged both Spanish and Turkish Jews to settle in the area. Their status changed during World War I, with the British defeat of the Turks. During the war, the strip was the scene of a particularly vicious battle between the two armies that left the banks of the Wadi Gaza littered with 15,000 corpses in the space of 2 days, neither side having gained an inch of territory. Under British rule, Jews were forbidden to live in Gaza. They returned, nevertheless, and in 1946 reestablished Kfar Darom, which had been destroyed during the Arab revolt in the late 1930s. Two years later, the Muslim Brotherhood, the Pan-Islamist movement established in Egypt in 1928 by Hasan al-Banna, entered Gaza in the vanguard of the invading Egyptian army, embarking on its first jihad against the nascent Israel, a struggle that has continued

into the 21st century. Beginning in 1951, Palestinian nationalist fighters known as *fida'iyun* launched a series of attacks against Israeli targets from locations in Syria, Jordan, and Egypt. In 1956, in response to these incursions, Israel initiated the Sinai Campaign and was joined by France and Britain, which were alarmed at Egypt's nationalization of the Suez Canal.

Egypt occupied the Gaza Strip from 1948 to 1967. Israel began its occupation in 1967, at which time a new settlement policy was initiated. At its height, the number of settlers amounted to nearly 7,000 individuals. With a durable peace with Egypt in place by 1979, Israel's occupation of Gaza came to be seen by many Israelis as a burden. In 2005, Ariel Sharon, the architect of many of Israel's settlements in the West Bank and Gaza, announced that Israel was pulling out of the strip, and Israeli soldiers proceeded to dismantle 21 settlements inside it. Within a few weeks, the Jewish population of Gaza fell to zero. Palestinian elections in the strip were held the following year and were won by members of *Harakat al-Muqawamat al-Islamiyyah*, the Islamic resistance movement Hamas, which had been founded in Gaza at the beginning of the first intifada as the Palestinian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood. In contrast to the secular agenda of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), Hamas presented itself as a Qur'an-based movement and the conflict in the region as ultimately a religious rather than political one. The group's *mithaq*, or covenant, penned directly after the first intifada began, calls for the replacement of the Jewish state with an Islamic one. Palestine, the document asserts, belongs to the Islamic *waqf*, the Islamic charitable trust, until the Day of Judgment.

Hamas won parliamentary elections in 2006 and formed a Palestinian Authority national unity government with its longtime rival, Fatah, the largest faction of the PLO, under Hamas leader Isma'il Haniya. Tensions between the two parties soon became acute and in June 2007 culminated in the Battle of Gaza, a series of violent clashes and assassinations that lasted for 2 weeks, from which Hamas emerged victorious and removed Fatah officials by force. The strip was still technically part of the Palestinian Authority, but controlled completely by Hamas, and possessed a status approaching that of a *Corpus separatum*, while the

West Bank remained in the hands of Fatah. Beginning in 2001, Palestinians had begun launching thousands of rockets and mortars into southern Israel, and in December 2008, Israel launched an air assault on the strip and, shortly thereafter, a large ground assault, resulting in the deaths of approximately 1,500 Palestinians, many of them civilians. Since the Islamist takeover, both Israel and Egypt vastly curtailed movement of goods, services, and people across their borders. Gaza's airspace remained controlled by Israel, whose air force routinely overflies it, searching for the next suicide bomber or missile launcher. On both the Egyptian and Israeli fronts are massive antismuggling barriers. Linking the strip surreptitiously to the Sinai Desert are scores of tunnels through which are smuggled food and livestock, arms, explosives, money, fighters, and people simply trying to escape the confines of life in the strip. In 2011, following the ouster of President Hosni Mubarak in Egypt, the Egyptian government reopened a crossing from Egypt into Gaza. A pact of cooperation signed between Hamas and the Palestinian Authority in 2011 anticipated the reconciliation of the two branches of Palestine.

Anne Marie Oliver

See also Fatwa; Hamas; Islamism (Political Islam); Israel; Muslim Brotherhood

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GEERTZ, CLIFFORD (1926–2006)

Clifford Geertz was an influential American anthropologist who made seminal contributions to the study of culture and religion. Geertz earned a doctorate in anthropology in 1956 from Harvard University's Department of Social Relations. He later served on the faculty at the University of Chicago from 1960 to 1970 and was appointed to a senior research position at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, New Jersey, from

1970 to 2000. Over the course of his life, Geertz was increasingly recognized for his contributions to what became known as the symbolic and interpretive school of anthropology. Symbolic and interpretive anthropology treats culture as a system of shared meanings that are transmitted through key symbols, rituals, and social practices.

For Geertz, the analysis of culture is not an experimental science in search of generic laws but an interpretive one in search of contextually oriented meaning. Geertz developed his particular approach to cultural analysis through extensive fieldwork in Southeast Asia and northern Africa. For example, in his book *the Religion of Java* (1960), Geertz paid close attention to the symbolic dimensions of the Slametan, a communal feast used to ritualistically mark important social events in Javanese society. In a similar vein, Geertz and Geertz's *Kinship in Bali* (1975) was a study of the specifically cultural dimensions, including the ideas, beliefs, and values of the Balinese kinship system.

Drawing on his ethnographic work, Geertz wrote a series of essays, including "Religion as a Cultural System," "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture," and "Deep Play: Notes on a Balinese Cockfight," which became influential across the social sciences and humanities. These essays, among others, were collectively published in *The Interpretation of Cultures* (1973) and develop Geertz's theoretical and methodological arguments regarding cultural analysis. In *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology* (1983), Geertz explored the nature of anthropological understanding and the importance of what he calls "local knowledge" to the meaning-making process. For Geertz, anthropological writings are carefully constructed interpretations, and the ethnographer's role is to grasp cultural meaning through thick description and close attention to local knowledge. Throughout his career, Geertz used this approach to provide insights into a broad range of cultural phenomena, with particular attention given to religion.

In "Religion as a Cultural System," Geertz provides analytically powerful conceptions of both culture and religion. Culture, according to Geertz, is best understood as a historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols. These symbolic forms constitute a system of inherited

conceptions through which people communicate and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life. The analyst, therefore, should seek to grasp the meanings embodied in various symbolic forms and to interpret the ways in which these symbolic forms are used and understood by members of a particular culture. Geertz's understanding of religion also emphasizes the role of symbols. Religion, according to Geertz, is a system of symbols that acts to establish powerful, pervasive moods and motivations in people by formulating conceptions of a general order of existence. This order of existence is characterized by an aura of factuality so that the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic. This distinctive understanding of religion highlights the way symbols are used, often through ritual, to establish shared experiences and interpretations of social life.

While many of his ideas, including those on religion, remain contested, Geertz's influence in the field of anthropology and beyond is unquestionable. Arguably the most influential American anthropologist of the late 20th century, his work remains essential for those seeking to study the complex webs of meaning that characterize human existence.

Jason J. Hopkins

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GENDER

Gender, in religion, refers to sex-associated characteristics and behaviors in both the natural and the supernatural world: the earth and its creatures,

objects, spirits, and the gods. Gender and religion are dynamically interrelated, with religions shaping gender, and gender influencing religion. In recent times, gender has been at the heart of major controversies in religion and has led to new ways of studying and explaining religion.

Religion Shaping Gender

Religion has played an important role in defining the meaning of gender both as a symbol and in practice. In ancient times, religions assigned gender to various aspects of the natural world—the earth, rivers, mountains, sun, moon, and stars—which in turn were associated with spiritual power. In an ancient Aztec myth, Coatlicue, an earth goddess, gives birth to the sun (male) and the moon (female). In indigenous Chinese religion, all aspects of the universe derive from the interplay of two opposing forces, symbolized as yin (feminine) and yang (masculine).

The designation of gender was often, but not always, connected to inherent characteristics of the natural object or to human gender roles in the culture. The sun was a male deity in ancient Egypt but female in Canaan. Goddesses associated with grain production and warrior gods in the ancient Near East corresponded to men's and women's activities. But we find both male and female deities associated with warfare and with fertility in these cultures.

During the axial age, the traditions that were to become what we now call the major world religions began to articulate the divine as transcending nature, but gender symbolism persisted. In Hinduism, gods and goddesses came to be understood as personifications of one underlying divine reality. Yet deities continue to display characteristics and behavior mirroring the roles of human males and females in Indian society. Sometimes the divine couple is understood as a model for human behavior (e.g., Sita's chaste and submissive relationship to Rama). Other times, the gods symbolize broader spiritual forces (e.g., the carnal embrace of Shiva and Shakti). In the major monotheistic religions, divine transcendence of nature meant a decoupling from sexuality—God became an asexual being. God continued to have a gender but was now exclusively masculine: in Judaism as Lord and King, in Christianity as Father and Son. While

Islam has stricter sanctions against the anthropomorphizing of God, the language of the Qur'an addresses God as masculine.

The idea of divine transcendence of nature in the major world religions was accompanied by a new use of gender symbols: the spiritual, eternal dimension is increasingly symbolized as masculine, while the female is associated with the material, temporary world and the human condition of passion and sexuality. We see this in Hindu philosophy: Purusha (spirit) is male, while Prakrti (matter) is female, a distinction that carries over to the conceptualization of Brahman (eternal divine consciousness) as masculine versus maya (the temporary illusory material world) as feminine. We also see it in Jewish tradition, where god is masculine (Father, Lord, King), while the people of Israel may be understood as feminine (bride of God), and in Christianity, where Jesus is male and the church is the bride of Christ. The emergence of such gender dualism in religion served to legitimate and enforce the unequal power relationships between men and women: If females are more passionate, more sexual, they are also less rational and morally suspect and therefore must be controlled by males. The use of gendered religious symbols, then, shapes how we understand what gender means.

Religions also shaped gender by articulating distinct behavioral roles for men and women. Historically, the major religious institutions formulated legal codes governing gender behavior. The Qur'an, the Mishnah, and the Laws of Manu spell out the specific rights and responsibilities of men and women in Islam, Judaism, and Hinduism, respectively. All these texts assign legal and familial authority to males and designate women's roles as primarily domestic. Prior to the modern age, adherence to religious gender codes was enforced by the courts and continues to be so today in nations that do not separate church and state.

Gender roles are also transmitted in stories whose values are internalized by the young. The Bible tells us that God created Eve from Adam's rib to be his helpmate; the *Ramayana* tells us that Sita always put her husband's welfare first. And gender roles are modeled in religious practice. Among the Asabano, a drum carried by male initiates is designated as female; it serves as a proxy for women, who are to be controlled by men. In

Egypt, many Muslim women do not attend Friday religious prayers, perceiving the mosque as male space. Young Catholics in America, no less than Muslims in Saudi Arabia, are accustomed to seeing only males in positions of religious authority, and surveys consistently show religion, more than any other demographic factor, to predict gender attitudes. Thus, even in today's secular Western society, religion continues to influence gender roles.

Religious gender roles are significantly connected to concepts of sex and sexuality. Historically, most religions have encouraged men and women to marry. The union of male and female may be presented as a religious duty (Hinduism, Judaism) or as an option to avoid illicit sex (Christianity, Buddhism), but marriage was always heterosexual and conformed to patriarchal standards. The subordination of women is rooted in part in the association of the female with sexuality. In the Bible, Eve's desire is for her husband, but he will rule over her; in Buddhist texts, temptation appears in female form, and an enlightened princess takes on a male body before entering nirvana.

Religious sanctions against homosexuality are common but do not emerge as a consistent theme until the axial age. In ancient cultures, such as Greece and Rome, homosexual sex was widely tolerated. But the religious separation of the divine from nature, and by extension sexuality, seems to coincide with more restrictive views of sex. The sacred texts of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam address only male homosexuality, and some passages judge it as a violation of divinely ordained gender roles. In other religions such as Hinduism, a "third gender" is defined for those who do not fit clearly into traditional male or female identities. While such individuals were tolerated, ordinarily they remained outside religious norms, though in some cases, such as the *bardache* in Native American religious traditions, they were regarded as specially spiritually endowed.

By connecting gender to nature and to a divinely ordained order, religions present their norms as immutable fact and serve to legitimate traditional gender roles. Religious communities have frequently punished gender-inappropriate behavior—be it uppity women or openly gay men—by exclusion or sometimes death. Joan of Arc was burned at the stake for cross-dressing; homosexuals in Iran can be and occasionally are executed to this

day. Even in secular societies, movements that challenge gender roles (e.g., to ordain women or permit homosexual marriage) are viewed by conservatives as attacking not only gender but religion itself. As Mary Daly put it, religion is the ideological glue that binds gender to sex.

Gender Shaping Religion and Religious Studies

Less obvious, but no less important, are the ways in which gender shapes religion. Traditional religion presents itself as existing prior to culture and the link between gender and sex as natural, a cosmic certainty ordained by God. In contrast, modern thinkers assert that both religion and gender are culturally constructed.

Feminists have pointed out that it was men who wrote the sacred texts and built the institutions that enforced religious gender norms. They assert that those norms are neither natural nor divinely ordained but rather reflect the values of ancient patriarchal societies. Invested in maintaining their own power, male founders created religious symbols, practices, and institutions that legitimated existing gender relationships. Religion itself, then, is shaped by gender.

Religion created by women (or by men with a less patriarchal outlook) may look different: more egalitarian and more affirming of the body and nature, as illustrated by contemporary pagan groups and feminist Jewish and Christian communities. But women have always shaped religion, even in patriarchal traditions—their contribution has just been overlooked, partly because what women did (e.g., domestic rituals, the creation of artifacts used in popular devotions) was not counted as part of religion as men had defined it.

Starting with feminist attempts to recover the missing women in religious history and expanding to other academic disciplines, gender has become an important category of analysis in the study of religion. The gender lens has focused attention on the distinctions between institutional religion (created and maintained by a male, literary elite) and popular religious movements (in which women often play a more important role), between public religious practice (dominated by men) and domestic religion (often defined by women), and between official religious teachings and actual religious practice, and on

the materiality and embodiment, rather than only the intellectual dimension, of religion.

Gender study in religion has become popular partly because it is viewed as more neutral than women's studies and thus depoliticizes feminist analysis. But the gender lens also has its critics. Conservatives view gender as a secular category that distorts our understanding of religious people. Some feminists view gender as a continuation of patriarchal discourse. The whole notion of gender as cultural presumes that sex is natural, leaving the latter un-theorized and thus immutable. They point out that gender, like race, is an artificial category developed by one group to oppress another. Gender, in short, is likely to remain at the heart of contemporary religious controversies for many years to come.

Christel Manning

See also Gay and Lesbian Theology; Goddess; Men's Roles; Sexuality; Women's Roles

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GENERATION X

See Generational Change

GENERATIONAL CHANGE

Generations comprise people born within the same time period, who share similar formative experiences in adolescence and early adulthood. The concept of generations has been used to explain change and continuity in societies by social scientists and

historians since the 18th century. Most recently, the concept of the generation has been used as a way to describe different groups in society, such as baby boomers or Generation X, and how their characteristics are somehow unique from other generational groupings.

The sociologist Karl Mannheim laid the groundwork for understanding the dynamics of how generations form and how social change takes place across different generations. For Mannheim, generations operate similarly to social class, with the crucial element being the common experience of the same historical problems and participation in the same social and intellectual movements that shape and transform the historical situation in which they grow up. Because of their common location in the historical process and their similar stage of personal development, those who experience and participate in similar historical and cultural events constitute a generation. All members of a particular generation, however, do not understand their common experiences in the same ways. Rather, they tend to differentiate into subgroups that express their common experiences in politically and culturally different ways.

If generational continuity takes place through the successful socialization of younger generations into the dominant societal system of values, norms, and beliefs, generational change takes place as younger generations come of age and experience tension or conflict with the values they have been taught and how those values relate to their own experiences. As these conflicting experiences are shared across a generation of people, generational consciousness emerges. As this new consciousness comes to constitute the outlook of a generation and is enacted through different generational subgroups coming into contact and conflict with each other and with previous generations, new ideas and values emerge, and social change takes place.

As applied to religion, as younger generations are socialized into religious beliefs, rituals, and practices, they interact with these in the context of their own experiences and expectations, from within their own particular sociohistorical situation. Thus, the particular experiences of younger generations that support or come into conflict with existing religious values and teachings drive the accommodation of religion to the needs and experiences of successive generations.

When assessing social and religious change, however, it is difficult to separate generation from other categories of analysis such as race and class. Using generation more as a descriptive category to delineate the differences between and within different generations, while focusing on how other variables influence how generations understand themselves and experience the world, is likely a more fruitful approach.

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See also Aging; Emergent Religion

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GENEVA CONVENTION

The term *Geneva Convention* (GC) is commonly used to denote a system of four international treaties and three additional protocols regulating the treatment of noncombatant personnel (wounded, shipwrecked, and captured soldiers) as well as civilians in cases of armed conflicts between states. These treaties do not refer to the use of weapons, which is covered by the Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907. The GC is not to be confused with the Geneva Protocol of 1925, which bans the use of chemical and biological weapons. Only states can become members of the conventions; nonetheless, nongovernmental organizations and substate organizations may still voluntarily declare compliance with the GC. The GC names the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) as the sole body empowered to enforce compliance on the part of the member states.

The first convention (GC1: “For the Amelioration of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces and Field”) followed the founding of the ICRC in 1863 and was ratified by 12 European nations in 1864. The initiator of the GC was Henry Dunant, the founder of the ICRC. With the first revision in 1906, the Hague Conventions III (1899) and X (1907) became the cornerstones of the GC2 (“For the Amelioration of the Condition of Wounded, Sick and Shipwrecked Members of Armed Forces at Sea”) in 1949. In 1929, another revision led to the framework of GC3 (“Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War”—at that time GC2 but became GC3 in 1949), and in 1949, the third revision, in the aftermath of World War II, resulted in the addition of GC4 (“Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War”). The four GCs have now been ratified by 194 countries. They include, famously, a ban on the use of torture to extract information from prisoners of war.

The protocols were added in 1977 (I: “Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts” and II: “Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts”) and 2005 (III: “Adoption of an Additional Distinctive Emblem”). Protocol I has been ratified by 168 (as of July 2009), II by 164, and III by 43 states.

GC1 calls for equal treatment of personnel and wounded, regardless of race and religious or political affiliation. This guarantee extends to both the ICRC personnel and noncombatants in all matters. Article 17, Chapter 2, ensures that the treatment of corpses and burial or cremation standards meet the religious requirements of the deceased as far as possible. GC2 extends this stipulation to include naval personnel. GC3 (Chapter V, Articles 34–37) regulates the conduct of religious activities during captivity, stating that prisoners of war (POWs) must be allowed to exercise their religion (Article 34) and ensuring the provision of all relevant necessities. The convention mandates that captured military chaplains be allowed to fulfill all their duties; to that end, chaplains must be provided with all necessities and free correspondence with their religious institutions in the nation in which they are held (Article 35). The same applies to any captured person who is not an army chaplain but a clergyman (Article 36). POWs have the right to the services of a clergyman even if none has been captured (Article 37). GC4 calls for the

provision of spiritual services for occupied civilians and for the facilitation of the distribution of religious texts (Articles 58, 86, Part III). Any regulation of GC3 also applies to detained civilians.

Daniel Koehler

See also Human Rights; Religion and State; Terrorism; War on Terrorism

Website

The complete text of all conventions can only be found online: <http://www.icrc.org/Web/Eng/siteeng0.nsf/htmlall/genevaconventions>

GEORGIA

Georgia, located on the Caspian Sea south of Russia, is one of the oldest Christian countries. Christianity became the state religion in the beginning of the fourth century. In the post-Soviet era, however, religion in Georgia is mostly a sign of national-cultural identity. Though it is not clear how many believers observe religious obligations out of religious motivation and how many out of custom or national loyalty, the number of Orthodox Christians has increased from 9.8% in 1998 to 17.5% in 2006.

According to the data of 2006, the population of Georgia comprises 4.7 million, with ethnic Georgians constituting the greatest part of the population, some 83.8%. The number of Orthodox Christians was almost the same as those of ethnic Georgians, 84%, indicating an overlap between those two categories. The remainder of the population were Muslims (9.9%), Armenian Apostolic (3.9%), Roman Catholic (1.2%), and Jews (0.8%). There were also small groups of Jehovah's Witnesses, Pentecostals, Lutherans, and others.

Legal Regulation of Religious Life

Article 9 of the Georgian constitution declares freedom of religion and independence of the church from the state. It also acknowledges the special role of the Orthodox Church in the country's history. In 2002, a constitutional agreement

was signed between the state and the Georgian Orthodox Church, making the Orthodox Church a subject of public law. Other religious organizations are subjects of private law.

Processes After Regaining Independence

In 1991, after Georgia restored independent statehood, the new historical context provided for an expansion of religious organizations and the rise of religious minority groups. The influential right wing of the Orthodox Church tried to impose a total domination of the religious market. New religious groups appeared with modern missionary tactics, such as Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, and others. These were resented and aggressively rejected by right-wing orthodox Christians in the late 1990s and the first decade of the 21st century. At the same time, there was a general rise of nationalism within the country that helped support the nationalist identification with the Orthodox Church. Influential political groups tried to make the Orthodox Church their ally, but in general, the leaders of the Orthodox Church preserved their distance from the political processes.

Opposition to Globalization

From the late 1990s, Orthodox fundamentalists and even moderate representatives of the church have expressed suspicion toward globalization, liberalism, and ecumenism. In the beginning of the 21st century, many Orthodox believers, rallying around church leaders, have attempted to stake out their own historical and social claims to Georgian religious superiority. This may be considered to be a form of opposition to the currents of global culture that have affected many other parts of the world.

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See also Eastern Orthodox Christianity; Globalization; Russian Federation

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GERMANY

Germany is at the center of Europe and is the historic cradle of the Lutheran Reformation. It was also on several occasions in the 16th and 17th centuries the seat of fratricidal religious wars between Catholics and Protestants (German Peasants' War, Schmalkaldic War, Thirty-Years' War), wars that sometimes had Pan-European dimensions. These struggles were resolved through attempts to create peaceful coexistence between Catholics and Lutherans, first through the Peace of Augsburg in 1555 and later by the Peace of Westphalia in 1648. In the later evolution of the Holy Roman Empire (962–1806), these arrangements led to a strengthening of state power, which guaranteed civil peace in the framework of territorial states. In a sense, the prince of the state became the high priest, who had the right to impose his confessional religious beliefs on his subjects, who had a choice either to convert or to emigrate (until 1555) or simply to be tolerated (as of 1648). This status of state church lasted until 1918 and was abolished only with the adoption of the Weimar Republic constitution (in August 1919).

Since the 16th century, Germany has been a biconfessional land of Catholics and Protestants and has been deeply marked by the political, cultural, and social stakes of this fragile coexistence. According to historians like Manfred Kittel, this confessional antagonism slowed down the development of German democracy and is said to have lasted until 1970. The period 1800 to 1970 represented a second confessional era (Olaf Blaschke), like the period 1530 to 1730, as described by the historians of the Reformation, Heinz Schilling and Wolfgang Reinhard. The internal conflict it created in the national state had consequences on

exactly what was the logic underlying German church-state relations.

German law continues to have a legal and institutional bias toward Christian churches. They are regarded as public law corporations. This status dates from the 19th century and was guaranteed to churches by the Weimar constitution (Article 137.5) as a compensation for the loss of state church status (Article 137.1). It also gave special status to groups such as humanistic congregations (Article 137.7). Being public law corporations, churches were constitutionally guaranteed specific rights, such as the right to levy funds with the help of the state (Article 137.6), including a church tax, representing 8%–9% of the income tax; the right to dispense religious courses/instruction in school; the right to have theology faculties in state/public universities (guaranteed today by the Länder constitutions or church-state conventions); and the right to have a pastoral presence within public institutions, such as chaplains in the army, hospitals, prisons (Article 141 WRV).

Due to the para-public nature of the status of churches in Germany and of these domains of action shared between churches and the state, the church-state relationship has been described as one of “limping separation.” The Basic Law of contemporary Germany took over nearly all the articles related to religion in the constitution of the Weimar Republic (Articles 136–139 and 141 WRV). However, the interpretation of these laws is affected by the changing historical context and the various changes that were made in the most recent constitution. It adds references to God in the preamble to the Basic Law, which were not there in the Weimar constitution; it stipulates religious freedom (Articles 3.3, 4) and the right to religious instruction in school (Article 7.3); and it requires oath taking to have a reference to God, as opposed to the secular practice enforced under the Weimar constitution. This positive attitude toward religion and religious freedom is explained by the immediate postwar acceptance of Christian values after the secular nationalism of the Third Reich and also by the influence of the Allies, who were supportive of the churches due to the mediation role that they played between the occupation forces and the population. By giving religious communities the right to impart religious instruction at school, the state admitted its incompetence in

transmitting values itself and delegated this responsibility to religious communities. This attitude is an essential part of the German church-state system and is manifest also in the humanitarian sector (hospitals, retirement homes, nursery schools, etc.), which is managed by the churches. These humanitarian service agencies run by the churches have an enormous social and financial impact since they constitute the second largest employer in the country after the state.

This administrative arrangement between church and state is supported by a relatively large consensus in West German society, where Christian values play the role of civil religion. The only opposition to it has come from the young liberals of the FDP in 1973 and the East German political leader Wolfgang Ullmann, himself a former pastor, who brought forward a motion in January 1994 to eliminate the reference to God in the Basic Law and modify a large part of the church-state system. There have also been repeated criticisms of the state's support for the church, albeit in a minority, from the Association of the Defense of Civic Rights and from the Association of Free Thinkers.

The ratio of Catholics to Protestants has varied over the years. There was a quantitative and ideological preponderance of Protestantism under the Bismarck Reich, and there was a political and social renaissance of Catholicism in West Germany in 1949, when the Federal Republic of Germany was founded. The reunification of the two Germanys has reestablished the numerical balance between Protestants and Catholics (25.4 million Catholics [31%] and 24.8 million Protestants [30.2%] in 2007 out of a population of about 82 million inhabitants) since, with the admission of the Basic Law for the East Länder in October 1990, the population increased by about 16 million inhabitants (about 2.2% of them Protestant and 4% Catholic, though a majority of 70% claimed no religious affiliation in 1990). This high percentage of people without religious affiliation expresses an important break with the East German Protestant past (80% of Protestants in 1949 and 60% in 1964 against 11% and 8% of Catholics in the respective years). Among the various reasons for this are the reduction in the number of Christians in some industrial regions, the departure to the West of certain Christian social classes, and antireligious politics practiced by the German

Democratic Republic through the introduction of the *Jugendweihe* (a secular coming-of-age ceremony for 14-year-olds) in 1954 and the propagation of scientific atheism. It is a fact that besides the massive presence of people without religious affiliation in the German society, there has been since the 1990s a regular increase in de-affiliation from the churches (*Kirchenaustritte* [2007]: 93,667 = +11% for the Catholic Church; 130,331 = +7.2% for the Protestant churches), which is associated with the demographic aging of the population. This has led the Protestants to contemplate making structural reforms (fusion of parishes and of provincial churches) in anticipation of a drastic reduction of financial resources. With regard to the Catholic Church, the euphoria following the election of a German pope ("*wir sind Papst*" was the headline of the gutter press daily paper *Bild-Zeitung*) was short-lived, and a growing ill-feeling appeared in the face of the Church's managing of the pedophilia scandals.

An evolution has occurred in the domain of religious instruction. In the state of Brandenburg, in 1996, a compulsory course was established for everyone in each class, having to do with religions and ethics. In 2009, Berlin introduced a multicultural course of ethics for everyone in a city that had become multicultural. So the federal states are taking the initiative to gather students of any philosophic or religious origin in order to pass on a common language about these matters and discuss the rules to observe to live together. Another evolution is in taking into account negative religious freedom. In 1995, the Federal Constitutional Court struck down a Bavarian rule that the crucifix must be displayed in classrooms as not being in accordance with the neutrality principle of the state.

The presence of a substantial Muslim community (about 5% of the population, i.e., 4 million inhabitants in 2010, of whom 1 million have obtained German nationality) is a second breaking point in the German biconfessional tradition. It contributes to the religious diversity of the country along with the 1.2 million Orthodox Christians and a little more than 100,000 members of the Jewish community. The majority of Muslims (2.6 million in 2006) are of Sunnī origin, and most—some 60%—are Turkish, with a higher birthrate than the national average. After the Schröder government (a coalition of SPD [German Social Democrats]/Green

parties) made access to nationality more flexible in 1998, it became easier for foreigners living in Germany to become naturalized, but these communities do not yet have much weight in Germany's political life.

As far as religion is concerned, on the other hand, the right of Muslims to practice their beliefs is well established. In 2009, there were about 200 mosques (a number that had tripled between 1997 and 2000) and about 2,600 other premises in which to pray. Muslim religious instruction in public schools is not offered in the whole country as it is in Austria, but it is being conducted as an experiment in all states of western Germany and in Berlin. During the first decade of the 21st century, political debates broke out regarding the Muslim veil—whether it could be worn by teachers or state servants; discussion also occurred over the architecture of mosques (the height of the minarets, the appropriateness of mosques in old inner cities) in certain big towns such as Köln or Duisburg.

The main stumbling block in terms of equality with other religions, especially Christianity, is the status of Islam. Unlike in Austria, Islam has not been given public law status in Germany. The reasons given are its absence of doctrinal authority, the diversity of its communities of obedience, and the lack of a census of the numbers of members of these communities. However, since Germany officially declared itself “an immigration country” in 2005, integration is on the agenda. In September 2006, in accordance with the initiative of the interior minister of the time, Wolfgang Schäuble (Christian Democratic Union), meetings were held that brought together public authorities and various Muslim associations to formulate concrete proposals aimed at religious integration into German society.

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(translated by Denise Le Boëdec)

See also Civil Religion; Islam; Politics and Religion; Protestant Christianity; Religion and State; Roman Catholicism; Secularization

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GHANA

Ghana is a West African country located on the shores of the Atlantic Ocean. It exhibits the characteristics captured in John Mbiti's (1990) famous statement: “Africans are notoriously religious” (p. 1), a sentiment also shared by Geoffrey Parrinder (1974), who called Africans “this incurably religious people” (p. 9). The religious landscape of Ghana defies the secularization theory, which predicts that religion will gradually be consigned to the private sphere in an increasingly modern-rationalist world. Religious activity in Ghana today depicts an upsurge in individual participation in religious activity (private sphere) as well as the continued

influence of religious groups in the public sphere. Churches, particularly Pentecostal/Charismatic churches, are springing up throughout Ghanaian society. This development is largely an urban phenomenon that, to mark their success, has also become transnational in nature through the establishment of branches in the Global North and other parts of the Global South.

The growth of Christianity in Ghana is remarkable given its fairly recent advent from Europe. The historic churches, also known as the mission, mainline, or orthodox churches, have asserted their presence in Ghana since the 19th century. The “Basel Mission,” for example, “arrived in Ghana in 1828, the Methodists in 1835” (Gifford, 1998, p. 57). And although consistent Catholic evangelization did not begin in the Gold Coast until 1880, a Portuguese chaplain celebrated the first Catholic Mass at Elmina in 1471 (Wiltgen, 1956). The presence of these churches is easily noticeable in their influence on the Ghanaian public sphere through their provision of social institutions, predominantly in the areas of education and health care.

Today, Pentecostalism is a salient sector of African Christianity. African Pentecostalism has roots in African Independent Churches, established after the 1950s to mark the independence struggle; Western Pentecostal churches (e.g., the Baptist Church), which gained entry into West Africa in the 1970s, growing considerably in Ghana since the late 1990s (Darkwah, 2001, p. 12); and the new churches (e.g., Aladura [Peel, 1989] and Nakaba) that originated in Africa. Now it is fashionable for Ghanaians to found churches that are beginning to take on new roles of providing social services, thereby emulating the historic churches.

Consequently, the religious face of Ghana is undergoing rapid transformation. Christianity has witnessed the most rapid growth in Ghana (26%) over a 40-year period (since 1960), moving from 43% to 69% of the population, while adherents of African traditional religion have plummeted from 45% to 6%—a 39% decrease (Gifford, 1998, p. 61). Islam has remained relatively stable, moving from 12% to 15.9%, while a new development has occurred with 6.1% of Ghanaians now reporting no religious affiliation (Ghana Statistical Service, 2002).

Pentecostal churches account in no small way for such a rapid growth of Ghanaian Christianity, even though the birth of Pentecostalism in Ghana is fairly recent. Statistics from the Registrar General’s

Department indicate that in 2005, 443 new religious groups were registered in Ghana. The total number of both secular organizations and religious groups registered over the same period was 1,931.

The increasing involvement of churches in socioeconomic life renders meaningless the view that consigns religion strictly to the private life of individuals. In everyday life, the experiences of the private and the public constantly intersect for most Ghanaians, making it difficult to draw a sharp distinction between religion as a private and a public affair.

Michael Perry Kweku Okyerefo

See also Africa; New Religions in Africa; Pentecostal Movements; Secularization

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GHAZALI (1058–1111)

Abu Hamid Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Ghazali (1058–1111) is one of the most important figures in the history of Islamic thought and has

influenced almost all Islamic disciplines. He was born in Tus, present-day Mashad, in northeastern Iran. After his basic education, he attended the Nizamiyah Madrasa, a higher-learning institution, in Nishapur, where he became a student of Abu al-Maali al-Juwayni (1025–1085). Then, at the age of only 33, he was appointed as the head of the Nizamiyah Madrasa in Baghdad by Nizam al-Mulk, the vizier of the Turkish-Seljuk ruler Malikshah. Because of his lectures at the Nizamiyah Madrasa, his fame spread throughout the Muslim world. In 1095, he left his job and headed to Mecca (Makkah) for a pilgrimage due to a personal spiritual crisis. In *al-Munqidh min al-Dalal*, a spiritual autobiography of sorts, Ghazali explains that he chose seclusion as a means to endure this crisis. After living in various cities, such as Damascus and Jerusalem, he returned to his homeland in Tus, where he passed away in 1111.

Ghazali was a Sunnī scholar, belonging to the Ash'ari school of theology and the Shafi'i school of Islamic law. He represents a turning point in Islamic thought. The literature of Islamic thought is usually divided as before and after Ghazali. An exceptional and multidimensional scholar, he was interested in multiple fields, such as law and legal theory, theology, philosophy, and Sufism.

It is reported that Ghazali's writings fill over 400 letters and books, which were in circulation throughout the Muslim world even in his lifetime. He began to write on Islamic law and legal theory at an early age. He composed three main books on Islamic law, written mainly from a Shafi'i perspective, titled *al-Wajiz*, *al-Wasit*, and *al-Basit*, and also wrote two books on Islamic legal theory. The first is *al-Mankhul fi al-Usul*, which some say is his first published work; but his main influence in Islamic legal theory occurred through another book, *al-Mustasfa fi al-Usul*, which was written toward the end of his life. In this work, he presents an original classification and a new approach to Islamic legal theory that is still influential in the discipline.

Ghazali has also made an important impact on theology through works such as *Fadaih al-Batiniyyah*, *al-Iqtisad fi al-I'tiqad*, and *Ijlam al-'awam an 'ilm al-kalam*, though he wrote many other important works on theology as well. Ghazali's legacy in the history of Islamic theology is exceptional. He left behind an epistemological system striving to reach certain truth and a distinct understanding of existence.

Ghazali was also interested in philosophy and wrote two important books in the field. He devoted *Maqasid al-Falasifah* to explaining in detail what philosophy is, and he critiqued both Greek and Muslim philosophers in *Tahafut al-Falasifah*. Despite his critical approach to philosophy, however, his *Mi'yar al-'ilm* made Aristotelian logic, the topic of the work, a necessary tool for every Islamic discipline.

His most celebrated work on Sufism, *Ihya' ulum al-Din*, has been widely considered one of the most influential works of Islamic thought. With this work, he fundamentally changed the way Sufism was understood and, in certain ways, legitimized it among Islamic disciplines. Ghazali, with his exceptional thought, continues to influence the ways in which current Muslims perceive Islam and to give shape to present Islamic movements on a global scale.

Ahmet Temel

See also Halakha and Shari'a; Iran; Islam; Sufism; Sunnī Islam

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GHOST DANCE RELIGION

The Ghost Dance was a prophetic Native American religious movement that started around 1870 in response to the White European American conquest, and it rapidly spread throughout two thirds of the United States, with local variations. It sprang from the harsh conditions the Indians had been forced to accept. It promised to restore ancestral might, and it helped revitalize native cultures. It was strongly marked by Christian moral teachings, apocalypticism, and messianism.

It had been prepared by several prophets who had seen in visions what the Indians must do to be

freed from White oppression and bring back the good old times: Neolin or the Delaware Prophet (in the 1760s), Smohalla (Wanapam, ca. 1815–1895), Tenskwatawa (Shawnee, 1775–1836), Kenekuk (Kickapoo, ca. 1790–1852), and Tavibo (Paiute, ca. 1835 to ca. 1915).

A major surge in the practice of the Ghost Dance occurred in 1890, resulting from the revelation received by Tavibo's son, Wovoka, aka Jack Wilson (ca. 1856–1932). On January 1, 1889, after a solar eclipse, Wovoka saw the spirits, the ghosts, of the dead ancestors with the Great Spirit, who told him to preach the Ghost Dance and good moral conduct. Unlike other prophetic messages, the new movement tolerated the Whites, who were, however, expected to retreat to their own world. Wovoka was given power through five songs.

The prophecy guaranteed that once the Whites had gone, their possessions would revert to the Indians; diseases, poverty, and death would vanish; and the preinvasion golden age would prevail, allowing the dead ancestors to be reunited with their descendants. They would bring back the buffaloes. Several groups, mostly the Sioux, wore a ghost shirt, a white garment (perhaps inspired by the one worn by the Mormons) decorated with feathers and mythological designs, which rendered the dancers purportedly invulnerable against weapons, and they held the traditional bow and arrow. The dance lasted 4 or 5 days, mostly at night, in an open space with details differing according to the tribes. The fasting dancers formed circles and pressed against one another so as to form a single organism. The leader sang an invocation to the departed, to the rhythm of the participants' steps, followed by laments and cries. The Great Spirit was then called on to bring the dead to communicate with the dancers. This climax was performed in a trance that would be repeated several times. The Dance acted out the final destruction of the world as well as its regeneration, providing for the salvation and healing of the disciples.

Though peaceful, such messianism was so obviously leveled against the White Americans that it worried them. The massacre at Wounded Knee (December 1890) was in part caused by the army's urgency to suppress it. This struck a major blow to the Dance; nevertheless, it continued to be performed.

Like most prophetic movements, the Ghost Dance turned to Pan-Indianism to vanquish the Americans.

Yet while it fought against them, it incorporated many of their spiritual features, for its disciples felt that the superiority of the European Americans must come from their religion, which thus had to be integrated into traditional rituals to strengthen their efficiency. (The major report on the movement was written by James Mooney in 1896.) An American anthropologist, Weston LaBarre, theorized that the emergence of the Ghost Dance Religion was a paradigmatic example of how all religions emerge as a response to crisis and imminent destruction, including the ominous threat of cultural obliteration.

Bernadette Rigal-Cellard

See also Apocalypticism; Indigenous Religions; New Religions; Prophecy; United States of America

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GILGAMESH EPIC

The ancient Mesopotamian Epic of Gilgamesh has earned a preeminent place in world literature because of its universal themes of love, loss, despair, and coming to terms with fate. Its motifs and themes have echoed throughout the early religious traditions of the Middle East. Introduced to the modern world in the late 19th century, the story struck a chord with biblical and classical scholars, who recognized the motifs of a forfeited paradise, initiation by seduction, a catastrophic flood, and the powerful love between heroes, one of whom dies. Along with the Enuma Elish, the Epic of Atrahasis, and other discoveries, the Epic of Gilgamesh excited research into the shared Mesopotamian-Mediterranean religious imagination. Today, the stories are studied as biblical and Greek Ur literature and also as classics in themselves.

The Epic of Gilgamesh is not of one shape, size, and theme in all its manifestations. Related texts

exist in half a dozen languages and adaptations, stemming geographically from Mesopotamia to Anatolia and historically from the 21st to the 7th century BCE. Few scholars believe that the actual exploits of one historical king stand behind these. Sumerian king lists date a King Gilgamesh to 2700 BCE, cult lists deify him by 2500 BCE, and he becomes the subject of song by 2100 BCE. Yet narratives about him reflect a significant evolution of authorial interest, from praise for a superhero (two-thirds god, one-third human) to, ultimately, meditations on human arrogance, love, and certain death. The versions known as Old Babylonian (ca. 1700 BCE) and Standard Akkadian (1300–1200 BCE) are masterpieces in their unique ways, the latter synthesizing the tale of a primeval flood with a despairing hero's vain quest for immortality. Across and also within these stories, Gilgamesh the tragic hero supersedes Gilgamesh the mighty god-king.

The universal appeal of the Standard Akkadian version is tied to its twin themes of love and death. The love between the cohorts Gilgamesh and Enkidu is figured in a variety of ways. They are bride and bridegroom, adoptive brothers, and hybridic adventurers. The themes of love and death unite squarely when Enkidu rages against his imminent demise and the loss of innocence that led to it. The sun god admonishes him: Had Enkidu not left his innocence behind in the wilderness, he would not have known profound love and joy with Gilgamesh. Later, Gilgamesh weeps for the dead Enkidu like a grieving woman and possibly as a spouse. The death of Enkidu impels Gilgamesh to undergo a futile search for immortality. Eventually, the only immortal human—a Noah-like figure named “He Has Found Life”—reports to Gilgamesh the story of the flood and that all humans now are destined to die. Gilgamesh returns home sobered but also wiser. The Standard Akkadian version concludes by offering enduring works of architecture and literature as consolations for death, whereas the Old Babylonian version offers love and family.

Essential parallels are often drawn among the Mesopotamian figures of Gilgamesh and Enkidu, the biblical David and Jonathan, and the Homeric Achilles and Patroklos. The power of all three stories may be gauged by their continued resonance today.

Margo Kitts

See also Ancient Near Eastern Religions; Bible; Myth

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GIRARD, RENÉ (B. 1923)

René Girard is considered by many to be one of the most important theorists of religious violence of his era, though severe scholarly criticism also has been leveled at his theories. His works have played an important role in discussions about religious studies in general. His focus is on ritual and sacrifice and the role that mimetic competition plays in shaping human culture.

Born in 1923 in France, Girard migrated to the United States, where he completed a doctorate in history at Indiana University in 1950, having previously majored in medievalism while in Europe. After a variety of teaching appointments, he settled at Stanford University, where he taught between 1981 and 1995. Although he has published profusely, his books *La Violence et le sacré* (Violence and the Sacred; 1972) and *Le Bouc émissaire* (The Scapegoat; 1982) are the most influential.

In both, Girard's ideas about sacrifice are principally indebted to the writings of Sigmund Freud, especially *Totem und Tabu* (Totem and Taboo; 1913). Freud's ideas on the psychology of violence provide the lens through which Girard begins to examine mimetic desire, the process of scapegoating, and sacrificial crisis, key theoretical ideas that he develops via analysis of literary texts.

Mimetic desire is the cornerstone of Girard's theoretical edifice. Also described as “acquisitive mimesis” or “triangular desire,” it describes a simple situation that most adults have seen around children: One child notices a specific toy that had previously gone unnoticed until then; but when that first child notices the toy and makes an effort to acquire and play with it, the second child notices this and, in turn, is compelled by desire for the exact toy, regardless of what other toys are available. Conflict thereby ensues as they both vie for the same toy. Under the influence of such mimetic desire, adults are just as susceptible as

children, but the consequences are worse because they lead to unsupervised forms of violence and vengeance. This is especially the case when the desire is thwarted by those possessing the same acquisitive interest.

Ritual sacrifice alleviates the tensions of mimetic desire. A key aspect of the ritual is the biblical notion of the “scapegoat,” where the ritual victim assumes the violence that otherwise would have torn apart a community burdened with intense mimetic rivalry. The communal murder of the scapegoat channels violent tendencies into a grand act of controlled violence. The catharsis induced by the sacrifice effectively stabilizes the clan and keeps violence outside its walls. However, under ultra-constrained or competitive conditions, sacrifice can sometimes be arrested. In this suspended state, the channeled catharsis of sacrifice is impeded, yielding a dangerous condition that Girard calls the “sacrificial crisis.” When this crisis arises, the stream of sacrificial violence can no longer maintain its trajectory outside the religious community. When the release of ritual and sacrifice can find no other outlet, violence erupts and strikes wherever it can, targeting even within the community. Potentially, this violence can spin out of control and breed itself in cyclically rejuvenated vengeance. Thus, the disorder and mayhem that issue primarily from mimesis and secondarily from the sacrificial crisis become key elements for understanding the role religion plays as the victim, instigator, and mitigator of violent activity in society.

Scholars in literature and religious studies especially have recognized the groundbreaking implications of Girard’s work and, in particular, the insights that he forcefully forges between religion’s use of violence and the state’s use. His ideas point to religion as the primary custodian of violence, in much the same way as a state aims to monopolize the violence of its constituency. The state, like religion, thus has a stake in minimizing the violence not issued by its own administration, lest it face its own secular sacrificial crisis in the form of revolution, civil war, or coup d’état.

There have been attempts to apply Girard’s theories to real instances of religious violence in contemporary life. A volume on *Violence and the Sacred in the Modern World* (1992), edited by Mark Juergensmeyer, explores Girardian themes related to modern-day instances of religious

terrorism, militancy, and intergroup conflict. Though appreciative of Girard’s approach, some of the authors provide alternative interpretations, including Juergensmeyer, who sees the contest between alternative visions of social order to be a larger driving force than mimetic rivalry in creating the conditions of discord that are, as Girard argues, symbolically diffused through acts of ritualized violence.

Gil Bailie’s *Violence Unveiled* (1995) examines foundational violence and the subtle differences between Freud and Girard. He explains that in Freud’s system, violence is originary. The killing of the father by the sons is the “once and for all” violence that sets the religious wheels in teleological motion. For Girard, violence is not the causal link to religious practice; rather, mimetic desire is. Mimetic desire is the foundation for the killing of the father, which it precedes. Moreover, this violence is not the onetime origin story that Freud presents. Instead, mimesis is a human trait, a common denominator of the species.

Other scholars have connected Girard to the notion of “atonement,” or “satisfaction” theology. This school of thought situates violence within the realm of theology, in effect prescribing violence on theological grounds. Under the sway of such subjectivity, society creates its own modern class of scapegoat, including vagabonds, the homeless, and especially criminals. Increasingly, these ideas gain ground in the area of criminal justice since they articulate the state’s interest in maintaining a permanent category of secular scapegoat to maintain social stability and control. Thus, under Girard’s scheme, those in the criminal justice system might be properly viewed as the sacrificial equivalent of the scapegoat, whose parallel perhaps reaches its full zenith in the practice of capital punishment.

René Girard’s inquiries into the nature of religious violence point to religion as a remedial measure for managing the violence that invariably attends mimetic desire. Violence against the scapegoat is the primary vehicle to accomplish this feat, which simultaneously lessens the potential and proclivity for random, uncontrollable acts of violence. Since Girard holds up as exemplary the Christian narrative of Christ as the God who plays the ultimate role of victim in sacrificing his life, his ideas have sometimes been criticized as having a Christian bias. One of his last books on sacrifice,

however, is dedicated to analyzing the Vedic texts of the ancient Hindu tradition, in which he finds similar themes. Thus, he argues that all religious narratives relating to ritual and sacrifice attest to the mimetic desire that is mitigated by the symbolic representation of violence.

SpearIt

See also Freud, Sigmund; Religion and State; Scapegoating; Violence

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GLOBAL CAPITALISM AND RELIGION

Max Weber provided one definition of the relationship between capitalism and religion in seeing the way religion provides the social values that conduce or are resistant to capitalist practices. But global capitalism raises new questions about the dynamics between the two. In the global era, religions pose alternative views and regulatory norms for dominant economic structures and, in so doing, contribute to the local diversity of capitalist economic structures.

Global capitalism is the prime force that drives other processes of globalization, including cultural

and political globalization. According to Manuel Castells, among others, its main characteristics are a constant flow of money seeking maximum profit; differentiated, global production networks; and flexibility of the workforce. The new types of production and consumption can have serious consequences for society in general and for religious values: greater social insecurity and inequality, seen as a violation of human dignity; forms of inclusion—including neocolonialism—and exclusion of nonprofitable groups that challenge the religious view of humans as social beings and that prompt charity; destruction of divine natural creation through exploitation of natural resources; and decline of the role of the national state, generally seen by religions as protectors of worldly justice. Especially for those religions that have a strong sense of the world as *oikos* (as a place that by divine will is to be inhabited and cultivated), these issues are of concern. We focus below on responses to them from within Christianity and Islam.

Some Christian leaders and activists are very critical of global capitalism. Liberal Christian groups have at times sided with antiglobalists in their critique of global capitalist institutions and were quite successful in a global campaign to fight international debt. The Roman Catholic Church grounds its economic critique in a long tradition of social teaching. Since *Rerum Novarum* (1891), the Church continues to promote the “common good,” subsidiarity in international relations (thus stressing the relative autonomy of national states and regional cultures), and preservation of the earth. Also, in line with the tradition of self-sufficiency of monastic groups, new Catholic initiatives such as Focolare seek to create an alternative economy based on principles of love and justice.

The Islamic world was not greatly affected by the global crisis of capitalism in 2008 to 2009. One reason given for its economic insulation was the difference in spiritual values regarding money. Usury—high interest rates—and forced contributions to charity are believed to alter the economic conditions. At the same time, there are transnational Islamic financial networks that exist in parallel to the capitalist ones. This kind of financial system is increasingly becoming an example for non-Islamic global financial institutions—for

example, European banks seeking to offer halal financial products.

Erik Sengers

See also Ecumenicalism; Islam; Roman Catholicism; Weber, Max

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GLOBAL CITIES

Religious diversity in the world's major cities is, first and foremost, a phenomenon of globalization. The global circulation of people and their cultures forces urban dwellers to encounter different collective identities, often defined by language, race, ethnicity, or religion. Cities have always been places where strangers interact. Members of different faith communities have been sharing the social spaces of modern urban communities for as long as modern societies have existed. The question of how these “cultural strangers” get along—sometimes peacefully and sometimes less so—is key to understanding contemporary urban life and culture.

There are numerous meanings of the term *global city*. One kind of definition fixes the category based on the roles cities play in the worldwide capitalist system. For example, a global city is a location of significant command and control functionality, or a global city is a hub of significant capital flows. Another kind of definition focuses on the global circulation of people. In this view, a

global city is one with a significant immigrant population. The latter type of definition is followed here for contemporary cities, but this was also true historically for imperial cities and their outposts. In discussing religion in global cities, this entry touches on the spatial semiotics of urban neighborhoods in global cities and gives examples from several contemporary cities of how religion shapes global cities.

Religion in Global Cities

The first decade of the 21st century has been a time of rising nativism. In the aftermath of large-scale political violence in global cities—such as the September 11, 2001, attacks on New York and Washington, D.C.; the March 11, 2004, bombings in Madrid; and the July 7, 2005, bombings in London—much of the anti-immigrant sentiment has been directed at Muslim communities, especially in the developed world. The ongoing conflict in the Middle East has fueled this tension as well. Add to this the long history of anti-Semitism and the flashpoints of sectarian violence within many of the world's religious communities, and one can understand the pressure building in multicultural, multiethnic urban neighborhoods.

Among members of world faith traditions, genuine ecumenical moments are fragile, and it is tempting to conclude that the story of religion in global cities is only about conflict. But a view from the ground, of the quotidian rhythms of urban life, suggests otherwise. Everyday circumstances force people to get along in order to achieve their individual goals. Observing intercultural interactions on the B68 bus along Coney Island Avenue in Brooklyn, Jerome Krase, in an interview to Larry Clamage, noted,

There are two different ways to ride the bus.

One is to look out the window of the bus and see the neighborhoods as you go by. Another way is to look inside the bus. You have all these different populations, which are constantly mixing as people get on and off the buses, depending on where you are along the Avenue.

In a sense it's a marvelous thing to see. Because we see Orthodox Jews and we see Muslims. We see Mexicans, people from Pakistan. We see people who might be warring with each

other in some other part of the world—and maybe even the day before they got here—all getting on the same bus. They just kind of understand. They kind of grasp, almost immediately, that this is not the place for that. (<http://www.voanews.com/english/news/a-13-2004-11-23-voa38.html>, accessed June 9, 2011)

This kind of intuition is common in global cities. As Georg Simmel explained, urban life makes people interdependent and forces people to interact, in ways that they might not choose to do so otherwise, as part of the day-to-day rhythms of multilinguistic neighborhoods. Conflict occasionally occurs, but pragmatic cooperation is the norm.

Spatial Semiotics of Urban Neighborhoods

Applying the work of Roman Jakobson, there are three different types of visual markers of collective identity that are commonplace in urban neighborhoods of global cities. Some signs of collective identity are *expressive*—that is, they are intentional enactments of some aspect of a person's identity for the purpose of signaling that identity to those who share it or to others who do not. When Christians wear a crucifix, for example, they enact an expressive sign. Other signs are *conative*; their function is to influence others. For example, in Borough Park, Brooklyn, an Orthodox Jewish neighborhood, some of the signage is written only in Hebrew. The effect is to welcome those who understand Hebrew and to repel others. Finally, *phatic* signs of collective identity are those produced in the normal daily activities of a community that signal aspects of identity. Religious dress, for example, is a phatic sign because the purpose of the practice is to enact the shared culture of the community, to affirm one's membership, or to express piety. Such signs are signals of collective identity to members of both in-groups and out-groups and are familiar to urban dwellers in neighborhoods of global cities around the world.

Examples From Contemporary Global Cities

Perhaps the best way to understand how religion shapes life in global cities is to simply look at

the ways in which people share social space in urban neighborhoods. Ordinary people change the meaning of urban places by changing how such spaces look, through their activities and by their presence. The following are a few examples of spatial semiotics.

Brooklyn

Coney Island Avenue runs south from Prospect Park to Brighton Beach in Brooklyn. A majority of the residents in the census tracts along Coney Island Avenue were born outside the United States, and almost two thirds of the population do not speak English at home. Among the distinct neighborhoods along the 4-mile (1 mile = 1.61 kilometers) commercial street are Caribbean, Hispanic, South Asian, Orthodox Jewish, Russian, and Chinese.

The mosaic pattern of the microsegregation results in specific forms of intercultural interaction. Traveling along the avenue, one sees the Muslim neighborhood, "Little Pakistan," abruptly become an Orthodox Jewish one, and then Russian. Signage in Urdu, Hebrew, and Cyrillic function as both conative and expressive signs. Despite the religious differences (with, e.g., Evangelical Protestant, Catholic, Muslim, Orthodox Jewish, and non-Orthodox Jewish communities), people interact in commercial settings such as corner stores, fast-food restaurants, and the ubiquitous pizza shops.

Cape Town

Religious diversity in Cape Town, as in many places in Africa, is the result of colonialism. The people and places in Cape Town reflect the religious traditions that came to the country since the middle of the 17th century, some of which have been influenced by indigenous practices. The earliest Christians were members of the Dutch Reformed Church, and later, Anglicans, Roman Catholics, Presbyterians, and others added to the mix. Islam also came early to Cape Town with the influx of Muslim political exiles as well as South Asian slaves and alter-indentured servants. Today, Muslim migrants from North Africa have diversified local practices. Figure 1 shows a mosque in a township outside Cape Town.



Figure 1 A Mosque in Cape Town

Source: Photograph by Jerome Krase (2000).

A small number of Jews have lived in Cape Town for centuries, but a significant Jewish community only developed toward the end of the 19th century as they fled pogroms in Eastern Europe. One of the most visually interesting areas of Cape Town is Bo-Kap. It sits on the slopes of Signal Hill in the city center and serves as the center of Cape Malay culture.

Germany

Prosperity is a strong magnet for migrants of all sorts, so it is to be expected that contemporary western and northern European cities increasingly reflect global diversity. Significant proportions of the populations of German cities such as Berlin and Frankfurt am Main today trace their origins to foreign lands, and as a result, the sights and scenes of religious diversity have become commonplace. Muslims, especially from Turkey, and Catholics from Poland and southern Europe add the most to this mix. As elsewhere, religious difference can produce negative reactions. For example, plans for building a large mosque in Cologne announced in 2007 resulted in loud protests, and the opposition

continued even as the cornerstone was laid in 2009. Similar opposition to what are essentially visual aspects of Islam, such as the veil for women, has become a common feature in European politics, as the size of the Muslim population has grown.

Göteborg

Sweden's second largest city has a large immigrant population, about 25%. Iranian, Iraqi, Somali, and other Muslim immigrants are concentrated in Angered Centrum and other suburbs, while Christian immigrants from Scandinavia and southern and eastern Europe are far less segregated and as a consequence are also less noticed. In contrast to the more industrial Swedish city of Malmö, Göteborg has few identifiably "immigrant" neighborhoods or markets, but shops that cater to their needs such as halal meat markets add color to suburban shopping malls.

Lisbon

Portugal is a predominantly Catholic nation, but there are ample signs of the presence of evangelical Protestant worship in Lisbon. Among the many car dealerships and upscale hotels in the Saldanha neighborhood, one can find several storefront churches, such as the Igreja Evangélica Baptista and Igreja de Christo on Rua Filipe Folque. Most of the immigrants in Lisbon are from former Portuguese colonies, and the signage of these Protestant churches is exclusively Portuguese.

Manchester

Britain has not escaped the anti-Muslim sentiment that has been growing in Europe in the past decade. The northwest of England is a stronghold for the British National Party, which has lately pushed an antimosque platform. But political contests do not tell the full story. In the urban neighborhoods of Manchester, for example, the most visible manifestation of "Muslim culture" might be the ubiquitous "Asian food" shops of the Northern Quarter.

Very often, "what Islam looks like" is at odds with commonplace expectations of "what looks like Islam." Figure 2 shows a warm July afternoon in

which hundreds of people gathered in Manchester's Piccadilly Gardens. Members of the local Iranian community took advantage of the crowd-drawing power of the park (and the nearby shopping mall) to stage a prodemocracy protest. The contested election in Iran may have made their connection to the homeland more salient; the protesters had, no doubt, many motives for their participation in the event, but their collective action also functioned as an expressive sign of their ethnic identity that both the English locals and tourists could not help but notice.

New York

The controversy about the building of a Muslim community center two blocks from the site of the World Trade Center (WTC) attack reveals much about the dynamic of intergroup conflict when religious communities are involved. Because the Park51 community center includes a prayer space, and because of its proximity to the WTC site, the controversy has been widely reported as about the "Ground Zero Mosque." In this conflict over public space—though the center is to be built on privately owned, formerly commercial space on Park

Place in lower Manhattan, the debate is about the extent to which the area around the WTC is more than just ordinary urban territory—the visibility of Muslims in the United States is thoroughly politicized. Though many of the participants in the public discussion of the plan to build the community center affirm religious tolerance as an American value, some of the opponents of the center have suggested that Islam is incompatible with American culture. The controversy prompted *Time* magazine to ask on its August 30, 2010, cover, "Is America Islamophobic?"

Paris

Along with ethnicity and class, religion is one of the principal dimensions of collective identity in contemporary Paris. Because of France's colonial history, North African immigration to France has always been a component of French multiculturalism. The earliest wave of migration was by the Jews, and the most common location in Paris for these Tunisian and Algerian Jews was Belleville in the 20th arrondissement. Later came a wave of Maghreb Muslims. But they, too, likely ended up in Belleville.



Figure 2 "Democracy in Iran" Rally in Piccadilly Gardens, Manchester

Source: Photograph by Timothy Shortell (2009).



Figure 3 Jewish Butcher Shop in Belleville, Paris

Source: Photograph by Timothy Shortell (2007).

There are many ways in which individuals and groups demonstrate to observers who pass by to whom a particular piece of territory, at least symbolically, belongs. Prior to World War II, European cities of any consequence contained a Jewish neighborhood. In many of those places today, visual testaments of symbolic Jewish ownership (expressive signs) are likely to be displayed in plaques or other historical sign markers such as the one seen in Figure 3. This is one of the few remaining Jewish businesses along Rue de Belleville. Around the corner on Rue Ramponeau, a bookstore and restaurant are further reminders of the neighborhood's past. Today, these businesses serve the local Muslim residents as well as the Tunisian Jews who live in the neighborhood or return to it to shop.

Although Muslims are generally more visible in the immigrant districts of Paris, one can still observe Orthodox Jews going about their day-to-day lives, walking home from the temple on the Sabbath along Place de la République, for example. In the decades before World War I, more than 20,000 European Jews fleeing persecution came to Paris, settling in the Marais, in what became known as "Pletzl." Today, the Guimard Synagogue on Rue Pavée is a popular public space of the neighborhood.

Rio de Janeiro

"Rio" is a global city whose image is dominated by its Afro-Christian hybrid religious celebration of the "Carnival" and the huge Christ the Redeemer statue overlooking the city. Rio de Janeiro is the center for major petroleum, media, and communications companies in Latin America. More than 11 million people live there, and almost half are Black or multiracial. The Black community is mostly made up of descendants of African slaves and Whites from Portugal, but due to late-19th-century and early-20th-century immigration, one can find communities of Jews, Arabs, Italians, Spaniards, and Germans, as well as indigenous people. Even though most of them are Catholic and the city is noted for Candomblé and Umbanda worshippers, rapid globalization is diversifying the religious tableau, and a significant portion of the population are Protestants, Jehovah's Witnesses, Jews, and Muslims, to name a few.

Rome

Rome is well known as the seat of the Roman Catholic Church. As to religious diversity, Rome's Jewish Ghetto is one of the world's oldest, and the city, as the nation's capital, is also host to

non-Christian residents representing foreign governments, who can be seen in traditional dress in the city's busy center. In recent decades, however, the "Eternal City" has also become home to numerous non-Roman Catholic and non-Christian immigrants. Municipal policies make it difficult for immigrants to establish concentrated areas of settlement, so the most visibly ethnic areas have been near the central station, which offer a "Little Africa," a growing "Chinatown," and a flourishing South Asian and Middle Eastern jewelry trade. Local stores also display culturally appropriate services, provisions, and clothing, but places of worship for Muslims, Buddhists, and Hindus, for example, are not easy to find on the streets. In contrast, Polish, Philippine, Russian, South Asian, and other Christians can be clearly seen frequenting different churches where services are offered in their own languages.

Sarajevo

The history of religious diversity in Sarajevo is both long and troubled. Once it was a model of religious tolerance and coexistence between Jews, Muslims, Roman Catholics, and Eastern Orthodox Catholic residents, which reflected its history as a Balkan crossroads of empires. Sadly, as a result of the Bosnian War (1992–1995) after the breakup of Yugoslavia, the city lost much of its non-Bosniak (Muslim) population, even though many bullet- and bomb-damaged buildings remain, as shown in Figure 4.

Singapore

The Republic of Singapore is an island country at the southern tip of Malaysia and is one of the world's most globalized places. Besides a powerful financial center and busy port, it has long been a country of immigrants. Almost half of its 5 million residents are from China, Malaysia, Philippines, North America, the Middle East, Europe, Australia, and India. This results in a very diverse religious population, including Buddhist (42.5%), Muslim (14.9%), Christian (14.6%), Daoist (8.5%), and Hindu (4%).

Conclusion

The spatial semiotics of vernacular spaces in neighborhoods of global cities reveals some of the ways

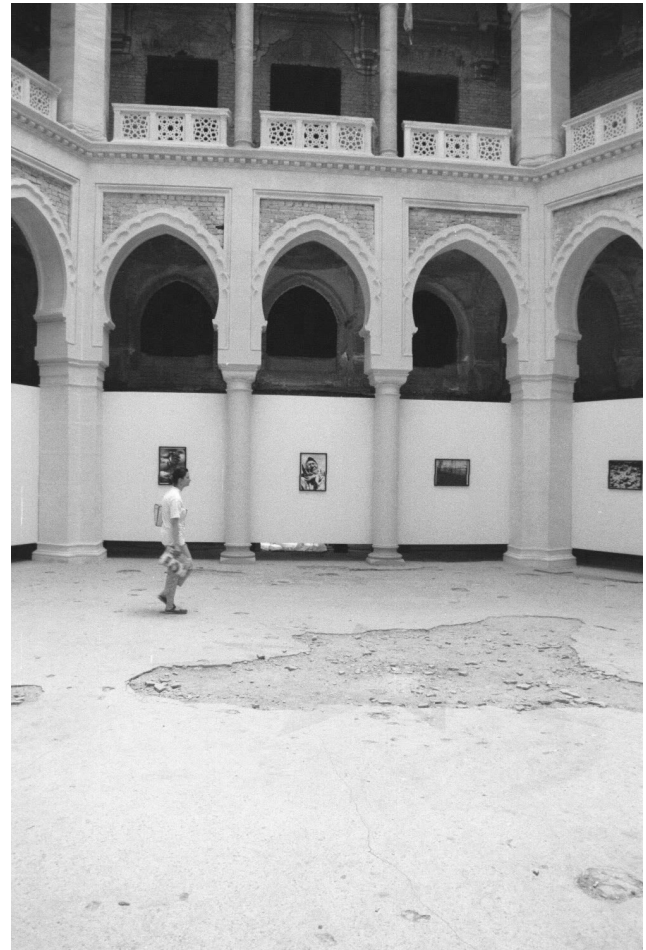


Figure 4 War-Torn Building in Sarajevo

Source: Photograph by Jerome Krase (2005).

in which religion shapes urban life and culture. Much of the appearance of vernacular urban landscapes is determined by signs of collective identity. In global cities around the world, members of different faith communities (who often differ also by race/ethnicity and language) share all kinds of social space in urban public places, such as streets, commercial shops, parks, plazas, and public transportation. The presence of this diversity fundamentally changes the nature of urban living; urban spaces and practices become a hybrid of local and global meanings.

Global cities are often the site of religious intergroup conflict, but though such episodes are regarded as more newsworthy than everyday urban life, sociological examination reveals the many ordinary ways in which members of different faith communities get along to get by. Even in

a time of rising nativism, the neighborhoods of global cities remain multicultural and multireligious, and this diversity has become part of the taken-for-grantedness in contemporary cities that Georg Simmel observed in early-20th-century urban places.

Timothy Shortell and Jerome Krase

See also Africa; Europe; France; Globalization; New York City; Religious Nationalism; Singapore; United States of America

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GLOBAL MIGRATION

The present era is not the first to see great trans-regional migrations; the Roman, Muslim, and Mongol empires all saw large-scale movements of people, as did the 19th and early 20th centuries. In the past 40 years, however, migration has gone global. Large numbers of people now move in all directions, temporarily and

permanently, with sometimes startling religious consequences.

Sociologists have typically understood religion’s role in transnational migration by using the “Ellis Island model”—named after the U.S. immigration station in New York harbor (1892–1954). European immigrants to the United States, the story goes, used religion as a way to adjust to their new surroundings. Swedish and Danish Lutherans, Dutch Calvinists, Scottish Presbyterians, and the like founded ethnic churches in the United States, which gave them a bit of the “old country” in the new. They kept their language and customs while getting used to their new country’s ways. American Catholics similarly formed Irish, Italian, Croatian, Polish, and other national parishes, which offered services and support in their native tongues.

America’s recent wave of immigrants may follow the same path, but with variations. Carolyn Chen, for example, showed how Taiwanese immigrants have become more religious in the United States than they were in their homeland. Various studies of new immigrant groups—among them Kerala Hindus, Mayan and Haitian Catholics, Korean Presbyterians, and Vietnamese Buddhists—show how people “become American” by reshaping their religious heritage to fit America’s congregational norm. Religion aids assimilation but changes as it does so.

Ellis Island is not the only story, however. In an age of swift, cheap travel and instant telecommunications, migrants no longer need to live simply in one place; they can participate fully in religious life in two countries at once. Peggy Levitt’s “transnational villagers” do precisely that, taking part equally in their parishes in Boston and the Dominican Republic. African migrants in Europe and the United States similarly work transnationally, sending missions, resources, and financial support in both directions. In such cases, religions help people maintain a bilocal residence, allowing them to have two “homes” simultaneously.

Nor do today’s migrants always integrate to their new surroundings. They can use religion to isolate themselves from their host countries and from each other. Greg Smith’s studies of East London, for example, show a veritable cacophony of immigrant religious groups, few of which interact. Officially, multicultural Britain, it seems, does not require assimilation to any simple norm.

Still, all this speaks to a particular form of migration: from the developing world to the United States and Europe. Today's migration is more complex. For example, it is not unusual to find an Arab born in France of Egyptian refugee parents, educated in the United States, and now working in Malaysia after stints in Berlin, Dubai, and Hong Kong. Olivier Roy calls such migrants "deterritorialized elites" and argues that religion can become, for them, a primary identity. This is not, to him, the only source of radical Islam, but it is one such source. Transnational Pentecostalism can similarly become a stronger identity than national citizenship for some whose lives carry them, for example, from Nigeria to Brazil and then to Canada, South Africa, and Zaire. Here, religion does not just aid the transition between national identities, it becomes a postnational master identity in its own right.

New patterns of global migration thus have religious consequences, perhaps shifting the balance between religions and the state as sources of meaning and belonging. The process is still in flux; however, it is not yet clear exactly where it will lead.

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See also Globalization; Immigration; Refugees; Translocalization; Transnational

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GLOBAL RELIGION

Religious traditions and communities have always been global. From ancient times, religious beliefs and customs would travel wherever people migrated, from one region to another, settling in disparate locations around the globe. Religious ideas and practices would also travel on their own, passed on from place to place and transmitted far from their communities of origin. The great historian of religion, Wilfred Cantwell Smith, described one such global transmission, the common religious practice of using prayer beads, an idea that spread from meditating Brahmans to chanting Buddhist monks and then to pious Muslims and observant Catholics, who took those transient beads and made them into the rosary, its users unaware of its multireligious global heritage.

Virtually, no part of the world is unaffected by the ideas and cultures of other parts of the planet; and no region consists purely of this religious tradition or that one. The cultural maps with neatly demarcated religious regions are highly deceptive. For instance, though India is largely Hindu—its Indian name, "Hindustan" implies that it is the land of the Hindus—15% of the country is Muslim, and before the 1948 partition of the South Asian subcontinent into the nations of India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, Muslims constituted 25% of the region. Large Muslim communities in supposedly Buddhist China and Orthodox Christian Russia make those two nations among the largest Muslim countries in the world. Even the world's largest Islamic country, Indonesia, is not exclusively Muslim; it houses a Hindu culture in Bali, Christian communities in Malacca and Timor, and an ancient Buddhist temple at Borobudur. Muslim Egypt has an ancient and thriving community of Egyptian Coptic Christians. China's religious identities are so diverse that most scholars choose to describe the religion of China as "Chinese religion" rather than Buddhist, Daoist, or Confucian, even though most of its population simultaneously accept all of these strands of religiosity as part of one syncretic, Chinese mix. Then there are other faiths in China as well. In addition to the large Muslim communities in China, there are also Christian ones and a Chinese Jewish community that dates back to antiquity. The same

situation exists in Korea and Japan, where traditional Korean and Japanese religious traditions are fused with Buddhism and ancient philosophical traditions, and communities of Christians, Muslims, and members of rapidly developing new religious movements exist as islands within these syncretic Korean and Japanese cultures. The religious beliefs in Haiti are both Christian and African; the same population that venerates the saints of Catholicism also sees in them the African gods as interpreted by the local form of Africanized spirituality, Vodou.

The old idea that you could have a map of the religions of the world has dissolved into an image of constant flows and interactions. This was probably always the case. Religious identity throughout history has been more fluid and interactive than static views of religious geography would imply. The case of Christianity is an example. The tradition spread from the Middle East to Europe during the first centuries of the Common Era and then to Asia, Africa, and Latin America during the colonial period, with these regions of the world having the largest percentages of Christians worldwide. And at the end of the Cold War in the last decade of the 20th century, there were missionary expansions of evangelical Protestant Christians into areas of the former Soviet Union. At the same time, religious traditions from around the world were making inroads into Christianity's cultural fortress of Europe and the Americas. The establishment of global communications makes it possible for Caucasian Americans in Los Angeles to adopt Buddhism, for instance, and for Episcopalians in Pennsylvania to practice Hindu yoga. Pacific Island cultures have turned toward the Mormon faith. In the 21st century, almost no region in the world consists solely of members of a single traditional religion.

Religion has always been global religion, in that religious communities and traditions have constantly shifted and interacted over and beyond political and cultural boundaries. Since religious ideas and customs are part of the cultural tradition of communities of people, these ideas and customs move, change, and interact with one another as these communities have migrated around the world. Though most people of faith like to think of their beliefs as anchored in enduring truths, the way those beliefs are expressed change over time, and they are affected by the other cultural traditions with which people come into contact.

In the remainder of this entry, these two forms of global religion—the spread of religious people and religious ideas—will be explored along with one other form of global religion, the new religions that are expressions of globalized, multicultural societies.

Religious Aspects of Migration

Some of the earliest forms of migrant religious communities were unintentional. The term commonly used for a cultural community in dispersion—*diaspora*, meaning to scatter—comes from the experience of ancient Israelites during the Babylonian conquest in the sixth century BCE. Later, the course of Jewish history was transformed with the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem in 70 CE and the subsequent diaspora of Judaism throughout the Mediterranean world and beyond.

The Babylonian captivity produced some of the most moving passages of the Hebrew Bible (the Christian Old Testament). The lamentations, condemnation, and visions of hope during this time enrich the biblical books of the prophets, including especially Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Hosea. The second scattering of the Israelite people occurred in 70 CE, after the fall of the temple in Jerusalem. This was a decisive moment in Jewish history, when the orientation of worship and community life shifted from the centrality of the temple and the priests to teachers (rabbis) and their teaching centers (synagogues), which were thereafter to be found wherever Jews lived. At first, the Jewish people were scattered around the perimeter of the Mediterranean Sea; later, they were relocated in central and northern Europe, Russia, and around the world.

Increasingly, every religion is a religion in diaspora, and virtually no religious tradition is exclusively the province of a single locale. The Sikh community is an example. Though they have traditionally lived almost exclusively in the Punjab region of India, by the end of the 20th century, about half of their total number, around 12 million, lived abroad—a number roughly equal to that of Jews who live outside Israel. During the period of British rule in India, Sikhs were sent on assignment as soldiers to Singapore and Canada. In the early 20th century, they came to California to become farmers. In the mid-20th century, Sikh

professionals and urban workers migrated to the United Kingdom, North America, and destinations around the world. By the 21st century, Sikhs were debating whether it was necessary to keep Punjabi customs in clothing and eating habits in order to be good Sikhs. Indian Hindus have had to face some of the same questions as large Indian populations have settled abroad, constituting the majority of the populations of Mauritius and Fiji and about half of the population of Trinidad.

The Global Transmission of Religious Ideas

In other cases, it is not religious people who have travelled around the globe but their ideas and customs. Some religious traditions are what Max Weber called “religions of universal salvation,” and these adapt easily to every cultural context. Christianity and Buddhism are such religious traditions, and so is Islam, though it often brings its own cultural assumptions with it when its beliefs and practices spread around the world. Judaism is not a “religion of universal salvation,” though in the case of Judaism, it is not so much the ideas that have travelled around the world as the Jewish people themselves, establishing diaspora communities almost everywhere on the planet. Likewise, Hinduism has not been a “universal religion” until the 19th century, when Vedantic ideas spread from the subcontinent to Europe and the United States, and in the 20th century, when new religious movements led by gurus and other popular religious figures transmitted Hindu ideas around the world.

Yet Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam are the primary “religions of universal salvation.” These universal religious traditions, based on transnational teachings, are found everywhere, but they are also rooted in particular historical and geographical locations. For this reason, Buddhists have special regard for the Indian locations of Sārnāth, where the Buddha gave his first sermon, and Bodh Gaya, where he received enlightenment; and Buddhists around the world learn Sanskrit and Pali to master the early Buddhist texts. Muslims from Indonesia to Morocco have a special affinity to the Middle East and especially to the Arabian city of Mecca (Makkah), where the Prophet first received the revelations of the Qur’an, and Muslims around the world diligently study the Arabic

language to understand the verses of that Qur’anic revelation. Christians revere Israel as the “Holy Land,” and Roman Catholic Christians regard the Vatican as their central spiritual location and in earlier times studied Latin to understand the texts, theology, and rituals of the tradition.

For this reason, one can claim that there is a cultural character to each of these universal religions—Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam. Yet despite their sense of homeland and their respect for the languages associated with their traditions, these traditions have a dazzling array of cultural diversity within them. Within Buddhism, for instance, one might say that the Japanese Zen tradition is as austere as the Tibetan Buddhist tradition is excessive, and each is emblematic of the geographic regions from which it emerged. Since the Middle Ages, Christianity has been associated with European culture, and yet since 1970, the majority of the world’s Christians are people who live in Asia, Africa, and South America. Apart from the United States, the largest number of Christians at the end of the 20th century were in Brazil and Mexico, with Russia and China close behind. Islam appears to have more of a unified tradition, yet local religious figures, customs, and saints characterize the great cultural difference between, say, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, and Indonesia.

The Religious Expressions of Transnational Communities

Globalized societies have appeared throughout history, and one might argue that some of the most significant moments in the history of religions have been due to the influence of multicultural communities on the expression of religion. For instance, Christianity as a world religion developed when its teachings were taken out of the provincial context of Israeli Judaism and into the globalized world of the ancient Mediterranean empires, where Christianity’s universal ideas could spread in the fertile fields of a multicultural society. Other religious traditions also flourished in that arena. From Egypt came fertility cults, from Greece came gnosticism, and from Persia came Zoroastrian teachings and the fascinating religion of Mithraism. Probably, the most popular of the new religions of the ancient Mediterranean world, Mithraism’s

emphasis on astrology and personal redemption was enormously appealing to an uprooted mobile society. It was more popular than Christianity at the time, and only the acceptance of Christianity as his own religion by the Emperor Constantine vaulted Christianity into a position of prominence in the Roman Empire. Nonetheless, it is fair to say that all of these religious movements in the ancient Mediterranean world were the new religions of globalization of their day. And the Christianity that emerged triumphant was able to assimilate many of these other cultural influences into its polyglot religious culture, adding to its Jewish heritage the Greek ideas of the separation of body and spirit and the gnostic ideas of powerful words and hidden knowledge. And from Zoroastrianism came concepts of heaven and hell, the sanctity of a sacred book, and the salvific power of a savior god. The eclectic ideas of Christianity appealed to a vast and multicultural constituency in the Mediterranean world and beyond. And it focused on religious practices that were extremely portable: The ritual was boiled down to the simple idea of prayer—a spiritual technology that is sublimely portable—and its priestly hierarchy could go anywhere. They were divorced from social and political locations. This was a powerful presentation for people who were also mobile, displaced from their traditional homelands and at sea from their particular cultural traditions.

In the 20th and 21st centuries, some of the most interesting religious expressions of transnational communities have been in the form of new religious movements. Some of these emerged from traditional cultures and spread around the world. From Japan, for instance, came a host of new religions; some have had a powerful international reach, including Soka Gakkai (known in the United States as Nichiren Shoshu of America). Others have come from elsewhere in Asia, including the Transcendental Meditation movement led by the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi during the last decades of the 20th century and the Unification Church led by Reverend Sun Myung Moon from Korea. Still others have no specific religious tradition as their forebear. The Church of Scientology, for instance, appeals to rootless urban people in part because it presents itself as a modern religious science with no strings tied to traditional religions.

The Study of Global Religion

Though the modern field of religious studies and comparative religion has developed only in the last half of the 20th century, it has had an earlier tradition in philosophical speculation about the universality of religious ideas. It also has roots in religious traditions themselves, as theological reflection within religious traditions tried to make sense of the diversity of religious beliefs and practices and the common stratum of spirituality that was experienced by all persons throughout the world.

Within religious traditions, many theological positions have attempted to locate the teachings of one faith within a family of faiths and to recognize the global location of the religious tradition's teachings. In Islam, for instance, from its very beginnings the Muslim tradition was aware of other religious teachings and held a special respect for those non-Muslims who followed the teachings of the book, the followers of Judaism and Christianity. Within the Qur'an itself, as in many Muslim writings, are references to the customs, teachings, and history of these "peoples of the book." The Muslim line of prophecy, for example, extends back from Prophet Muhammad to Jesus Christ and to most of the leading prophets and figures of the Hebrew Bible (the Old Testament). The prophetic lineage begins with the first human mentioned in the Bible, Adam. In Sikhism, reference in Sikh literature is also made to other religious traditions, and the sacred book of the Sikhs, the Guru Granth Sahib, the Adi Granth, is a composite of poetry by medieval poet-saints, most of whom are said to be Hindu and Muslim.

Judaism and Christianity have also interacted with and sometimes embraced elements from other traditions. In Christianity, not only were the early teachings influenced by the Greeks and Zoroastrians, but also many of the later practices were absorbed from pre-Christian European religious traditions, including the idea of holy men or saints and the festival days of Christmas and Easter (the latter taken from the name of a European fertility goddess).

Christian theology has similarly been aware of its location within the family of faiths, particularly after the European colonial expansion and the awareness of an interactive global economy and society in the 17th and 18th centuries. By the 19th century, the problem of a particular religion in a

sea of universal religiosity was a major issue for theological reflection. In the early 19th century, for instance, Friedrich Schleiermacher startled the theological world by suggesting that an unseen, unnamed universal global religion was truer than the limitations of particular dogmatic confessional faith. About the same time, a Danish theologian, Søren Kierkegaard, presented the idea that a natural religion was part of a deep stratum of culture that was beneath the diversity that appeared among competing religious traditions. A century later, F. S. C. Northrup went further and imagined a “meeting of East and West.” A similar syncretism was foreseen by William Ernest Hocking, who thought that an evolved form of Christianity would interact with other faiths in a new kind of world civilization. Arend van Leeuwen thought that the global secularism of the 20th century was a manifestation of this new civilization and that it was the fulfillment of Christianity’s role in world history. Like Hocking, he expected that Christianity would shed its particularity and embrace a global unity of faiths. Paul Tillich, one of Protestantism’s best known theologians in the 20th century, did not go as far; but one of his last writings was about the encounter with other faiths and the effect that this had on Christianity as well as on global religiosity. The Roman Catholic theologian, Hans Kung, envisioned a global ethics based on the best moral teachings of the world’s religious traditions and thus creating a kind of moral, if not theological, global consensus.

Global aspects also became part of the study of religion in other disciplines. Though the field of theology had largely been relegated to seminaries that were located outside the secular academic institutions of the modern Western world, the study of religion thrived in the field of history and in the social sciences, where the pioneers of sociology—Max Weber, Émile Durkheim, and Karl Marx—all took the global study of religious phenomena seriously and regarded it as essential to understanding the nature of society itself. Marx regarded the criticism of religion to be the beginning of all other forms of social criticism. Many of the studies undertaken by Weber, Durkheim, and Marx were comparative, covering the major religious traditions of which they were aware; other aspects of their work treated the phenomenon of religion as a universal category that played a structurally similar

role in all societies. In these two ways—the study of comparative world religion and of universal religiosity—these early social theorists pioneered the study of global religion.

In the latter half of the 20th century, a new field of religious studies brought the study of religion back into the academy. The methodology of religious studies was explicitly not theological, in that it attempted to be applicable to all religious traditions and to adopt an outsider’s objectivity. Though the objectivity of social studies would later be challenged by scholars who argued that all intellectual perspectives carry with them a distinctive cultural and historical baggage, the attempts of the new field of religious studies to be evenhanded in addressing the world’s religious traditions made it possible for the project of comparative religion to blossom in secular universities.

The approach of comparative religion—putting all religious traditions on an equal footing—became a central project of the field of religious studies. Courses on world religions became the basic introductory course for the field. In the last half of the 20th century, popular interest in world religions thrived. In 1958, a philosopher of religion, Huston Smith, wrote what became the largest selling textbook in the field, *The World’s Religions*. It examined the structural similarities among the traditions and proclaimed the unique features of each. Another popular approach at the time was the one associated with the University of Chicago historian of religion Mircea Eliade, who searched for what he believed to be the essential religion beneath all the religious diversity, an essential character that was revealed in religion’s mythology. Joseph Campbell, a psychologist of religion, saw in all religious mythology enduring archetypes of human identification.

These efforts at comparing religious traditions and searching for essential universal elements in all religious traditions may be regarded as precursors to the study of global religion, though many of their assumptions have been challenged by subsequent scholarship. At the end of the 20th century, the “world religions” approach to teaching religious studies became largely discredited by scholars who observed that the attempt to create a common template of religious experience through which all religions could be compared was a way of

privileging some religions—such as Christianity—over others. The ideas that a religion had to have a founder, a sacred text, and an organization were elements distinctive to Christianity but not necessarily to, say, Hinduism or Confucianism. The approaches of Eliade and Campbell to universal religious themes were criticized as being covertly theological.

At the turn of the 21st century, the very concept of “religion” has been challenged. In an earlier work, Wilfred Cantwell Smith had questioned the utility of the term *religion*, seeing it as a modern invention. Then, scholars such as Talal Asad and Charles Taylor went further in reflecting about the concept and traced the origins of the idea to a pattern of Western thought that was part of an Enlightenment view of public life, one dominated by secular thought devoid of the superstition and intolerance of religion. In this view, the very terms *religion* and *secular* constituted an invented dichotomy in which to understand the ideological perspectives through which one saw the world, leading to a whole pattern of public institutions, ideas, and worldviews that Taylor called “the secular age.”

In what may be described as the postsecular age of the 21st century, the major assumptions of “the secular age” are under assault. On the one hand is the postmodern critique of master historical narratives that privilege the concepts of European and American political and intellectual elites, including the ideas of secularism and religion. On the other hand are the religious political movements of the late 20th and early 21st centuries that frame their opposition to Western secular political institutions in religious terms. In a curious way, however, one could accuse these religious activists of accepting the religion/secular distinction but reversing the order, placing religion as primary in public life rather than privileging secular ways of thinking. A true “postsecular” attitude is one that rejects the dichotomy. It regards all public life to be at least potentially infused with a moral and spiritual sensibility that is characteristic of what has been described as “religion” and regards religion as a stratum of morality and spirituality that is endemic to all forms of personal and public life.

The study of global religion, therefore, is one that attempts to understand not only the diversity of religious traditions over time and space but also the shifting meaning of the idea of religion itself.

The task of understanding global religion in its fluid shape is one that requires a leap of intellectual imagination and an ability to see the world from diverse and changing perspectives. Ultimately, then, the study of global religion requires an intellectual stance that is itself global in its outlook and multicultural in its diversity of worldviews.

Mark Juergensmeyer

See also Africa; Chinese Popular Religion; Christianity; Diaspora; Globalization; Hinduism; Islam; Jainism; Judaism; Mahayana Buddhism; Secularism; Sikhism; Theravada Buddhism; Vajrayana, Tibetan; World Religions; Zoroastrianism (and Parsis)

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GLOBAL SECULARIZATION PARADIGM

The concept of secularization is controversial. Though ideas of secularization dominated sociological studies of religion through the 1960s and 1970s, the meaning of the term broadened to the point where its utility in describing the relationship between religion and society had been compromised and scholars began to criticize it. Criticisms tend to converge on the observable fact that religion has not disappeared; it remains a force in the lives of people and proves its power politically and culturally through revolutions both peaceful and violent.

In 1993, R. Stephen Warner encapsulated these criticisms and described a developing paradigm in the sociological study of religion in the United States. The new approach shifts attention from declining religion to how the supply of and demand for religion vary according to whether and how much governments regulate the religious market and shift attention away from the European experience toward the U.S. experience of religion and society.

In response to this declaration of a new paradigm in the sociology of religion, other scholars pointed to several still fruitful strands of secularization. One of these paths, secularization as differentiation at the institutional level, has mounted the most promising defense of the old paradigm. These scholars point out that the new paradigm à la Warner does little to challenge the classical insight that religion as an institution in society is now one institution among others and that the relative strength of religion as an authoritative institution has declined over time.

Peter Beyer is one of the chief proponents of this approach to secularization, and his work documents how this manifests at a global level as a dilemma for religion. Religion is the only institution whose function is to speak about the whole of reality, while at the same time the language and logic of religion work best within the functional sphere of religion. Thus, the Islamic Revolution in Iran was successful in instituting a religious state structure more aligned with religious principles, but these very principles conflict with a global political institutional system that is highly secular and frowns on sectarian guided government.

Frank Lechner draws on David Martin's general model of secularization to sketch a larger point about globalization. Martin's general theory of secularization posits that the frame through which a society or nation enters the institutional differentiating process has lasting effects for how a society relates to religion. For Lechner, Martin's approach provides a distinctive frame for thinking about globalization: The notion that states enter the modern era with respect to religion and state also has consequences for how a state enters the global era.

Little empirical research has been conducted with respect to these two insights, but together they represent a potential research program for students of religion and globalization. Examining the relationship of religion and society at the global level explodes the focus on either European or North American exceptionalism and expands the classical secularization paradigm into a global era.

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See also Desecularization; Globalization; Modernization; Secularization

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GLOBALIZATION

Globalization is a process whereby the institutions of our daily lives, including religion, are greatly

affected. The term is commonly used to describe the current era. While the term *globalization* is notoriously difficult to define, it can be understood as the confluence of several factors, including communication connections, world economy, and migration. Technological advancements have permitted communication connections that are worldwide, allowing every corner of the globe to interact with one another instantaneously. The world economy, dominated by transnational corporations, has grown and become interconnected, leading to the erosion of national borders and the formation of worldwide markets. Opportunities and demands of the global marketplace have instigated voluntary and involuntary movements of people across borders. While reflecting on these factors, their religious dimensions and the consequences of globalization on religion must also be considered. Indeed, religion and the religious have an integral role in globalization. Religion and globalization can be characterized as having a cause-and-effect relationship. Missionary movements and religious territorial expansions have functioned to instigate globalization. Religions in all forms have become globalized, with technology, communication links, and migration playing a significant role in carrying religion across national borders. Globalization has accelerated both the spread of religion as well as the creation of the religious. While globalization has allowed religions to grow and achieve global status, it has also served as a corrosive agent, causing religions to break down from their traditional forms and localize to the areas in which they exist.

Religion as a Carrier of Globalizing Tendencies

Global religious revival and activism movements have in part heralded globalization, acting as a carrier of globalizing tendencies within the world. Religious missionary movements as well as territorial expansions cultivated the initial modes of globalization. There has been a long historical process, including the history of European and Western propelling of its power around the world, leading to the contemporary age of globalization, and the geographical expansion of Christianity was a crucial part of that historical process. The Christian tradition has become the world's largest

religion, expanding globally to all six continents. Its early historical efforts to create a global network of adherents as well as its missionary outreach have acted as transmitters of globalizing tendencies.

The movements and expansions of other religions have functioned in a similar way. Islam is the second largest and the fastest growing religion as a result of *da'wah* (meaning "invite") efforts, which began with Muhammad. Asian religious leaders have brought the message of their traditions to the West through missionary movements. Along with other factors, this outreach has resulted in Los Angeles now having the largest Buddhist population in the world. Aspects of this historical pattern within religions are widespread. The universal aspirations of religious traditions have resulted in missionaries making significant contributions over time to international, cultural, and commercial exchange.

Globalization of Religion

While religion has partially functioned to promote globalization, globalization has allowed religions to achieve global status. Technological advancements, communication, and migration have triggered the globalization of religion. All religions, including small and new religious movements, are now able to attain expansion beyond national borders and engage in overseas proselytizing activities while fostering new religious developments, including cyber religions, interreligious dialogue, and global peace and social justice movements.

Advanced technology, communication links, and social media have allowed and promoted the free flow of information, permitting religions to achieve global status. Cyber religion has become popular and offers new modes of religious engagement online. For many religions, the use of blogs, Facebook, podcasts, and other cyber pursuits is widespread, and these have become common tools for communication. Thus, on account of technology, religions have reached mass populations who may not have otherwise been accessible.

Globalization has also brought about a strong awareness of religious pluralism, resulting in interreligious dialogue and a collaboration of religions in an effort to work toward social justice. Through interreligious dialogue, traditions have come

together to work toward peace, compare beliefs and spiritual practices, as well as resolve doctrinal debate and conflict. In addition, globalization has enabled the collaboration of religions with the purpose of addressing global social injustice, a task that is argued to need assistance from the resources of all traditions. Because religious social justice and action groups work toward global sociopolitical change, they are a global phenomenon.

Both voluntary and involuntary migration has resulted in the globalizing of religion. Along with populations, their religious systems and spiritual beliefs are crossing national borders. As migrants practice their beliefs in cultural, social, political, and economic transnational arenas, the cultural characteristics of one region are established in another region. Consequently, this process results in practitioners of a particular religion in different geographical locations sharing very similar religious beliefs. Cultural and religious practices are extended across transnational boundaries, and transnational interactions are established and maintained.

Globalization has led to the creation of the metaphorical religious marketplace. Thus, individuals and groups within the global religious community have the option to choose their religious orientation rather than have a specific tradition transmitted to them via family and culture. Within the religious marketplace, religious traditions compete for adherents, and religious practitioners shop for a religion that best fits their needs and beliefs.

While globalization offers positive elements for religion, it also acts as a corrosive agent. Achieving transnational status results in religious traditions adapting to new social contexts and interacting with other cultures. Consequently, a transformation of the religions themselves as well as their cultural environments occurs.

It has been argued that globalization threatens the religious and cultural values of traditions and creates homogeneity. Fundamentalist and extremist social movements have responded with resistance for this reason and have sought to reclaim the authority over sacred tradition. These movements have rebelled against globalization in an effort to return religion to the center stage.

Gina Messina-Dysert

See also Global Capitalism and Religion; Global Cities; Global Migration; Global Religion; Globalization; Glocalization

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GLOBALIZATION AND CONVERSION

The defining characteristic of contemporary globalization is the accelerated circulation of people and ideas across the globe, aided by technology and typified by mass migration from the Southern to the Northern Hemisphere. There is no lack of literature on globalization and transnational religion. Robertson and Chirico's is the earliest theoretical analysis of the link between globalization and religion, in which they point to the increasing eruptions of religious and quasi-religious concerns and themes within societies worldwide. This entry identifies four main dimensions of the contemporary relationship between religion and globalization.

First, religions currently follow *intercontinental immigration networks*, making their presence and recruitment now truly global. This is an important factor in many contemporary religious conflict zones, especially where these conflicts are based on economic and political power imbalances.

Second, the construction of *global religious networks and global religious identities* is accelerated. This is connected to the first dimension, but it goes

beyond that. The global spread of religions implies increased contact between religions and, where allowed by national states, increased interreligious competition for members. This often makes the dialogue between them more complicated.

Third, the increased use of *mass media*—especially television, the Internet, and e-mail—in both religious practice and religious recruitment is noteworthy. Again, this is connected to the first two factors, but it also has a dynamic of its own. Some religions, such as Pentecostalism, prefer to use certain mass media (radio and television), but there is almost always an influence following from this use on the religious organization itself. Its liturgical styles often change, the “health and way” gospel often becomes more important, and the religious organization continuously needs more funds to finance its mass media operations.

Fourth, *political religion* or religious fundamentalism was already on the rise in the 1970s, culminating in the guerrilla insurgency against the Russians in Afghanistan and the Islamic Revolution of Iran in 1979. Political religion was visible during the starting phase of all world religions, but the current pace of globalization has intensified global religious competition and hence global religious conflicts. In some areas, especially the Middle East and South Asia, this tendency has led to armed conflicts that are framed in religious terms.

Globalization and Conversion

Conversion, which is defined as a change in religious worldview and identity, seems to thrive particularly under the influence of the globalization process. The defining characteristic of contemporary globalization is its speed, aided by technology (mass media, computerization) and mass migration from the South to the North. Television and the Internet bring the reality of life in the North much more intensely into the homes of the poorer people in the South, providing an important impetus for migration—no matter how high the costs. This global context provides an excellent breeding ground for religious change. Migrants introduce their religions in other parts of the world. They either hold on to their home religions under new and uncertain circumstances or might be open to experimenting with other religions. Moreover, some religions, such as Pentecostalism, seem particularly made to travel.

The increase in the speed and efficiency of global communication also leads to an increase in conflict. Political, economic, ethnic, and religious struggles are intensified, and often even fueled, by modern mass media and the use of computer technology for purposes of mobilization. Religious competition is now more intense, because most religions nowadays have transnational networks and all use mass media to spread their message. Because the religious perspective is holistic, powerful, and empowering, its adherents are continuously tempted to use religion to solve the many problems they face in their daily lives: in their families, at work, at school, in the neighborhood, in their village or city, in politics, in the society as a whole, in their own religious local or national organization, and finally even in “the collectivity of fellow-believers.” Under certain circumstances, usually for concrete purposes, certain religious or political leaders may find a way to address all believers of the same ilk collectively. By doing this, they provide legitimatization for a worldview that distinguishes primarily between “us and them,” risking conflict on the outside by stimulating cohesion on the inside (Huntington, 1996).

Moreover, geopolitical conflicts that are framed in religious terms—such as President George W. Bush’s war against radical Islamist terrorists—tend to escalate when there are significant power imbalances, cultural differences, economic inequalities, and underlying secondary conflicts (e.g., Israel and the Middle East or U.S. support for corrupt Muslim rulers). What is in essence a political conflict now becomes a religious struggle, allowing President Bush some years ago to use the ill-considered term *crusade* and allowing Muslim terrorists to hijack Islam for their own purposes.

Because religion is such an efficient source for mobilization, it is easily mixed with politics and rarely free from state intervention. Missionaries are subjected to strict state control in most parts of the world. Nations that leave their citizens free to roam the Internet and watch religious programs on television run the risk that many of them will find a new religion that they like. Increased information often leads to increased curiosity. Curiosity, after all, provides an initial stimulus to seek out new alternatives that may lead to conversion. Hence, the contemporary globalization process also stimulates the forces that want to counteract

its effects on national society by putting limits on religious freedom. It is exactly because of the intensifying globalization process that many nations want to curb or even prohibit the activities of (foreign) religious groups and missionaries. Most of the Muslim Middle East, Russia, India, and Indonesia can be mentioned in this respect.

Conclusion

Religious mobility is currently close to zero in the Middle East, low in western Europe and India, somewhat higher in eastern Europe, much higher in the United States, and probably highest in most Latin American countries (especially Brazil and Central America). But what does a high religious turnover mean for the host society?

In cultural anthropology and mission studies typical of the 1950s, conversion was considered an element of cultural change. The supposed transition to modernity in non-Western countries was thought to lead to anomie, instability, and a general feeling of crisis in those cultures. Conversion to a (Western) global religion was seen as a response to that crisis—a solution that was at the same time intellectual, psychological, sociological, cultural, and of course religious.

Culture change not only leads to a rise in conversions, but the process also works vice versa: An increase in conversions has the potential to change local culture. Although Rambo (1993) and Stark and Finke (2000) show that the majority of the target populations generally reject new religious options, many societies and many nations fear religious change in general and conversion in particular. Their main aim is to protect their own long-established religious tradition(s), which are often interwoven with the nation-state. In many parts of the world, religion and culture are intimately connected. In Indonesia, only five religions are officially allowed. In India, Hindu nationalists claim that conversion to Islam or Christianity is equivalent to robbing the nation of its citizens. Similar accusations are directed against people wanting to convert from Orthodox Christianity to any other religion in Russia.

At least until the 1960s, it was also common to hear that to be a Mexican, Argentine, and so on was to be a Catholic—if only a nominal Catholic. This was increasingly challenged with the massive

growth of Pentecostalism since that time. Clearly, under some circumstances, new religious options *can* gain a massive following. In countries with a strong Pentecostal presence (Central America, Brazil, and the Southern Cone), the concept of national identity is changing under the influence of religious change.

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See also Conversion; Global Religion; Globalization; Hinduism; Internet; Islam; Pentecostal Movements; Television

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GLOCALIZATION

Globalization theorists have coined the term *glocalization* to better understand how global economic and social forces affect individuals. This neologism, combining *global* and *local*, shifts the study of globalization to the periphery of transnational organizations. Whereas the idea of globalization connotes an overwhelming, unidirectional, and homogenizing force, in practice globalization rarely is experienced as a compulsion to eat the same foods, wear the same clothes, and sing the same songs. Instead, these theorists assert, one often sees a *mélange* of the global and the local in everyday life. By looking at the ways in which the global and the local interpenetrate, these theorists seek to establish the extent to which individuals have the ability to act when faced with the force of globalization.

The term was first popularized by Roland Robertson, who feels it is absurd to suggest that globalization originates from a particular country or a particular corporation. He obtained the idea of glocalization from the term *dochakuka*, which was popular in Japanese business circles in the 1980s. *Dochakuka*, derived from *dochaku*, or “living on one’s own land,” suggests that one must adapt the principles of farming to one’s immediate situation; among business leaders, this term came to describe the practice of creating products for specific markets. Robertson uses this concept of a global marketing strategy masking itself in local traits to point to an important difference between what is one’s home territory and the sense of the same that one receives in the shadow of the global. Even though one might think of the local as being opposed to the global, he asserts that this is a false dichotomy. A global mind-set creates a particular sense of the local; there is no need to describe certain traits as local if one does not have the sense of

an encroaching globalization. He uses the term *glocal* to mark this local identity that only exists in conjunction with a global awareness.

In spite of this origin, glocalism is sometimes cast as a positive ethic. John Tomlinson, for instance, suggests that in a global society one needs to promote a sort of “ethical glocalism.” The appropriate stance for policy makers or citizens of the world is to understand how their local world is touching the outside world, avoiding ethnocentricity and paternalism, and cultivating the sense that there is no “other” in the world; “we” are all “us.” Others such as Richard Giulianotti and Roland Robertson point to the important process of identity formation as an individual negotiates local traditional and global culture, emphasizing individual agency. Some theorists go so far as to suggest that the “glocal” can be a site of resistance. Embracing the collaborative possibilities between local knowledge and global resources, these thinkers praise hybridity as an appropriate aesthetic for the 21st century.

The idea of glocalization is so ensconced in the transnational business community that it becomes difficult to recuperate it as an ethical position. Businesses have realized that baldly foreign products will not fare well in the markets they wish to exploit; this is readily seen in restaurant marketing, where standardized menus are customized to local dietary restrictions or tastes as an affected concession to customer needs. Television networks like MTV and CNN have epitomized this lesson. Glocalized marketing is recently seen in telecommunications, where it is difficult to identify the global corporation(s) behind companies because of branding and promotional material that seems to firmly root the companies in the country in which they operate. Glocalization is such an integral part of transnational businesses’ best practices that there are theorists who are uncomfortable with the positive spin that others attempt to apply to the term.

George Ritzer invents another term, *grobalization*, to address this tension. Combining *growth* and *globalization*, the grobal is the result of the imperialist imperative of organizations and corporations to expand their scope into new territories. He identifies the grobal as the malevolent force that needs to be resisted, thus admitting the possibility that the glocal can be a positive space for

resistance. He posits that these two forces are in tension in contemporary societies and that one cannot be understood without the other.

There seem to be many examples of how globalization is best characterized by such interpenetration. For instance, one can see consumers responding to global products by customizing them: Global clothing retailers may make their presence felt by dispersing their brands in many markets, but an individual may adapt one of their products, such as denim pants, with embroidery and paint. Popular music is often cited as a force of globalization, but there is no simple domination from a centralized source. Consider rap music: From one perspective, it is a force that spreads the English language, American values, and ready-to-wear fashions around the globe, demolishing traditional values among youth. Yet the hip-hop ethics of sampling, garage production, and micro-marketing support the development of indigenous performers wherever rap music finds an audience.

Christopher Leslie

See also Global Religion; Globalization; Local Religion

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GOD

Exemplary instances of globalization can be captured through a variety of economic, political,

social, and cultural currents. One cultural current in particular that has spanned the entirety of the globe is the notion of God. Perhaps no other figure of worship has reached so extensively into the past of ancient history and geographically throughout all reaches of the world than the idea of God itself. Although there are religions that focus directly on the worship, existence, guidance, or tyranny of God, no tradition could be said to lay exclusive claim to His or Her invention or creation. It is with this notion of theocratic plurality that any religious tradition may hold insight into the concept of God. This entry will discuss references to God, Goddess, gods and goddesses; qualitative and quantitative theistic categories; attributes of God; globalization of God; and concepts of God.

As contentious differences among religious practitioners and academic scholars have had considerable influence over the interpretation of God-figures, the principles of objectivity and cultural consciousness surrounding depictions of God have always had a lesser role. Terms denoting precivilized, premodern, or even non-Western concepts of God, such as “primitive,” “savage,” “tribal,” or “pagan,” have demonstrated this type of politicism involved in a contextualization of God. Given the potential subjectivity of these discourses, there is little consensus over the religious and/or cultural origins of the idea of God.

The plurality of ideas found within globalization fortifies at least an accepted sense of diversity with regard to these interpretations. However, the notion of syncretism among religious beliefs challenges the linear historical models that situate the intersection of ideas about God and globalization as a new and/or emerging phenomenon. In fact, the foundations on which many of the modern religious traditions were built have had a number of transgeographical/transcultural origins. The building of the Etruscan-Roman mythology borrowed from the Greeks; the influence of Zoroastrianism on the Abrahamic traditions; the sects, chasms, and denominationalism emerging from the Judeo-Christian traditions; and the emergence of eclectic new religious movements in the 20th and 21st centuries are all telling examples of the religious integration prior to modern globalization.

Although God may have always been an eclectically devised entity cast throughout a globally

historical and perceptively multidimensional world, the Enlightenment provided a momentum that would establish a footing for burgeoning ideas such as the creation of the nation-state, technological advance, and reasoning that has driven a more intense form of globalization. In an instance of this type of movement, the very etymology of the word *God* and the variety of terms by which God is referred to demonstrate the diverse ways of conceptualizing a God-figure. Despite specific names given to the deities of particular institutions of worship throughout history, the actual term *God* derives from the Proto-Germanic word *guthan*, meaning “to invoke.” While some traditions described God through parables and metaphysical concepts, others transformed God into a carnal living being, even developing hagiographies that support the indoctrination of particular beliefs. Still others understood God as a manifestation of nature and followed God’s teachings to incur similar attributes within the harmony of life. Yet regardless of the ontological characteristics that distinguished these understandings of God, the geographical, social, and cultural conceptions that undergirded God’s existence were the impetus for major wars, stretches of peace, grounds for exploration and conquest, and the establishment of ancient moral codes and ethical strictures.

To view God today within the global community is to peer into the past and trace an amalgamation of historical religious traditions that have shared at least some homogeneous interpretations of God. However, as differences inevitably emerge, no single tradition holds dominion over the notion of God.

Referring to God, Goddess, Gods, and Goddesses

References to God, Goddess, gods, and goddesses are typically differentiated by classical conceptions based on historical developments of the God-figure itself. The referent “God” expressed with a capital “G” is used as a singular noun, a pronoun in place of a more particular reference to a deity, and at times a proper noun. Similarly, “Goddess” refers to the singular feminine noun, a pronoun in place of a more particular reference, and, less frequently, a proper noun or name of a deity. Within an impoverished lexicon, Goddess can also be

substituted by the masculine or unisex pronoun *God*. The terms *gods* and *goddesses* expressed with a lowercase “g” are generally used as plural references to multiple gods, though they can also denote an intentionally ambiguous reference to the notion of God.

Qualitative and Quantitative Theistic Categories

Interpretations of God can be classified according to a variety of quantitative and qualitative categories. There are at least four primary categorical varieties pertaining to the beliefs in God or gods. Quantitative varieties include monotheism, or the belief in and/or worship of a single god, and polytheism, or the belief in and/or worship of several gods. Parallel categories of these quantitative varieties include henotheism, which is the belief in one god combined with the belief in the possibility of other existing gods, and monolatry, which denotes the worship of one god while recognizing the existence of other gods.

A telling example that demonstrates more than one of these quantitative varieties can be found in the early emergence of differing devotional affinities in ancient Israel during the sixth century BCE. The diversity of faiths during that period held a polytheistic scope pertaining to multiple deities. Although the early Israelites were considered monotheists as prescribed by Hebrew scriptures, the presence of polytheism has led some scholars to conclude that these Israelites may have operated under the principles of monolatry or even henotheism.

Among qualitative interpretations of God, there are pantheism and panentheism. Where the former refers to God’s existence as an equivalent entity to the universe itself, the latter refers to the notion of God as equivalent to the universe, yet adds that God is also greater than the universe with regard to time and space.

Animistic traditions of Japan have often been associated with pantheism. The animistic-based religion of Shintoism involves the polytheistic worship of spirits that take on tangible forms in nature, such as rocks and plants. Shintoism demonstrates a pantheistic feature through the worship of several deities as equivalent to a nature-based universe.

Panentheism may be found among many traditions of the Indian subcontinent. Religious doctrines

undergirding the belief in God found within Sikhism—a monotheistic religion geographically surrounded by polytheistic traditions—incorporate an example of a panentheistic concept of God. The Sikh God-figure, Vahiguru, is considered to be larger than the universe itself and is thus of the panentheistic variety.

Attributes of God

Although there are several attributes associated with the conceptions of God, there are at least three that are commonly used across the majority of traditions: omnipresence, omnipotence, and omniscience. As each of these attributes includes the prefix *omni*—a derivative of the Latin term *omnis*, denoting “every”—these terms suggest an expression of an all-encompassing feature of the suffix that follows.

Omnipresence

Omnipresence, or the always present nature of God, may be viewed through several Christian traditions that have adopted the concept of the Trinity. In accordance with the Nicene Creed of the early fourth century, the Trinity expresses the existence of God as constituted through the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Although there may be other symbolic expressions of the omnipresence of God, the Trinity demonstrates how the presence of God is embodied separately and simultaneously among three vital figures that make up the foci of the Christian tradition.

Omnipotence

Omnipotence denotes an all-powerful attribute of God. The Jewish God of the Hebrew scriptures is viewed as an omnipotent figure. In the Book of Exodus, the prophet Moses leads the enslaved Israelites out of Egypt with the assistance of God. According to the text, God is said to have implemented deadly plagues in an attempt to coerce the Pharaoh and the Egyptians to release His people. This show of power over the destiny of man is an example of the omnipotence of God.

Omniscience

Omniscience denotes an all-knowing attribute. Among the 99 terms used for God in Islam, there

are at least 11 names that suggest the omniscience of God, including *Al-Hakam* (“Adjudicator”), *Al-Mujeeb* (“Response Giver”), *Al-Haseeb* (“Thinker”), *Al-Mu'min* (“Affirmer of Truth”), *Al-Bari'* (“Corrector”), *Al-Hakeem* (“Wise”), *Al-Khabeer* (“All-Aware”), *Al-Wajid* (“Perceiver”), *Al-Muqutadir* (“Determiner”), *Ar-Rashid* (“Teacher”), and *Al-Alim* (“Omniscient”). Although the first 10 could be considered attributes of omniscience, the 11th, *Al-Alim*, in particular, is a direct indication of the omniscience of Islam’s God.

Globalization of God

The globalization of God can be most frequently found in the textual similarities between religious traditions and the adoption of religious doctrines by influential rulers. As no religion has grown as vast and large as Christianity, the concept of the Christian God is particularly telling. One reference to the globalization of the Christian God comes from the interpretation of presence and dominion. The biblical story of Jacob’s ladder found in the Book of Genesis tells the story of Jacob’s vision of a ladder to heaven. In the story, the Hebrew God speaks to Jacob and conveys a future inheritance to Jacob’s people, stating his dominion over territories beyond Jacob’s local area. In this way, textual references to God’s jurisdiction demonstrate the way in which a concept of God can expand over a vast portion of a variety of geographic locations.

The history of religious ideas has also shown an inseparable relationship between the talent of humankind in expressing their convictions and the vast migrations of people abroad. The missionary movements of the Christian saint Paul and the translation of the Vulgate by Saint Jerome illustrate the mobility of humankind’s influence over the concept of God. In addition, the early-third-century Roman emperor Constantine’s conversion has also had an enormous impact on the proliferation of a Christian God.

Concepts of God

The concept of God varies over time and space. Even traditions that are said to be associated with each other have held different interpretations of what the concept of God constitutes. Among the Abrahamic traditions, there are monotheistic interpretations of God where, in some instances, a mixture of human

and mortal contributes to an image of the deity (i.e., Christianity). Within many of the Eastern and African traditions, polytheistic interpretations of God draw out several different components of a variety of gods that serve as vast representations of one single God or God-like entity. New religious movements have held eclectic interpretations of their gods, and in some instances, they have de-emphasized a standard model for conceptualizing God. Yet one certainty that is found among all these differing traditions is that each one has had to deal discursively with a concept of God.

Abrahamic Traditions

The concept of God among the Abrahamic traditions may have begun well before the time of Abraham through the creation myths of Sumerians. Though there are obvious distinctions between the pre-Abrahamic traditions and those of ancient Mesopotamia, the similarities between stories suggest a type of cultural and historical continuity that extends to the Abrahamic traditions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

Within Judaism, Hebrew scriptures used the tetragrammaton of *YHVH* for the expression of God. Subsequently, English transliterations of *YHVH* have resulted in names such as “Yahveh,” “Yahweh,” and “Jahveh,” all of which have been used to describe God within Judeo-Christian religions. The God of Judaism is considered an eternal entity bearing no anthropomorphic attributes. For Judaism, God is said to have created the entirety of the earth.

The God of Christianity grows out of the Jewish tradition through a contiguous interpretation of Hebrew scripture connected to the life and death of Jesus of Nazareth. Christians believe in a Trinitarian concept of God whereby the three entities God the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit constitute an all-encompassing Godhead.

In Islam, the Muslim version of God is referred to in Arabic as *Allah*, though the term is also used among all Arabic-speaking members of faiths within the Abrahamic traditions as the name for God. According to Islam, the concept of God is strictly monotheistic and has the attributes of omnipresence, omniscience, and omnipotence over all things. Despite these all-encompassing attributes, the God of Islam cannot be realized as incarnate.

Traditions of the Americas

The pre-European traditions within what is now known as the Americas date back at least as far as the 12th century BCE. For roughly the next 2,700 years, several hundred cultural civilizations, including the Olmec, Chavin, Adena, Mogollon, Inuit, Maya, Inca, and Aztec, would worship thousands of gods through polytheism. A sample of these gods includes the fertility goddess of the Inuit, Akna; the Incan god of rain, Kon; the Aztec god of war, Huitzilopochtli; and the feathered serpent, Quetzalcoatl, found across a variety of Mesoamerican traditions.

After the conquest of the Americas by Europeans, formally beginning in the mid-16th century, practitioners of Mesoamerican traditions assimilated to Christianity or practiced their religions in secret. However, in much more common practices—inclusive of a system of slavery that accompanied European migration—some Mesoamerican traditions underwent a synchronization of religious belief, practice, and conceptualization of the gods. As a result of this synchronization, many religions became infused with new notions of God that reflected myriad African, American, and European traditions. A sample of these new versions of God includes the *Orixá* manifestations of several new world religions; Nana Buruku of Vodou and Candomblé; Olodumare of Candomblé; and Jah or his Ethiopian incarnate, Emperor Haile Selassie I (1892–1975).

Eastern Religions

Within Hindu traditions, there are certainly beliefs about the existence of several different gods—denoting polytheism—yet that does not necessarily preclude the worship of only one god or all gods as an extension of a God. Furthermore, this polytheistic categorization is complicated by early-19th-century Orientalist interpretations of Hindu traditions as the unified religion of “Hinduism.” In contrast to such misleading assumptions, there are complex differences among Hindu gods that extend well beyond Western interpretations of quantitative or qualitative theistic categories. One misconception therein holds that Hindus worship

Vedic gods guided by the textual foundation of the Vedas themselves. However, scholars of Indology have pointed out that the Vedas are not as central to the Hindu system of beliefs as some might presume. Rather, Vedic gods and texts are influential though not central to Hindu beliefs.

For these Hindu traditions, the more commonly recognized interpretations of God would revolve around a three-faced expression of gods known as the *Trimurti*. This *Trimurti* consists of Brahma (the creator), Vishnu (the preserver), and Shiva (the destroyer). From these three expressions comes a variety of avatars and consorts that make up the Hindu pantheon of gods.

Out of these traditions of the Indian subcontinent, the teachings of the fourth-century BCE figure Siddhartha Gautama established the philosophical principles known as Buddhism. Although the general philosophy of Buddhism does not include a concept of God, some traditions have adopted the adoration and worship of the Buddha, and others who have achieved enlightenment, as God.

Within Sikhism, God is known as *Vahiguru*, or “wonderful master/teacher.” As strict monotheists—often a pronounced feature as a distinction from any form of Hinduism—Sikhs may realize the Vahiguru through discipline and practice of their faith, but they do not describe the Vahiguru in mortal terms.

Greco-Roman Traditions

The Greco-Roman traditions embody entire pantheons of gods from religious and mythological contexts. The close relations and adaptations of these figures across Greek and Roman history exponentially increase the number of their gods. In this way, the Greco-Roman traditions have been interpreted within the framework of polytheism. The major categorical pantheons include the primordial gods (Aether, Chaos, Chronos, Erebus, Eros, Gaia, Hemera, Nyx, Ophion, Tartarus, and Uranus); the Titans (Oceanus Tethys, Hyperion, Theia, Coeus, Pheobe, Mnemosyne, Themis, Chronus, and Rhea); and the Olympians (Aphrodite/Venus, Apollo, Ares/Mars, Athena/Minerva, Artemis/Diana, Demeter/Ceres, Hephaestus/Vulcan, Hermes/Mercury, Hestia/Vesta, Poseidon/Neptune, and Zeus/Jupiter).

New Religious Movements

One feature of new religious movements is their tendency to operate in an eclectic fashion that allows for a variety of differentiation with regard to their conceptions of God. Religions such as the International Raëlian Movement, the Unarius Academy of Science, and the Aetherius Society all share beliefs in an assortment of extraterrestrial gods and celestial prophets from a futuristic interpretation of the cosmos.

Christian-oriented new religious movements, including the Jehovah’s Witnesses and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, all share a belief in Jesus Christ as their Savior; however, they differ drastically from the traditional Trinitarian model as well as the hagiography used in support of Christ’s narrative found among mainstream Christian traditions. Members of the Jehovah’s Witnesses reject the Trinity doctrine of Christianity in favor of a more separated model of God, opting instead to believe in Jehovah as their God and Jesus Christ as God’s son. The Mormons also believe in the separation of God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost. In addition, the Mormon’s informal belief that God is married breaks considerably from much of Christ’s hagiography within Christianity.

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See also Atheism; Axial Age; Global Religion; Globalization; Goddess; Myth; Polytheism; World Theology

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GODDESS

The term *goddess* refers to a feminine deity, both as an abstract concept of the divine (analogous to god) and in reference to a particular deity. Goddesses were prominent in ancient religions in many parts of the world and have continued to play an important role in Asian religions, particularly Hinduism. The rise of universal monotheism, as articulated by Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, displaced the worship of goddesses in favor of masculine god images in much of Europe, Africa, and the Americas. However, the rise of feminism has led to a rebirth of goddess religion in the West as well. This entry discusses goddesses in ancient religions and in Asia, Europe, Africa, and the Americas.

Goddesses in Ancient Religions

There are numerous accounts of goddesses in the local religions of ancient cultures, such as the cult of Cybele in ancient Greece, Isis in Egypt, Asherah and Anat in Canaan, Kuan Yin in China, and Prajapati in India. What we know about these goddesses is based partly on literary evidence (e.g., the poems of Homer and Hesiod or inscriptions on Egyptian tombs) and partly on archeological findings (e.g., excavations of temples, pottery, or votive offerings). But the interpretation of this material is difficult, and scholars continue to debate both the meaning of goddesses and their implications for human gender roles.

The apparent prominence of goddesses in various ancient civilizations has led some scholars to propose the theory that the predominance of patriarchal religions was preceded by an earlier, matriarchal age in which goddess worship was universal. This theory has its roots in the 19th- and early-20th-century scholars of myth, who saw goddess

worship as rooted in primitive cultures that perceived motherhood as magical. That argument was first articulated by Johann Jakob Bachofen, whose book *Mutterrecht* (Mother-Right) traced the idea of mythical female power to ancient fertility cults. The theory was further supported by James Frazer, who in *The Golden Bough* compiled mythical examples from various cultures of a goddess and her dying son/male consort. The notion that religion began with female, rather than male, divine imagery was later strengthened by psychologists such as Carl Jung, who wrote extensively about the Great Mother as an archetypal being. In the mid-20th century, these mythical accounts were supplemented by archaeological findings of female figurines in “Old Europe,” Greece, Malta, Egypt, India, and the Near East, which were interpreted by some archeologists as evidence of a universal goddess culture. Perhaps the best known and most controversial work was that of Mariya Gimbutas, whose *The Gods and Goddesses of Ancient Europe* caught the attention of feminist scholars seeking to recover lost or suppressed evidence of female divinity. Feminists postulated that human society began everywhere with goddess religion, whose priestesses fostered a peace-loving, egalitarian culture. That religion was violently suppressed some 4,000 years ago by the rise of warlike, nomadic tribes (the Aryan migration to India and the Israelites in the Near East), who imposed the patriarchal religions that are still with us today.

Other scholars reject this theory. They point out that in most cultures where goddesses were worshipped, they were part of a pantheon of various deities, both male and female, animal and spirit, which does not support the notion of one universal goddess as a kind of counterpoint to patriarchal monotheism. When we do have evidence for worship of a high goddess, it is still not clear what that meant for human women in that culture. For cultures where we have written documents, such as ancient India, Greece, or Rome, it appears that ancient goddesses were revered by both genders and that their cult was sometimes officiated by males and sometimes by females. Ordinary women in these societies, however, often had few rights and were treated as the property of men. In contrast, much of the evidence for a goddess-worshipping matriarchal society comes from preliterate cultures, the interpretation of which is impossible without

conjecture. The determination of the meaning of a female stone figurine, for example, relies heavily on contextual factors, such as where it was found (e.g., in the ruins of a temple or by itself) and the other objects found with it (e.g., weapons or pottery), and these factors are subject to varying interpretations. Modern interpreters risk projecting contemporary readings onto ancient cultures. They assume, for example, that a figure with large breasts must be a mother goddess. But many ancient cultures symbolized the divine in animal form; thus, a stone figure of a human female could refer to a human woman rather than a goddess. We also lack information about the structure of these societies; thus, visual images of female participation in a typically male activity—for example, hunting—does not tell us that women shared equally in power or authority. In short, critics assert that there is insufficient evidence to verify the existence of universal goddess worship or a causal relationship between goddess religion and gender roles.

The wide variety of goddesses may necessitate a diversity of interpretations. Female deities, like male ones, have many different associations, and while it is true that divine imagery is often modeled on human experience, it is not an exact correspondence. Thus, we find many examples of grain goddesses (e.g., Demeter in Greece, Ezina in the Near East) that may reflect a perceived correspondence between female and earth fertility. There are also several goddesses associated with writing and record keeping (e.g., Sarasvati in India, Nissaba in Sumeria) who may have originated in women's duties as managers of the household, which included the storage and administration of goods. But we also find male fertility gods (e.g., Shiva in India) and goddesses associated with warfare and battle (e.g., Ashtar in Accadia, Durga in India), even when textual evidence suggests that women were not involved in military activity.

Divine femininity could have diverse associations even within a single culture. In Mesopotamian religion of the third millennium BCE, for example, we find accounts of creation resulting from the interplay of male (heaven) and female (earth) divine elements and also accounts of one goddess, Nammu (the personification of water), as the progenitor of all subsequent deities. The meaning of a goddess may also change over time. The Sumerian goddess Inanna first appeared in the fourth millennium

BCE as the patron deity of a city; later, she is associated with the morning and evening star (the planet Venus). By the third millennium BCE, she has become the Lady of Heaven, who, unattached to any masculine deity, is depicted as virginal in some hymns, licentious in others. Retaining all of her seemingly contradictory attributes (the youthful goddess of love, the warlike protector of a people), her imagery eventually merges with that of her Semitic counterpart, Ishtar, to become a liminal deity of infinite variety, associated with life and death, love and war, both powerful and dangerous. Similar evolutionary processes in the meaning of goddesses have been documented in other cultures such as that of India.

Goddesses in Asia

Goddesses continue to be significant in various contemporary cultures, particularly in South and East Asia. The most prominent living goddess religion is found in Hindu India, where goddess worship is widespread among both men and women. In Hinduism, as in other polytheistic traditions, we find a multiplicity of goddesses who are revered alongside various gods, often for their association with a particular location (e.g., a village goddess) or realm of human life (e.g., Sarasvati, the goddess of learning and music, who is worshipped by schoolchildren every year). Yet millions of Hindus are devoted to one great goddess, Mahadevi, who can take many forms, perhaps most notably as Kali, the goddess who will destroy a corrupt world so that a new, perfect one can emerge.

The meaning and significance of Hindu goddesses has changed over time. Tracy Pintchman argues that, while references to female divinities can be found as early as the Vedas (texts dated as early as 1500 BCE), the process of elevating the feminine principle to supreme status took several centuries, and it is not until the Puranas (sixth century) that the idea of one supreme goddess is fully articulated. As such, the goddess is understood to be the energizing principle of the universe, Shakti, responsible for both originating and eventually destroying our world. The cult of Mahadevi, however, did not displace the worship of other deities, male or female, or overturn the patriarchal interpretation of religion that has been the norm in much of Brahmanical Hinduism.

In Hindu mythology, the most powerful aspects of god—creation, preservation, and destruction of the universe—are associated with a trinity of masculine gods: Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva, respectively. Goddesses are shown as the wives or consorts of these gods (e.g., Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth and royalty, is the wife of Vishnu; Parvati, a beautiful mother goddess, is the wife of Shiva). Classic philosophers understood Mahadevi as a complement to the functions of the masculine trinity. The divine is the union of opposites, which are symbolized as masculine and feminine. Female divine power, or Shakti, brings forth *prakrti* (the material world) and *maya* (temporary existence), while masculine divinity is associated with *purusha* (spirit) and Brahman (eternal divine consciousness). The feminine divinity is powerful and creative, but it is also dangerous, and unless properly channeled will cause destruction. This view is reflected in law books such as *Manu*, which assert the need to control women's power, especially their sexuality, and require that females always be subordinated to males. It is also seen in popular mythology, where married goddesses are generally depicted as benign, whereas independent female deities such as Kali are described as dangerous and frightening.

Historically, the worship of Hindu goddesses has generally not served to empower women. While India is a secular democracy that, at least on paper, grants women the same rights as men, females continue to struggle with gender discrimination (e.g., the higher rates of female infanticide, illiteracy, and unemployment), which is often legitimated by the patriarchal religion. Thus, some Indian feminists point out that it is hard to fight domestic abuse in a society where the most emulated goddess of the Hindu epics is Sita, the model of a chaste and submissive wife, who remains devoted to her husband no matter how poorly he treats her. There are alternative readings of Sita (as a model of moral fortitude) as well as other goddesses that might present a more modern role model to women. Examples are Draupadi (a goddess in the popular epic *Mahabharata*), whose marriage to the five Pandava brothers has been interpreted as affirming both her sexual and her intellectual needs, and Durga (a warrior goddess), whose image was used in campaign advertising for the late Indian prime minister, Indira Gandhi. And while much of Indian feminism has been secular,

an emergent religious women's movement has led to new interpretations of the Hindu goddesses that can and do serve to empower women, both socially and economically.

Goddess in Europe, Africa, and the Americas

The worship of goddesses in Africa, Europe, and the Americas has been largely displaced by the great monotheistic religions, though it has persisted in popular and native traditions. The local religions of pre-Christian peoples were usually polytheistic and included female deities, and the process of converting them included both force and persuasion and was sometimes welcomed and often resisted. There is evidence that missionaries to European peasants were willing to co-opt some elements of goddess worship. The church tolerated or even encouraged the association of local goddess symbolism with the reverence for women saints (e.g., in Ireland, St. Brigid is venerated at the site of a Celtic goddess), and the cult of Mary has a significant place in the Catholic and Eastern traditions. But Christian leaders made clear that such women were human and thus distinct from god, and the worship of goddesses as such was persecuted as heresy, leading to the execution of hundreds of witches, most of whom were women. Goddesses also persisted in the Americas. Some Native Americans simply combined Christian worship with reverence for goddesses. Inez Talamantez, for example, writes about the Apache goddess Isanaklesh, who continues to play a central role in girls' puberty rites, even among Apache Christians. Other colonized cultures used Christian symbols to disguise their continued worship of ancient tribal goddesses. The religious practices of Haitian Vodou, for example, were created by African slaves who "hid" their deities behind the images of Catholic saints, such that Mary is conflated with a female water spirit of West Africa. Because the spread of Christianity and Islam was closely tied to military conquest and colonization, the revival or maintenance of native goddess traditions may be seen as a form of local empowerment. But as in the case of Hindu goddesses, this does not always serve to empower women. In West Africa, for example, images of the Great Mother were common in the Yoruba religion. Yet, as Mercy Oduyoye writes, the culture was deeply patriarchal even

before the Christianization of Nigeria under British rule.

While goddess worship continues to be rejected by most Christian denominations, the rise of feminism, particularly in Europe and the United States, has led to an explosion of interest in articulating a concept of a feminine divine. Goddess, in the context of feminist theology, refers to a feminine symbol of god and the powers associated with the divine, such as wisdom and goodness. Feminist theologians have pointed out how an exclusively masculine symbolization of god legitimates patriarchal structures, which has harmful effects for both men and women. If god can only be addressed as father or son, for example, not mother or daughter, then god is essentially male. It follows that men are more godlike and thus wiser and morally superior to women. Such arguments—buttressed by scriptural interpretations that blame woman for the fall of mankind and dualistic philosophies that associate man with culture and woman with nature—can and have been used for many centuries to support male authority in the family and society and to deny basic human rights to females. Even when women are granted the same legal rights as men, patriarchal religion continues to restrict females both culturally and psychologically by shaping our very definitions of what it means to be a man or a woman. Thus, various Christian and Jewish theologians have attempted to articulate a concept of goddess analogous to god. Some have sought to ground this understanding in new readings of biblical texts (e.g., by identifying the goddess as divine wisdom); others have argued that even if there never was a goddess in the biblical tradition, we would, as Mary Daly put it, have to invent her. The use of goddess metaphor and language is thus a means to create gender balance and redeem biblical religion from the sins of sexism.

Other religious feminists rejected the biblical tradition in favor of an emergent goddess religion. This movement builds on academic theories of ancient goddess religion and the symbols and rituals of Neo-Paganism to restore an ancient religion that was woman centered, peaceful, and ecological. Goddess feminists appropriate female deities, often rather eclectically, from various religious traditions, asserting that names such as Isis, Astarte, and Diana are merely different labels for the same divine reality. This goddess is often symbolized in

her three aspects of virgin, mother, and crone, which correspond to the seasons of a woman's life as well as those of nature. She is identified with the sanctity of the earth, sexuality, and the body (especially the female body), aspects of our existence that have been denigrated by patriarchal religion. Goddess feminists self-consciously reject the customs of biblical religion; they often eschew texts, rotate leadership, worship outdoors in a moonlit circle, and claim the right to both reconstitute ancient rites and create new rituals. Goddess symbolism has also influenced environmental spirituality (where reverence for the goddess means restoring the planet) as well as some schools of psychology (where goddess ritual and symbolism are a way to affirm the value of female identity and are used as a tool for healing and recovery).

Still other feminists have questioned whether the goddess symbol is necessary or sufficient to liberate and empower women and create a society that values both genders equally. They assert that the goddess movement's reverence for the Great Mother may unwittingly affirm sexism by maintaining gender stereotypes (e.g., by associating the goddess with motherhood and the earth, whereas masculine deities are identified with a much wider range of function, or by asserting that women are peaceful and nurturing while men are aggressive and warlike). They also point out that many goddesses are neither nurturing nor benign and that efforts toward gender equality have progressed far more in secular societies than they have in those that worship goddesses. While it is clear that goddesses have powerful symbolic meaning, the actual impact of that symbol depends on how it is used.

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See also Ancient Near Eastern Religions; Gender; Global Religion; God; Hinduism; Native North American Religion; Neo-Pagan Movement; New Religions in the United States; Vodou; Women's Roles

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GOLDEN RULE

The most common statement of the Golden Rule is probably “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” This moral teaching appears twice in the New Testament. Matthew 7:12 in the New Revised Version of the Bible reads, “In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets.” The reference to “the law” is to the Torah, the first five books of the Jewish scriptures. Luke 6:31 in the New Revised Version reads, “Do to others as you would have them do to you.” Both Gospels attribute this teaching to Jesus.

The Golden Rule urges us to put ourselves in the place of others, to see the world through their eyes, to act on our empathy. It affirms our common humanity.

In this respect, it is not unique to Christian teaching, although other forms of the same moral rule are generally expressed as a prohibition. At the beginning of the first century, Hillel, a leading rabbi in Jerusalem, taught, “What is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow men. This is the entire law: all the rest is commentary” (Talmud, Shabbat 31a). Two centuries earlier, a Chinese compilation of teachings attributed to Confucius asserted, “Surely it is a maxim of loving kindness: Do not unto others that you would not have them do unto you” (Analects 15:23). Similarly, a collection of Buddhist teachings includes the statement, “Hurt not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful” (Udana-Varga 5:18).

The Golden Rule should not be confused with consequential reasoning. It does not say, “To get

others to treat you fairly, you should treat them fairly.” Confucian, Buddhist, Jewish, and Christian teachings affirm what is right and good, not what is expedient. The Golden Rule is not a calculation as to how we may achieve what we want but an affirmation of what we should do and the persons we should be.

The Gospel of Matthew explains that this commandment sums up God’s revelation through Moses and the prophets of ancient Israel. The Gospel of Luke introduces the Golden Rule with the well-known teachings attributed to Jesus: “Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you. . . . If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also” (6:27–29). In the Gospel of Matthew, the same teachings are presented earlier (5:38–40) in what is known as the Sermon on the Mount, which includes the Golden Rule in its conclusion.

Christian teaching not only reaffirms a traditional moral maxim but also transforms it. In the New Testament, the Golden Rule becomes the rule of love:

But love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. (Luke 7:35–36; see also Matthew 5:44–48)

Robert Traer

See also Bible; Christianity; Ethics

GOOGLE

Google is an Internet search company founded in 1998 by Sergey Brin and Larry Page, who met while they were graduate students in computer science at Stanford University. Headquartered in Mountain View, California, Google has become widely recognized as the world’s largest search engine. Operating in more than 150 countries and 100 languages, Google’s mission is to organize the world’s information and make it universally accessible and useful. Through its proprietary PageRank technology, which ranks webpages according to their relevance to any given search query, Google

allows users to find information online at no charge. As the presence of online content related to religion has increased dramatically over the past decade, with millions of webpages devoted to religious content, Google enables users around the globe to find sites relevant to their queries.

Searching the Internet is Google's primary utility, but Google offers users free communication and publication services as well, such as Gmail (Google's e-mail service), Blogger (a weblog publishing tool), and Google Book Search (a project to provide access to digitized print material). Thus, Google assists in both the dissemination and collection of religious content online. The easy accessibility of information online can undermine the authority structures of religions, especially those of new religious movements, which lack the deeper plausibility structures of the more established religions. On the other hand, web publishing tools such as Google's Blogger can assist in the proliferation of religious messages and the construction of religious identities. The Internet's international reach also increases the visibility of religions across the globe and can help sustain transnational diaspora communities.

Google does not always play an assisting role in online communication. Because Google complies with the censorship policies of the countries in which it operates, it sometimes censors religious content. For example, the Chinese government censors content related to the Falun Gong spiritual movement, the Dalai Lama, and other sensitive topics. Google displays a notice to users when content has been filtered, but controversy continues over its role in censoring information. Google has also been the subject of criticism for its advertising policies and for displaying pornography in its search results, although it does provide a default "safe search" to block pornography. Google generates income by serving ads alongside search results, and its policies are regarded as idiosyncratic by some. For example, Google refused to host antiabortion ads from Christian advocacy groups until it faced court action and was forced to revise its position. In general, Google tries to abide by local laws and customs.

"Google" is a deliberate misspelling of *googol*, a term for the number starting with 1 and followed by 100 zeros.

A. R. Bjerke

See also Globalization; Internet; Modernization; Postmodernism

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GOSPEL OF JUDAS

The Gospel of Judas is an early Christian text that was discovered in the late 20th century. Scholars were previously aware of an ancient Gospel of Judas, but no known copy had survived. In his book *Against Heresies* (ca. 180 CE), Bishop Irenaeus of Lyons mentioned a group of Christians who glorified Judas Iscariot, the man who betrayed Jesus to the authorities according to the New Testament. Irenaeus said that these Christians claimed that Judas was the only one who knew the truth of Jesus' message and that they wrote a text called the Gospel of Judas to back up their claims. The recovered Gospel of Judas is believed by many to be the same Gospel as the one mentioned by Irenaeus.

The Gospel of Judas came from the antiquities black market, so the details of its discovery are somewhat unclear. It was found in the 1970s in Middle Egypt near Al Minya, in a fourth-century CE papyrus book that contained three other Christian texts. The texts are described as Gnostic, and the Gospel of Judas is typically assigned to the Sethian school of Gnosticism. The Gospel is a fourth-century copy of an earlier Greek text. It was written in Coptic, a form of Egyptian written with Greek and Demotic characters. The Greek original likely dates to the second century; if this is the same Gospel of Judas as the one mentioned by Irenaeus, then it was certainly written before 180 CE, probably around 150 CE.

Dealers tried for years to sell the book but were unsuccessful until 2000. The Gospel was in such a poor physical condition by this time that it took 5 years for experts to restore it and translate the

text into English. In 2006, the Gospel of Judas was finally released to the public. However, not everyone agreed with the restored text and translation. The many holes in the text leave much of the Gospel unclear and open to speculation, and its unusual contents allow for multiple interpretations. Prominent scholars have produced alternative translations, disagreeing over key words such as *daimon*, which some translate as “spirit” and others as “demon.” There is also a division over the Gospel’s stance toward Judas. One side reads the Gospel as favorable to Judas, saying that it portrays him as the only disciple who truly understands who Jesus is. Judas’s betrayal is seen as obedience to Jesus’ instructions. However, the other side argues that this interpretation relies heavily on Irenaeus’s description and claims that a careful reading of the text shows that it actually vilifies the figure of Judas.

Victoria J. Ballmes

See also Bible; Christianity; Egypt; Gospel of Thomas; Heresy; Jesus

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GOSPEL OF THOMAS

The Gospel of Thomas is an early Christian text with strong parallels to the New Testament Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. However, while the New Testament Gospels contain both sayings of Jesus and narratives of his life, the Gospel of Thomas is simply a collection of 114 sayings, most of which are introduced by the phrase “Jesus said.” Written largely without narrative, the Gospel of Thomas is the only surviving example of one of the oldest forms of Christian

literature, namely, the sayings collection. Its discovery was important for the field of Christian studies because it proved that such a sayings collection was used in early Christian circles. Many scholars had posited for years that an unrecovered sayings Gospel, referred to as Q, was one of the two main sources for the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. The discovery of the Gospel of Thomas, another sayings Gospel, lent credibility to the argument for Q and also helped demonstrate the many forms of early Christianity that existed in the ancient world.

Scholars had long known of the Gospel of Thomas, but the Gospel itself remained lost until the 20th century. In 1945, a copy of the Gospel of Thomas was found in a collection of fourth-century CE texts buried in a fifth-century jar near the city of Nag Hammadi in Egypt. The jar contained 45 texts written in Coptic, a form of the Egyptian language written with Greek and Demotic characters. Many of these documents were early Christian texts with a distinctly Gnostic flavor. Like most of the texts, the Gospel of Thomas was a Coptic copy of an earlier Greek text original written by at least the second century CE, most likely in Syria. The Gospel claims to be written by Didymos Judas Thomas; the first line reads, “These are the secret sayings that the living Jesus spoke and Didymos Judas Thomas wrote.” Both Didymos and Thomas mean “twin,” however, so the document is claiming to be written by Judas “the twin,” possibly referring to Jesus’ brother Judas (mentioned in Mark 6:3 and Matthew 13:55).

Although it is not a true Gnostic text, the wisdom sayings, parables, and prophecies preserved in the Gospel of Thomas place a strong emphasis on knowledge similar to that found in Gnostic literature. According to the Gospel of Thomas, “The Kingdom of the Father” can be found by gaining knowledge (gnosis) of one’s own self through the sayings of Jesus. This emphasis on knowledge rather than faith as the basis of salvation became an integral aspect of Christian Gnostic literature, exemplified in texts such as the Apocryphon of John and the Gospel of Mary.

Victoria J. Ballmes

See also Bible; Christianity; Egypt; Gospel of Judas; Jesus

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GRANADA

Granada, the capital of the southern Spanish province of the same name, is a celebrated city rich in political, cultural, and religious history. Today, its principal religion is Roman Catholicism, but Granada was once the capital of the Nasrids, the last Muslim dynasty to rule in the Iberian Peninsula. Granada was also home to a flourishing Jewish population. During the *convivencia*, or period of coexistence shared by Jews, Christians, and Muslims that lasted between 711 and 1492 in Andalusia (Muslim-ruled Spain and Portugal), it served as a major center of scholarship by accommodating scholars from around the world, including the medieval historian Ibn Khaldūn.

Granada is home to three UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) World Heritage Sites: (1) the Alhambra fortress, (2) the Generalife garden complex, and (3) the currently Muslim-majority Albaicín neighborhood, all of which exemplify the blending of Moorish and Andalusian architectures. The Cathedral of Granada, built over the city's previous Great Mosque, represents the region's transformation from Islamic to Christian governance. Also counted among the city's culturally significant constructions are the cave dwellings located in Granada's hillside Sacromonte district, currently inhabited by a six-century-old Roma population. Crowning the hill is the Abbey of Sacromonte, a pilgrimage destination founded in the early 17th century after the discovery of relics buried at that site, among them plaques describing the martyrdom of San Cecilio, Granada's patron saint and first bishop.

The year 2003 saw the opening of the Mosque of Granada, the city's first new mosque after the passing of more than 500 years since the *reconquista* conducted by the Catholic monarchs Ferdinand and

Isabella in 1492. Built and staffed mostly by converts to Islam, the mosque represents a landmark social advancement for native Spanish Muslims and North African immigrants alike. Francisco Franco, head of state for nearly 40 years during the mid-20th century, banned the practice of religions other than Catholicism, and the nation did not recognize Islam as a legitimate religion until 1989, 14 years after the dictator's death. Today, the Mosque of Granada serves approximately 500 Muslims, many of whom were spiritually curious communists before their conversion in the early post-Franco era.

It is the Alhambra palace-fortress complex, however, that serves as the greatest reminder of Granada's religious history. The architectural icon began as a simple citadel and evolved over the centuries into a conglomerate of palaces commissioned by Muslim kings and ultimately Charles V, the Holy Roman Emperor. Due to the continual additions made to the citadel, there is no apparent logic in the monuments' layout, but the captivating buildings, gardens, and bathhouses, especially the Court of the Lions, manifest the quintessence of Andalusian artistry. The Alhambra remains Granada's primary tourist destination and represents the constant evolution of Muslim-Christian interaction in Spain.

Emily Pollokoff

See also Global Cities; Ibn Khaldūn; Inquisition; Islam; Roman Catholicism; Spain

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GREECE

The southern European country of Greece is a majority Christian Orthodox country, with

approximately 93% of its population belonging to the Greek Orthodox Church (GOC) and Orthodoxy declared as the “prevailing religion” in the Greek constitution. Surveys suggest low levels of church attendance relative to high levels of self-declared religiosity. The country’s religious situation is characterized by a strong relationship between religion and national identity and between church and state (including tensions in the latter), the increasing presence of religious minorities, and fluctuations in the church’s public profile according to changes in church leadership.

A perception of “Greek” and “Orthodox” as coterminous is a historical fixture, not the least from the four-century experience of Ottoman rule, under which non-Muslim subjects were divided into groups according to religion (millets), with the Orthodox millet ruled by ethnically Greek clergy. This conflation of Greek ethnicity with the Orthodox faith was buttressed soon after Greek independence was won in the early 19th century, when the autocephalous GOC was established in a unilateral decision by the state and thus became a symbol of national sovereignty. The religion/national identity link has been cultivated since then by both the church and—when politically expedient—the state.

Close church-state relations are embedded in Greek legislation and practice: The clergy of the GOC are remunerated and pensioned by the state, bishops are given a role in the issuance of licenses for the building of places of worship for minority faiths, the lessons of religion in public schools reflect official Orthodox positions, state holidays are compatible with the religious calendar, the Statutory Charter of the Church is passed by the parliament, and church and state leaders often jointly preside over state functions and national holiday celebrations. All of the above contribute to the strong public presence of religion in the Greek public sphere.

At the same time, Greece is increasingly less homogeneous religiously due to the mass influx of immigrants’ (representing approximately 10% of the total population) since the 1990s. This situation renders somewhat awkward the aforementioned privileges enjoyed by the majority church over the other faith groups. The lack of a functioning mosque in Athens is conspicuous, as are complaints of limitation of religious freedom by minority religious groups (in particular, Jehovah’s Witnesses, who

have won multiple cases against the Greek state in the European Court of Human Rights).

Efforts to limit the privileges of the GOC have led to intense church-state conflict, notably over church property ownership (ongoing since the 1980s) and, more recently, the state’s removal of reference to religious affiliation from national identity cards (in 2000). In such conflicts, the church has tended to mobilize public opinion in its favor and to thus limit politicians’ will to address such issues for fear of losing political support.

The situation was particularly acute during the reign of Archbishop Christodoulos (1998–2008), a vocal and politicized religious leader who frequently invoked the religion/national identity link in his dealings with the state. Archbishop Ieronymos (2008–) distances himself from his predecessor’s populist tactics: He calls for separate church-state roles but close cooperation on matters of joint interest, such as the use of church property for the general good of Greek society. The new archbishop’s election was greeted with enthusiasm, especially by the elite.

Effie Fokas

GREENLAND

Greenland, an island nation in the far North Atlantic region, is the most sparsely populated territory in the world (about 56,000 inhabitants). Globalization has brought Greenland out of geographical isolation through global economy, communication, human mobility, and the media. In recent decades, the indigenous cultural and religious practices have been revitalized to counterbalance the social influence of the Danish culture and language. Up to the present, Greenland has remained largely unaffected by the transnational flows of global migration due to its geographical remoteness and harsh arctic or subarctic climatic conditions.

A typical Greenlandic community is small. Most of the population are ethnic Inuit, and a minority are of Danish (about 12%) or of mixed Danish and Inuit descent. Two thirds of the population are Evangelical Lutherans, the rest are mostly Christian minorities—Catholics, Pentecostals, Jehovah’s Witnesses, and Seventh-Day Adventists.

Several hundreds of Baha'is form the largest non-Christian minority.

The Inuit ("humans" or "people" in Inuit language) are the indigenous inhabitants of Greenland (*Kalaallit Nunaat*). The Inuit tribes started to settle down in the coastal areas of north Greenland as early as 2500 BCE, but they were converted to Christianity only during the 18th century.

Until 1721, when the Danish colonization and Christianization of the Inuit began, the Inuit were living in a hunter-and-gatherer culture. Pre-Christian Greenland Inuit culture included the practice of polygamy, animistic beliefs, and shamans, who acted as mediators between this world and the supernatural world. Christianization undermined the social position of shamans, discouraged the practice of polygamy, but did not interfere with the traditional productive lifestyle (seal hunt).

In the 20th century, the Greenlandic communities experienced rapid modernization. Scattered communities of seal hunters and fishermen living in mostly turf dwellings were turned into an urbanizing postindustrial society with raised living standards and improved health care and education but also dependent on the global market.

Since 1979, when Greenland was granted Home Rule from Denmark, Greenlandic Inuit have been striving for political autonomy and for the revitalization of their distinct cultural heritage. The process of indigenization of Evangelical Lutheranism started already in the 19th century with the emergence of Inuit clergy, bibles, hymns, and religious services. Since 1979, there has also been a revival of some pre-Christian traditions (ice fishing, dogsled races) and beliefs, especially those connected with hunting and fishing. At present, Greenlandic Lutheranism, which still is a part of Denmark's Evangelical Lutheran Church, is planning to become an independent Church of Greenland.

In 2009, the Greenlandic language was elevated to the status of the sole national language. The Danish language ceased to be an official language, which demonstrates the growing self-assertion of the Inuit culture over the Danish. Greenlandic Inuits are linguistically and culturally close to other Inuit communities in Canada (Nunavut), Alaska, and Chukotka in the Russian Federation.

Alar Kilp

See also Denmark; Indigenous Religions

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GRENADA

Grenada, an island nation in the eastern Caribbean archipelago, was discovered by Columbus on his third voyage in 1498 and was colonized by the French and later by the English. After slavery was abolished in 1850, there was a shortage of labor on the plantations, and therefore the British imported a considerable number of indentured laborers from Nigeria, mostly Yoruba speakers from Ilesha. Although they were superficially Christianized, they have kept a number of their original religious traditions until today. In the so-called Shango cult, Yoruba deities (*orishas*) are invoked in a dialect derived from their native African language. The believers are mostly peasants, who construct simple altars or shrines (stools) for their favorite divinities, such as Ogun, Shango, Yemanya, and Oshun, next to their houses, where food and libations are offered almost daily, to receive protection from their guardian spirits. They are implored to provide a good harvest and to prevent people from becoming sick.

From time to time, the believers join together for special rituals. A temporary shrine is constructed, where candles are lit and offerings of food and flowers are deposited. Drummers are invited. The queen of Shango, an old female worshipper or priestess, is in charge of this ceremony. After invoking the deities in prayers, she is induced, by drum rhythms and songs, to dance and eventually is possessed by Shango or any other African deity, who may then be consulted by the faithful, speaking from her mouth. She may also perform a healing rite, as it is believed that the old queens possess a wide knowledge of herbal medicine and magic formulas. Most Shangoists are also members of one or another Christian church at the same time. In many Pentecostal congregations, African rites are considered to be complementary

to Christian rites. The Shango religion in Grenada is less structured than its counterpart in Trinidad, where it is organized by male leaders in the local temples.

Grenada and the neighboring little island of Carriacou are the only places in the Caribbean area where commemorative rites for remote African ancestors, such as Mandingos or Congos, are still performed today. During these rites, called *saracas*, sacrifices of food and libations are offered to the dead. These feasts are usually organized by the members of an extended family, considering themselves to be the descendants of a particular African ethnic group, who arrived as slaves in colonial times, before the free Yoruba laborers. Similar events are also celebrated for thanksgiving after a good harvest or at the occasion of a wedding or a funeral. Sometimes *saracas* are also given when a new house is inaugurated or if the community has a good reason to celebrate. They are known as Big Drum Dances or Nation Dances. Each African ethnic group preserved special drum rhythms and songs. In *saracas*, spirit possession does not occur. Today, Big Drum Dances do not take place very often, due to their high cost. They may now be witnessed only in Carriacou. Shango practices are also less frequent nowadays, as most of the old queens of Shango have died.

Angelina Pollak-Eltz

See also Santería; Trinidad and Tobago; Vodou

GUADELOUPE

Predominantly Catholic, the island nation of Guadeloupe in the eastern Caribbean is a former French Antillean colony that has been considered an overseas department (*département d'outre-mer*) of France since 1946. The island's residents are French citizens with all the rights, privileges, and responsibilities of French nationals, including military duties. Guadeloupeans have stressed that French influences often overpower their African, East Indian, and Amerindian heritage, making their affiliation with France potentially tenuous in the long term. The nation is mostly populated by citizens of African (70%), East Indian (15%),

and European (9%) descent, with approximately 400,000 permanent residents. Religiously, Guadeloupeans today are mostly Roman Catholic, with only 10% of the population practicing Protestant, African, or Hindu forms of worship. In Guadeloupe, Catholic practitioners may also adhere to other available religious traditions, including taking African-derived healing remedies and attending Hindu celebrations.

Guadeloupe is an archipelago that includes the outlying islands of La Désirade, Marie-Galante, and Îles les Saintes, as well as the larger Guadeloupe two-part island Grand-Terre and Basse-Terre, which is separated by the Rivière Salée body of water. From 1963 to 2007, the French Saint Martin and Saint Barthélemy islands were considered *arrondissements* (French subdivisions) of Guadeloupe, but today the islands are considered regionally and departmentally separate. France took control of Guadeloupe in 1635. Within a decade, the French had both suppressed the local Amerindians and established a thriving plantation economy. The French saw Guadeloupe as a New World cash crop resource, transporting thousands of enslaved Africans to the region for sugarcane labor production. Though slavery was abolished in the French colonies during the French Revolution, white planters called *békés* sought to reestablish it, and under Napoleon, slavery was reinstated. After emancipation was reestablished through the 1848 revolution, contracted immigration of predominantly Hindu, East Indian laborers was used to aid in sugarcane production. The island department of France produces bananas, rum, and sugarcane for export and partially relies on tourism for income. At the beginning of the 21st century, a fusion of Afro-Indian, Afro-French, and Afro-Caribbean cultural influences can be seen in food culture, religion, music, art, and dance.

Christi M. Dietrich

See also Caribbean; Diaspora; France; Hinduism; Missions and Missionaries

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GUAM

Guam is the largest island of the Mariana Islands in the Pacific Ocean, which include Saipan and Tinian of World War II fame. It is located roughly 1,500 miles (1 mile = 1.609 kilometers) east of the Philippines. Presently, it is a U.S. territory, and as such there is a substantial U.S. military presence on the island. The United States is one of three foreign powers, along with Spain and, briefly Japan, to occupy Guam. Roman Catholicism is the dominant religion of the indigenous Chamorro population. This is due to nearly 300 years of Spanish contact, missionization, and colonialism. Native-born Protestants make up a small minority, and there are still those who practice the traditional Chamorro religion.

The first European to set foot on the island was the Portuguese explorer Ferdinand Magellan in 1521. The explorer, sailing for Spain, claimed the archipelago for the Spanish Crown. He named the islands the Islands of the Thieves due to his experience with the indigenous population. Magellan's stay was short. After the explorer's departure, European contact was infrequent. It was not until the establishment of the Spanish colony in the Philippine Islands in the 1560s that Spanish ships, primarily galleons, stopped at Guam at regular intervals. Although Spain had long claimed Guam and the other islands, there had been no systematic effort to either convert the indigenous population to Catholicism or establish a permanent colony.

This changed in 1662. Father Diego Luís de San Vitores of the Society of Jesus briefly arrived in Guam while en route to the Philippine Islands. He believed that the indigenous population of the island chain was ripe for conversion. While in the Philippines, he agitated for funds and permission to lead a mission to the islands. After a few setbacks, the Guam mission was authorized by the Queen Regent of Spain, Mariana of Austria. In 1668, Father San Vitores founded the first mission and renamed the Islands of the Thieves as Mariana Islands, in honor of Queen Mariana. Initially,

Father San Vitores's conversion efforts were peaceful, but within a short time war broke out between the Chamorros and the Spanish soldiers sent to protect the missionaries, eventually costing the ambitious priest his life. The Chamorros were eventually subdued by force, and Catholicism was forced on the population. Roman Catholicism maintained a monopoly on religion in the Mariana Islands until the end of Spanish colonial rule in 1898.

With the U.S. victory in the Spanish-American War, Guam became a U.S. territory to be governed by the Department of the Navy. Prior to its surrender, Spain ceded the other islands to Germany. The arrival of U.S. naval rule ushered in a new era of missionary activity. Missionaries attempted to convert the Chamorros from Catholicism to Protestantism. For the most part, they failed. This occurred for two reasons. First, Spanish Catholicism had long been established, and second, the Protestant missionaries were poorly funded. Thus, Catholicism has maintained its dominant position in Guam.

Robert L. Green Jr.

See also Indigenous Religions; Pacific Islands/Oceania; Roman Catholicism; Spain

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GUATEMALA

Guatemala is the largest country in Central America, with 13 million inhabitants. Table 1 shows the main global religions present in Guatemala: Roman Catholics, Protestants, marginal Christians, other world religions, and new religious movements.

Roman Catholicism

The Roman Catholic Church entered with Spanish colonization, establishing the Guatemala diocese in 1534. A shortage of priests curtailed the strength of

Table I Main Global Religions in Guatemala: 1995, 2000, 2004

<i>Main Religion</i>	<i>1995</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>2004</i>
Roman Catholics	8.4 million (84.2%)	9.6 million (84.3%)	57%
Protestants	2.5 million (21.1%)	2.5 million (22%)	30%
Jehovah's Witnesses	33,500 (0.34%)	NA	24,008 (0.19%)
Latter-Day Saints	148,013 (1.41%)	196,707 (1.39%)	200,537 (1.34%)
No religion	157,500 (1.6%)	204,900 (1.8%)	NA
Other world religions:			
Buddhism	1,850	2,000	NA
Judaism	1,000	1,000	NA
Islam	850	910	NA
Transnational new religious movements:			
Spiritualists	22,200 (0.2%)	23,800 (0.2%)	NA
Baha'is	18,000 (0.2%)	20,100 (0.2%)	NA
Chinese religions	3,500	3,700	NA
Other religions	1,900	2,000	NA

Sources: Barrett, Kurian, and Johnson (2001), CID Gallup (2004), and Holland (2002).

the Church for centuries. After independence (1821), Conservative dictators supported the Roman Catholic Church, whereas the Liberals were anticlerical and annexed the Church properties.

The Guatemalan Bishops' Conference

Since the 1940s, Guatemalan bishops supported Catholic Action, a lay movement fighting communism, Protestantism, and Indian religious syncretism. The Bishops' Conference, founded in 1964, was conservative and hardly influenced by the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965). Cruel oppression by military governments in the 1980s made a few bishops sympathetic to Liberation Theology, which proposed an active role for the Church in establishing a just society. The Bishops' Conference played a crucial role in the Peace Accord (1996), ending 36 years of war.

The Catholic Charismatic Renewal

The Catholic Charismatic Renewal (CCR) arrived in Guatemala in the year 1973, stressing a personal relationship with the Holy Spirit and a strict morality. The CCR had 921,300 participants

by 1995, representing the majority of active Catholics. The Bishops' Conference supported the CCR to retain membership.

Mainstream Protestantism

The Liberal dictator Barrios invited U.S. Presbyterian missionaries to Guatemala in 1882. The Central American Mission arrived in 1899, followed by the Quakers (1902), Nazarenes (1904), Adventists (1908), Lutherans (1935), and Baptists (1946). None were successful in converting the Guatemalans.

Pentecostalism and Neo-Pentecostalism

Missionaries from the U.S. Full Gospel Church of God arrived in 1916, followed by the Church of God of Prophecy (1923), Assemblies of God (1937), Foursquare Gospel (1945), and many others. A successful local brand of Pentecostalism was *El Príncipe de Paz* (The Prince of Peace), founded in 1945. Between 1976 and 1986, the Pentecostal denominations increased from 3% to 17% of the population.

Guatemalan Neo-Pentecostalism exploded with the start of *Verbo* (1976), *Fraternidad Cristiana* (1979), *Shaddai* (1983), and *Lluvias de Gracia*

(1984). Verbo and Shaddai enjoyed influence during the reigns of General Ríos Montt (1982–1983) and President Serrano (1991–1993). Brazilian Neo-Pentecostal churches, emphasizing faith healing and prosperity, started using old cinemas in the mid-1990s. The Universal Church of the Kingdom of God and God Is Love attracted many members.

Marginal Christians

The Jehovah's Witnesses arrived in 1920 and had 33,500 members by 1995. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints sent its first missionaries to Guatemala in 1947. Mormons claimed 205,221 members in 2006, but only about one quarter were active.

Other World Religions and Transnational Religious Movements

Other global world religions in Guatemala are Buddhism, Judaism, Hinduism, and Islam. All arrived with immigrants, and none proselytized beyond their own ethnic group.

Since the 1980s, globalization influenced the arrival of transnational new religious movements in Guatemala. These include the Baha'is, the Family, Hare Krishna, and Soka Gakkai. Except for Baha'is, their membership is modest.

Henri Gooren

See also Baha'is; Catholic Charismatic Renewal; Hinduism; Judaism; Liberation Theology; Mahayana Buddhism; Mormons; Pentecostal Movements; Protestant Christianity; Roman Catholicism; Theravada Buddhism; Vajrayana, Tibetan

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GUERNSEY

The Bailiwick of Guernsey is a self-governing British Crown dependency that includes the island of Guernsey, the second largest of the English Channel Islands, along with the smaller islands of Alderney, Sark, Herm, Jethou, Brecqhou, and Lihou; together with the Bailiwick of Jersey, it is the last remnant of the medieval Dukedom of Normandy. The Church of England is the established church in Guernsey; thus, the British monarch is officially the Supreme Governor of the Church, with the Archbishop of Canterbury as the spiritual leader. As a Royal Peculiar, Guernsey is annexed to the Diocese of Winchester, having been formerly part of the Norman/French Diocese of Coutances. The Dean of Guernsey (the head priest over Guernsey parishes) is directly appointed by the Crown and serves as a Commissary for the Bishop of Winchester. The Guernsey Bailiwick and Deanery today cover less than 30 square miles (1 mile = 1.609 kilometers), with a population of approximately 65,000. The Anglican clergy perform a significant percentage of funerals and weddings, but church attendance continues to decline.

The Church of England does not own most of the ecclesiastical buildings in Guernsey, and the taxpayers are responsible for the maintenance of the church and cemetery. Anglican clergy also have civic responsibilities; until 1948, Anglican clergy were automatically members of the States of Deliberation (Guernsey's parliament) and are still ex officio members of the State of Elections. Guernsey has been largely Anglican since the Act of Conformity was applied following the English

Civil War and includes 16 Anglican parishes at present. There is also a significant Methodist presence (12 churches) and a strong Roman Catholic Church as well (3 churches). Other denominations include Baptist, Pentecostal, and Presbyterian churches as well as the Society of Friends. Recently, Guernsey has experienced the influence of the evangelical/nondenominational movement, with the Newfrontiers network setting up the Church on the Rock in Guernsey.

There is also a small but growing non-Christian presence in the Bailiwick, including Muslim, Jewish, and Hindu communities. In 2007, the Guernsey Islamic Charitable Trust became the first Islamic organization to be established on the island. Recently, clergy members have been promoting ecumenism and interfaith dialogue, organizing regular meetings between the clergy as well as community events.

During the German occupation of Guernsey from 1940 to 1945, many islanders, especially Jewish residents and children, left Guernsey never to return. Concentration camps were built on Alderney in 1942, and hundreds died before the camps were closed in 1944. Guernsey changed drastically due to the trauma of the German occupation, and it continues to change as the banking and offshore finance industry attracts newcomers, especially wealthy Britons.

Lauren Horn Griffin

See also Anglicans; United Kingdom

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in West Africa composed of four ecological regions alongside three distinct ethnic groups. The lowlands of Basse-Coté are populated mainly by the Susu ethnic group, composing 20% of the total population, while the Fouta Djallon mountain region is home to the Fula (previously Peul) group, the most ardently Islamic community of the nation and comprising approximately one third of its people. The Maninka (aka Malinké or Maninko) reside in the Sahelian Haute-Guinea northeastern region, making up 33% of the population, and the jungle regions of the southeast have several ethnic groups living together. As the majority religion of the country, Muslims constitute 85% of the population, mainly Sunnī, with Shi'a communities growing. Christians, mostly Roman Catholic, account for approximately 8% of the populace, and while 7% engage in exclusively indigenous religious practices, syncretism is widely evident in the use of amulets as well as kinship and life cycle rituals.

Islam is recorded to have been introduced in Guinea as early as the 17th century, when Muslim immigrants settled in the small city-state of Baté on the banks of the river Milo. It would attract Islamic scholars and traders from across Africa. While Islam did not make significant inroads into the southeastern region, the Fulas created a theocratic Muslim state in Fouta Djallon following the displacement of Susu ancestors in the 18th century. Roman Catholic missions were more successful in the coastal regions, where the Susu had gained dominance in the 17th and 20th centuries through trade with Europeans. Guinea was colonized by the French in the 1890s, and while it participated in the slave trade, it was never a significant contributor.

Guinea gained independence in 1958 under the presidency of Sekou Touré, who blended African institutions with a Marxist agenda and looked to the communist Soviet Union and China for aid while being a leading voice for Pan-Africanism. After the iron-fisted leader began losing popularity in the 1970s, Touré successfully looked to Islamic institutions to legitimate his rule. The cooperation between the nation and Muslim religion continues up to the present, and the imams of the principal mosque in the capital, Conakry, are government employees. There is a system of Islamic education in Guinea for children who cannot attend a government-run school, though despite ongoing

GUINEA

Guinea (formerly French Guinea, also known as Guinea-Conakry) is a small, mostly Muslim country

efforts, Guinea's Ministry of Education has as yet been unable to integrate madrasas into the Franco-Arab education system funded by the government.

With Lansana Conté seizing power after Touré died in 1984, and Moussa Dadis Camara similarly gaining leadership, Guinea's history is riddled with violence and struggle. Conté opened the country to Liberians and Sierra Leoneans in the 1990s, but later found them ready scapegoats for the border town attacks of the early 21st century. Though the European Union, International Monetary Fund, and World Bank have been active under Conté, privatizing utilities and improving infrastructure, Guinea's people remain among the poorest in the world, in spite of their vast mineral resources. The country held its first successful democratic elections in 2010, with Alpha Condé being declared the victor, but continued discontent between ethnic groups fuels continuing fears of Guinea becoming a failed state.

John Soboslai

See also Africa; Indigenous Religions; Islam; Syncretism

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GUINEA-BISSAU

One of the smallest and poorest West African nations, Guinea-Bissau is the only former Portuguese colony without Christianity as its majority religion. The majority of the population practice traditional, indigenous religion, while Islam also has a very strong presence in this country. Some sources assert that Islam has become the majority religion, but a lack of authoritative statistics makes that claim

questionable; what is certain is that Muslim communities have increased dramatically during the end of the 20th century and continue to grow into the 21st century, mostly through the Fulani and Malinké ethnic groups, which constitute approximately 30% of the population. While approximately 50% of the populace engage in traditional religion exclusively, around 45% adhere to Islam (nearly all Sunnī), with roughly 5% of the country belonging to Christian communities, mostly Catholic, with some Protestant groups as well. Christianity is concentrated mostly in the capital of Bissau, whereas Islam reigns especially in the north and northeast of the country, and traditional beliefs dominate in the coastal and central regions.

Ethnic identity has not played a large role in national unity, but tribal attachment is evident in many life cycle rituals that still mark the lives of Guineans (“-Bissau” was added to distinguish the country from its southern neighbor). The indigenous religions practiced by many citizens are largely animist in nature, and reverence for ancestors is ubiquitous throughout Guinea-Bissau. Most households contain shrines to forebears, and villages are likely to have shrines to guardian spirits that are at the center of religious festivals. Spirit possessions during festivals are common, and sacrifices of alcohol, food, and animals are made publicly to avert misfortune. The tenacity of these beliefs can also be seen in the heavy syncretism evident in national varieties of Islam and Christianity.

Following the establishment of the slave trade on the coast of Africa, the Portuguese colonizers exploited tribal tensions by promoting intertribal raids to supply slaves for trade. After the slave trade was abolished, economic and political chaos ensued, fueled by Muslim factions struggling for power and coming into contact with European coastal groups. Islam initially entered Guinea-Bissau likely through the Fulani ethnic group coming out of Guinea—a group that would dominate the countryside for much of the 19th century. The Portuguese were able to wrest control of the area by manipulating schisms in Muslim leadership and aligning with the Fula community under Abdulai Injai. After the alliance had served its purpose, the Portuguese turned on the Fulas and decimated their once partner group. The Portuguese controlled the area as well as the islands of Cape Verde until the 1960s, when challenges coming from African nationalists under Amílcar Cabral

began the road to Guinea-Bissau's independence. That independence came in 1974, and the leaders of the revolution that brought it about are still celebrated and enjoy leadership positions in the 21st century. (Interestingly, it is estimated that in the year 2010 more than half of Guinea-Bissau's population was born after the 1974 revolution.)

Poverty is the greatest problem plaguing Guinea-Bissau at the beginning of the 21st century. Efforts to liberalize the economy have resulted in widening the gap between government officials and citizens, a gap that spans all ethnicities and religions. Ongoing coups have split the allegiance of the military and resulted in growing animosity to the perceived riches of Cape Verdeans, who were almost incorporated into the country. Civil unrest in 2010 has led to more concerns of increased drug trade and corruption. Christian missionaries are still active in the country but with unspectacular results. Christian aid during times of unrest may result in a greater number of adherents, but demographic changes at the time of this writing are mostly in the direction of increasing conversion to Islam.

John Soboslai

See also Africa; Ancestors; Cape Verde; Indigenous Religions; Postcolonialism; Syncretism

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GULEN MOVEMENT

The Gulen movement is an Islamic religious/civic movement begun in Turkey in the 1960s by

Fethullah Gulen, a scholar, preacher, and imam. The movement has spread worldwide to virtually every country. It is one of the many Nur movements that were inspired by the teachings of Said Nursi, an Islamic preacher who taught that Muslims should not reject modernity but engage with it. After being part of Nursi reading circles in his youth, Gulen as an imam in Izmir began preaching the necessity of educating Turkish youth both in the principles of living a faithful Islamic life while being educated in the natural and social sciences and in modern technologies.

In the early 1980s, encouraged by the neoliberal policies of President Ozal, Gulen and his supporters began building Gulen-inspired schools throughout Turkey. These schools follow the state curriculum but are administered by principals and staffed by teachers who are inspired by the Gulen movement. While Islam is not directly taught in these schools, the example of the dedicated teachers, who often tutor children after school and meet with parents to engage them in their children's education, provides a model of dedication inspired by Islamic values. By the mid- to late 1980s, the Gulen-inspired schools were considered among the best in Turkey, and students from these schools began winning the top prizes in international science Olympiads.

The many educational projects that are part of the Gulen movement are financed by trusts established by businessmen who are inspired by the ideas and goals advocated by Gulen in his teachings and writings. In addition, supporters of the movement set up local reading circles, based on people sharing occupational or residential interests, who meet weekly to discuss the Qur'an and the writings of Gulen. The circle participants also support educational projects. The average financial donation given by movement supporters is 10% to 15% of one's annual income.

In addition to the schools, supporters of the Gulen movement have established a large media empire in Turkey (e.g., the *Zaman* newspaper, Samanyolu television, magazines); Asya Bank, the largest Islamic bank in Turkey; Fatih University; the Journalists and Writers Foundation; six private hospitals; and Kimse Yok Mu Solidarity and Aid Association, a relief agency that supports disaster victims worldwide.

In the past two decades, many Gulen-inspired businessmen have expanded their businesses globally,

especially into the countries of the former Soviet Union and into the Balkans. As they become more financially involved in these countries, they see the need for better educational opportunities for the youth there, pledging their own financial resources and soliciting financial assistance from friends and associates in Turkey to build schools and tutoring centers. As former Ottoman provinces, the Balkans and the Central Asian countries were the first countries to which Gulen supporters moved and established Gulen-inspired schools. However, currently, participants of this movement are also found in western Europe, the United States, Australia, South and Southeast Asia, and Africa. The exact number of supporters varies; however, common estimates are that the participants number between 8 and 10 million people worldwide, with approximately 1,000 Gulen-inspired schools existing in more than 100 countries on five continents.

In addition to education, a major goal of the Gulen movement is to promote interfaith and intercultural dialogue. As Turks have migrated to various countries, as businessmen, professionals, and students, they have established local organizations to promote the goals of the movement, especially the promotion of religious and cultural dialogue. The Gulen movement, rooted in moderate Islam and dedicated to education, science, and interfaith dialogue, has become a global religious-civic movement.

Helen Rose Ebaugh

See also Islam; Islamic Modernism; Liberal Islam; Turkey

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GURU NANAK (1469–1539)

Guru Nanak, the founder of the Sikh tradition, was one of several important religious figures in medieval North India. His ideas are seen to have emerged from a creative interaction between indigenous Hindu beliefs and those that came with Islam to the Indian subcontinent beginning in 1000 CE. Unlike other contemporary figures, however, Guru Nanak established a community of followers (Sikhs) whose lives were centered on his spiritual ideals. By the closing decades of the 16th century, the Sikhs created detailed narratives of his life and mission, and it is not hard to reconstruct his life as the community remembers it.

Guru Nanak was born into an educated, land-owning, influential Hindu family that lived in Talwandi (Punjab), a village established by an upper-caste Hindu convert to Islam. At the village temple, Guru Nanak learned about Hindu religious texts, elementary mathematics, and record keeping; at the local mosque, he learned Farsi. He married a woman named Sulakhani at a young age, and eventually they had two sons, Srichand and Lakhmidas. With his family in place, Guru Nanak found employment in Sultanpur, an important city that was situated on the main road that connected Lahore with Delhi. According to accounts of Guru Nanak's life, during those years, his spiritual life reached a level of new vibrancy. At some point during this period, Guru Nanak had a revelatory experience in which he describes having visited the Divine Court (*darbar*) and having been entrusted with the mission of spreading the Divine Word (*nam*).

In this new role, Guru Nanak is remembered as having embarked on an extensive period of travels where he met both ordinary men and women who showered gifts and affection on him and preeminent religious figures who recognized the importance of his mission. In 1521, Guru Nanak witnessed the large-scale violence wrought by the invasion of Babar, the Mughal chief from Central Asia, and subsequently, he halted his period of travel. The Guru acquired a piece of land on the banks of the river Ravi and settled down to start a farming community there, naming his town Kartarpur ("City of the Creator"). Once the community was firmly in place, he

again began his travels and encounters throughout the region.

Guru Nanak's beliefs were centered on the unity of God and the beauty of his creation. According to Guru Nanak, God runs the world along the twin principles of justice (*nian*) and grace (*nadar*). Guru Nanak urged his followers, given the unique opportunity provided by a human life, to live according to the principles of immersion in the Divine Name, charity, personal purity (*nam, dan, ishnan*), and service to humanity (*seva*). Rejecting the rigors of asceticism and renunciation, Guru Nanak believed that liberation was collective, and congregational worship (*sangat*) was the best mode of devotion. This worship was defined by a set of liturgical practices, rituals of initiation, and, most important, the presence of the Guru. While the beliefs and practices of his successors would continue to develop in response to historical circumstances, the core of the tradition is rooted in the original vision of Guru Nanak. With Sikhs currently enjoying the status of being the fifth largest religious community in the world, the success of the experiment of the founder is obvious.

Gurinder Singh Mann

See also India; Sikhism

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GUYANA

Guyana (officially known as the Co-operative Republic of Guyana, as well as British Guiana) is a country located in South America, lying on the continent's northern coast. Unlike other countries in South America, Guyana receives much of its cultural mores from the Caribbean islands influenced

by England and the United States; likewise, it is the sole country on the mainland joined to the British Commonwealth of Nations.

Guyana's two primary religious faiths are Christianity and Hinduism. According to Guyana's census statistics, roughly 57% of the residents are Christian, with the denominations being a mixture of Protestants (Holiness, Presbyterians, Seventh-Day Adventists, Anglicans, Methodists, etc.) and Roman Catholics. In addition, a great proportion of the population practice Hinduism (brought to South America by indentured servants from East India), with roughly 28% believing its precepts. Other faiths include Sunnī Islam, Rastafarianism, and the Baha'i Faith. Four percent of the Guyanese state that they have no religious beliefs. Guyana is highly diverse, with a number of different races and ethnicities calling the country home. Likewise, the diversity of the citizens is visible in the various religious groups scattered about the country.

The Anglican Church is thought to be the largest Christian denomination in Guyana, with one estimate stating that it had roughly 125,000 believers. Roman Catholicism had approximately 94,000 believers during the mid-1980s, with the majority of them living in Georgetown. Although the Roman Catholics were a mixture of all racial and ethnic groups, the Portuguese were the most vocal and outgoing members of the congregation. Guyana's third largest denomination is the Presbyterian Church, which has approximately 40,000 adherents. Other Protestant churches with a substantial membership include the Methodists, Holiness (primarily Pentecostal with the central theme being charismatic services, centered on the gifts [charisms] of the Holy Spirit, e.g., speaking in tongues), and Seventh-Day Adventists, each comprising roughly 20,000 followers.

The influence of Christianity in Guyana's system of ethical principles and mores is due to the outcome of colonial history. When the Europeans moved to the land to plant sugarcane, they brought with them their overseers, their system of justice, and missionaries. With time, if a Guyanese native wanted inclusion within the ruling junta, he had to profess belief in Christianity as well as practice the dictates of the religion. Although Whites felt it useless to teach the Black slaves their religious beliefs, Christianity ultimately spread throughout the

country. After slavery was abolished, Christianity grew to become an inherent part of the lives of the former slaves. When the East Indians arrived (during the late 1830s), they found Guyana strongly aligned with Christianity. It was not until the mid-1900s that the Indo-Guyanese became strong politically; thus, Hindus and their religious principles are now viewed as being equal with those of their Christian counterparts.

Most of the East Indian migrants were Hindu, and their belief system centered on Vaishnavite Hinduism. As is common throughout India, different castes had dissimilar rites and ceremonies. People of the higher castes prayed to the archetypal Hindu gods, Vishnu and Shiva. Today, Vaishnavite

Hinduism is still the principal faith of the Indo-Guyanese.

Cary Stacy Smith and Li-Ching Hung

See also Anglicans; Caribbean; Hinduism; Latin America; New Religions in South America

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HAITI

The Republic of Haiti occupies the western half of the Caribbean island of Hispaniola, which it shares with the Dominican Republic. On the surface, the most popular religion in Haiti is Christianity, though most Haitians also practice forms of the Afro-Caribbean religion known as Vodou. About 80% of Haitians claim to be Roman Catholic, while most of the other 20% claim various forms of Protestantism (10% Baptist, 1% Congregational, 1% Seventh-Day Adventist, 4% Pentecostal/Evangelical). Though Islam was present in Haiti from the start, there has been a recent surge of Islam and Buddhism—sharing about 3% between them—mainly among immigrants in Port-au-Prince. Fleeing Nazi persecution in Germany, Jews came in considerable numbers to Haiti, and recently there has been an influx of Jewish immigrants, now totaling a bit less than 1% of the population.

The common practice of Vodou is Haiti's most distinctive religious tradition. As a result of Hollywood portrayals, the indigenous religion of Vodou enjoys a notorious reputation. To avoid racism and prejudice, Haitians are often evasive about their true religious practices, and thus, the actual number of Vodouists is not known (though it is undoubtedly large). Western popular culture has sensationalized the more dubious ritual elements. However, underlying this accretion of practices such as “voodoo dolls” and zombies is a deeply mysterious and culturally irresistible force

for good in Haitian society. The gods, symbolism, and instruments from central and west Africa are predominant in Vodou.

Vodou survived colonialism by adopting an acceptable Christian facade through a process known as syncretism. Whether this syncretism was simply a survival tactic or a signal of a genuinely new blend of African, native, and European elements, the fact remains that Vodouists comfortably worship Catholic saints and African gods together on the same altar.

Vodou services are held over a period of days and consist of litanies and sacred dances eulogizing and inviting various spirits (*Iwas*) to possess the participants. The fact that much of the ceremony happens at night has contributed to erroneous associations of Vodou with evil and death. Recently, more responsible scholarship and artistry have begun to turn the tide on such hostile impressions, an effort helped by the Constitution of 1987, which guarantees freedom of religion. Ironically, involuntary isolation meant that non-Western beliefs such as Vodou would remain relatively unchallenged, and there has always existed a tension between the state, aspiring elites, and the struggling poor in Haiti. At its worst, this has meant outright persecution of Vodouists, but usually it has meant an uneasy, and unfortunate, silence.

There has also been a recent surge of Pentecostalism/evangelicalism throughout Haiti. Scholars note that the reasons Haitians so readily believe in intercessory Catholic saints and Vodou spirits are the same reasons Pentecostalism is becoming popular. These

churches emphasize material help (Creole *bourad*, or “boost”) in times of need, and in return they demand strict allegiance to doctrine, liturgy, and morality—a fine trade for many poor Haitians. Whereas the state as well as Catholic and mainline churches are perceived as failing to meet the needs of the people, Pentecostal churches, and their mainline and Catholic imitators, are seen as filling the gap—both materially, through charity, and emotionally, through success stories of members who have transformed their lives to rise out of poverty.

The massive 2010 earthquake that struck the capital of Port-au-Prince was a transformative experience for Haitian society. It destroyed many churches and religious institutions in addition to displacing some 3 million people and taking hundreds of thousands of lives. The involvement of international relief agencies—many of them religious—has brought interfaith cooperation and global attention to the Haitian community.

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See also Latin America; Vodou

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HAJJ

The hajj is one of the largest annual religious gatherings in the world today. Known also as the fifth “pillar” (*rukṅ*) of Islam, it is a pilgrimage that all Muslims are required to undertake—to travel to the holy city of Mecca (Makkah) in western Saudi Arabia (a region known as the Hijaz) at least once in their lifetime if they are able to do so. The journey can be accomplished only between the 8th and 13th days of Dhu al-Hijja,

the 12th month of the Muslim lunar calendar. During this time, all the pilgrims, known as hajjis (or *ḥujaj*), must purify themselves, abstain from certain ordinary bodily practices, and don special pilgrimage garments (*iḥrām*). Then they perform a sequence of ritual actions at several stations between the Sacred Mosque (*al-Masjid al-Haram*) in Mecca and the plain of Arafat, about 13 miles (1 mile = 1.609344 kilometers) east of the Sacred Mosque. These rituals include seven circumambulations around the Kaabah (a cubic building in the central court of the Sacred Mosque), seven “runnings” between the hills of Safa and Marwa next to the Sacred Mosque, an encampment at Mina (between Mecca and Arafat), midday assemblage and prayer at Arafat on the 8th day of Dhu al-Hijja, an encampment that night at Muzdalifa (near Arafat), a return to Mina to throw stones at three pillars representing the devil and to perform animal sacrifices, and farewell circumambulations at the Kaa’bah. The sacrifice is celebrated worldwide by Muslims as the Great Feast (*al-’īd al-kabīr*) or the Feast of Sacrifice (*’īd al-aḍḥā*). A lesser pilgrimage known as the *’umra* occurs throughout the year; it includes only the rites of *iḥrām*, circumambulation of the Kaabah, and the runnings between Safa and Marwa. This does not, however, satisfy the hajj requirement. Both pilgrimages, the hajj and the *’umra*, draw millions of Muslims from around the world but are forbidden to non-Muslims, who are permanently banned from entering Mecca. Pilgrims customarily also include a visit to Muhammad’s mosque in Medina, the second most holy city in Islam, on their way to or from Mecca. This is a supererogatory act of devotion and is not required.

The hajj requirement and the spatiotemporal ritual multiplex it entails are based on the Qur’an and Sunna. Muhammad’s farewell pilgrimage of 632 serves as the paradigm for all Muslims to emulate, but Islamic tradition also invokes other exemplary figures known from Islamic sacred history: Adam, Ibrahim (Abraham), and Ibrahim’s wife and son, Hagar and Ismail (Ishmael), respectively. The narratives about the involvement of such figures clearly suggest that the hajj was understood as a universal duty for humankind at an early stage in Islam’s history, not just an obligation restricted to Arabs living in and around

Mecca. Specific details and issues pertaining to the performance of the hajj were taken up for discussion by the ulema (Muslim scholars and jurists), starting in the late seventh century, leading to the eventual composition of instructional manuals and handbooks for pilgrims going to Mecca. Today, hajj manuals and instructions are available in multiple languages around the world via the print media, videos, CDs, and the Internet. Pilgrims must nevertheless rely on an array of guides and government agencies to complete the requirement successfully. In addition to fulfilling the hajj as a divinely sanctioned religious duty (*farḍ*), many Muslims believe that it is a penitential act, wherein sins are forgiven, as well as an expression of the values of equality and unity. Also, it is often stated that the gathering of pilgrims at Arafat in their simple white garments is a preview for the final Resurrection and Day of Judgment.

For many centuries, participation could be taken up by only a select portion of the Muslim population. The journey could take months, and numerous dangers had to be overcome—both natural and man-made. Caravans had to be conducted under armed escort to guard against attacks by Bedouin raiders. Disease, famine, warfare, storms, and drought were other hazards that might be faced. Muslim rulers were obliged to patronize the pilgrimage, ensure the well-being and safety of the pilgrims, and maintain the holy sites in Mecca. This was especially so for those who claimed control of the holy cities in the Hijaz. Prior to the creation of Saudi Arabia, Ottoman authorities in Istanbul, Damascus, and Cairo assumed primary responsibility for the hajj between 1517 and 1923. They usually worked in cooperation with local dynastic rulers in the Hijaz, known as the Sharifs.

Pilgrims came from all parts of the Middle East and in lesser numbers from Africa, central Asia, South Asia, and Southeast Asia. Statistics for hajj participation are inexact for the Ottoman period and earlier, but available records indicate that the number of pilgrims varied between 83,000 and 202,000 in the 19th century. The introduction of modern mechanized transport, such as steamships, railroads, automobiles, and, more recently, airplanes, have contributed significantly to the increase in the numbers of pilgrims. Extensive

European colonial involvement in Muslim lands, together with the two world wars, curtailed participation rates during the first half of the 20th century, but they began to increase significantly in the 1950s with peace and national independence. Indeed, it is estimated that 2.5 million Muslims now go to Mecca for the hajj annually, with most coming from nearby Arab countries (led by Egypt, Yemen, Algeria, Iraq, Libya, and Jordan). Nonetheless, hajj participation has become more globalized than ever before, with large numbers coming from Iran, Pakistan, Turkey, Indonesia, India, Nigeria, Malaysia, and Bangladesh.

To accommodate the increased regional and global demand for access to its holy sites, the government of Saudi Arabia spent more than \$100 billion between the 1950s and the 1990s to modernize and expand the pilgrimage facilities. Additional steps have been taken recently to redesign and further modernize Mecca's pilgrimage landscape to accommodate even more pilgrims. Since 1988, the Saudis have also worked with other Muslim-majority countries through the Organization of the Islamic Conference to institute a quota system—allowing 1,000 pilgrims per million Muslims in the country of origin. This situation is not satisfactory to all parties, and often the quotas have to be renegotiated to allow for special circumstances. While the quota system affirms Saudi control of the holy sites and pilgrim traffic within their borders, it also opens the way for the involvement of other Muslim-majority countries, where hajj politics has important domestic as well as international implications.

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See also Islam; Mecca; Ottoman Empire; Pilgrimage; Sacred Places; Saudi Arabia

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HALAKHA AND SHARI'A

Halakha is the body of Jewish religious law. It comprises biblical laws found in the Hebrew Bible, Talmudic law, and post-Talmudic religious legalistic texts, as well as in traditions and customs that have developed throughout centuries of Jewish practice and as a result of scholarly deliberations. The word *Halakha* is derived from the Hebrew word for "walk" or "go," and so it refers not only strictly to law but also to the way Jewish persons should live their lives and the path on which they should journey. Although later distinctions were made between the more particular ritual laws (known as *hukkim*) and the more universal ethical/moral laws (called *mishpatim*), the Torah itself makes no such division; both are of equivalent importance within Israelite society. From a global standpoint, it is significant to note that unlike other religious codes of law, such as the Muslim Shari'a, Halakha also contains many basic principles that apply to people of all faiths. In that sense, Jews perceive Halakha as a global system of religious law, particularly as it relates to ethical practices and monotheistic belief. The seven Noahide laws, basic ethical principles and practices that are incumbent on Gentiles from a Jewish point of view, are such an example.

The earliest contribution to Halakha comes from the five books of Moses, known as the Torah, where according to tradition, all or nearly all of the 613 foundational commandments (known as *mitzvot*) can be found. Subsequent to the Torah is the next major work of Halakha—the Talmud, a 26-volume compilation of laws and customs developed by rabbinic scholars after the canonization of Torah and encompassing discussions from approximately the second century BCE to the seventh century CE. Following the Talmud, social and technological advances within Jewish

life gave rise to new interpretations and codifications of Jewish law, which were collected in later religious texts, such as the *Mishneh Torah*, authored by the great philosopher and jurist Moses Maimonides in the 12th century, and the *Shulchan Aruch*, written by the mystic and jurist Rabbi Yosef Caro in the 16th century.

Since more than 2,000 years of Jewish life have taken place while in exile from the Jewish homeland of Israel, the preponderance of Halakha naturally relates to life in the diaspora. Whereas in premodern times, Jews lived within semiautonomous communities that were governed by Halakha, and thus, so long as a Jew remained in the community, he or she automatically lived under the halakhic system, today, strict observance of Halakha is a voluntary choice of Jews, generally undertaken by those living solely within the Orthodox Jewish community. Disagreements exist among Conservative, Reform, and Orthodox Jewish communities over how Halakha should be interpreted. Furthermore, even among Orthodox communities, one may find differences in the interpretation and practice of Jewish law, since there is no single central halakhic authority that is empowered to decide between different understandings of Halakha for the entire Jewish community as a whole. In the modern state of Israel, Halakha is not generally used as the state civil law, except in certain areas of family and personal status law.

Halakha has left a lasting global impact through its influence on the two monotheistic faiths that succeeded Judaism, namely, Christianity and Islam. In the case of Christianity, Halakha was perceived not so much as a system to follow but mainly as a system to avoid, as is evident by statements in the New Testament, different synods of the Church Fathers, and other anti-Jewish legislation and regulations undertaken by the Church. But although Christianity chose to distance itself from the ritual and more particular aspects of Halakha, it maintained most of the ethical/moral principles found within it. Moreover, since the Hebrew Bible is considered a sacred scripture, Christians know of its existence and some of its particular laws through stories in the Old Testament as well as those in the New Testament that touch on halakhic issues in the life of Jesus and his disciples/followers. Finally, in time, the Catholic Church developed its own system of religious law

known as canon law, which displays some similarities to Halakha.

In the Islamic context, a famous statement ascribed to Prophet Muhammad is reported to have described the proper relation of Islam to the other, older monotheistic religions: "You will follow the traditions of those who preceded you span by span and cubit by cubit—so closely that you will go after them even if they creep into the hole of a lizard." According to S. D. Goitien (1974), this was stated "in the most authoritative collections of Muslim oral traditions" (Goitien, p. 46). Thus, it is no surprise to find so many similarities between Islamic law and Halakha. While early Halakha has influenced Shari'a, later Halakha in turn was influenced by Shari'a as well. Although one may find the early beginnings of this influence in the Qur'an itself, this process of mutual effect started largely in the eighth century under the Caliphate of Baghdad in Babylon (Iraq of today). Babylon had been the world center of Jewish study of Halakha for many centuries prior to the rise of Islam and was the birthplace of the main source of Jewish law, the Babylonian Talmud. The interaction of Jews and Muslims there and throughout the world opened a two-way channel of mutual, ongoing impact. For its part, Islam adapted the notion of religious law from Judaism in general, as well as specific customs and laws in particular, such as some dietary laws (i.e., the prohibition of eating pork and the need for ritual slaughter of the animal before its meat can be consumed, to name a few examples). Within Judaism, the great Jewish rabbi-jurist Moses Maimonides was clearly influenced by the systematic structure of Shari'a, whose organization he attempted to replicate in his seminal work of halakhic codification, the *Mishneh Torah*.

Shari'a

Like Halakha, Shari'a, meaning "the way," is the body of Islamic religious law. In addition to serving as the legal framework for observant Muslims, it also addresses many aspects of the social, political, and daily life of Muslims. In a global sense, it is the most widely used religious law today and the third most employed legal system in *ijmā* world, after civil law and common law.

In addition to the Qur'an, Shari'a is primarily derived from three other key sources: (1) the

Hadith, a record of Prophet Muhammad's life; (2) *Ijmā*, a consensus of Islamic scholars throughout many centuries; and (3) Qiyas, or reasoning by analogy in situations not covered by traditional Islamic texts. As with Halakha, differing interpretations and schools of thought regarding Shari'a exist throughout the Muslim world, often depending on the geographic region in which it was formed.

The degree to which Shari'a is applied in Muslim-majority countries varies greatly. Turkey was until recently an example of a Muslim state at the secular end of the spectrum, going so far as to overturn certain traditional Islamic laws by banning the wearing of the veil by women. At the other end of the spectrum in the Islamic world are Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic of Iran, where Shari'a serves as the only and ultimate source of law. Nevertheless, influences of the Shari'a can be found in the judicial systems of all Arab/Muslim countries, especially in the areas of personal status, such as marriage, divorce, and inheritance. One striking example of the influence of Shari'a on contemporary Muslim society is in the fields of banking and finance, where there is an increasing emphasis on adhering to Islamic law and, thus, prohibiting the investment of money in business ventures that involve gambling or alcoholic consumption, which are considered illegal.

Zion Zohar

See also Islam; Islamic State; Jewish Diaspora; Judaism; Qur'an; Reform Judaism; Torah

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HALAL

In Arabic, *halal* means literally that which is permitted, authorized, or prescribed, as opposed to *haram*, which refers to that which is forbidden and not permitted. In contemporary Muslim societies, halal and haram primarily refer to dietary restrictions that Muslims are expected to follow. Muslims are not permitted to eat the meat of an animal that has not been ritually slaughtered according to certain rules and rituals. Halal dietary restrictions are similar to the Jewish practice of observing kosher rules regarding food and have a similar range of strictness regarding its observance. In the pluralistic societies of a globalized world, maintaining halal practices can be arduous, but it also provides a distinct marker between observant and nonobservant Muslims.

When North African immigrants first began to emigrate to Europe during the 1950s and 1960s, eating halal food was not a major issue. The first generation of Muslim migrants in Europe were poor or working class and were not in a position to insist on proper halal preparation of the meat that they purchased and prepared for consumption. Later generations of Muslims, however, are better educated and paid and have tended to stay in immigrant communities that are able to replicate the customs of their places of origin, and they have been more insistent about keeping halal food practices.

Since the 1990s, there has been an emerging demand for halal-approved food in public restaurants in Europe and America, especially in areas dominated by Muslim immigrant communities. The public debate about halal food in France began in 2002, when a food store in Paris limited its offerings to halal food and stopped carrying alcohol and pork, thereby becoming the first market to shift to *le Tout Halal* ("the full halal"). Several years later, Quick, a fast-food hamburger chain that competes in France with McDonalds, experimented in 14 of its restaurants by offering its customers the choice of having halal beef in their hamburgers and having the bacon in bacon burgers replaced by smoked turkey. The experiment was an overwhelming success, and the chain quickly expanded these offerings to dozens of

other restaurants in its network. The marketing ploy was not without controversy, however; some politicians decried the move as being contrary to French secular values, and a local mayor accused the chain of funding Muslim clerics with the fees that it provided them for certifying that the meat used in their burgers was properly halal.

The social impact of the dietary laws and food customs in the immigrant Muslim communities is their ability to help provide their groups a cultural distinctiveness and shore up the communities' sense of identity. In a postmodern world, the need for expressing a sense of communitarian identity is acute, and for Muslims living in Europe and America, the practice of halal food consumption is one way these cultural and social ties are enhanced.

Mustapha Radji

See also Diaspora; Halakha and Shari'a; Islam

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HALLELUJAH MOVEMENT

Hallelujah is a syncretistic religion that originated in (British) Guyana among the Carib-speaking Macushi Indians shortly before 1900. It combines elements of indigenous South American shamanism and beliefs in nature spirits with biblical teachings of the Anglican missionaries who worked among the Indians during the second half of the 19th century. Abel, its founder, had lived with the Anglican priests, who even took him to England for a short time. On his return, he had a vision in which he met God in heaven and was ordered to dance in his honor. Benjamin, an Indian of the related Patamona tribe, was converted by Abel and built the first Hallelujah church in his village, where the Indians began to dance in honor of God. Soon the movement spread to the Akawayos and the Venezuelan

Pemons of the Gran Sabana. The religious leaders or prophets are inspired by revelations, which they supposedly received in dreams and visions. The teachings are propagated mainly by songs sung while dancing.

Hallelujah churches are found today in many native villages in Guyana and the Gran Sabana in Venezuela. The faithful meet in large native huts and, for several hours, dance in a circle in a monotonous way, singing in their own language about events from the Bible and about the history of Hallelujah. From time to time, they stop to take a drink of *cachiri* (native beer). Then the dance continues, until many participants reach an altered state of consciousness, during which they may talk about their spiritual experience with God and superior beings. Finally, they fall on their knees and pray to God. Sessions usually take place on weekends, and often the participants attend mass in a neighboring Catholic mission or in an Adventist church before the dance begins. They believe that God and the spirits of the universe are present in the ritual and will grant them what they wish. Dancing, singing, and prayers are important to achieve these ends. Protestant and Catholic missionaries are certainly not in favor of Hallelujah, but in the postcolonial era, they do not forbid the Indians from taking part in these rituals as long as they also participate in Christian ceremonies. According to the native tradition, life on earth has its source in the spirit world, which can be reached only by shamans, when they are under the influence of the hallucinogen *yopo* and have visions. Then they transmit the orders they received from the spirits to the community. In Hallelujah, similar rituals link the community with God.

In 1971, a related movement started in the Gran Sabana on Venezuelan territory, called the Movement of San Miguel. Prolonged dances, chants, and prayers are intended to provoke a vision of Saint Michel or of God. Self-purification of the believers, however, is necessary to be prepared for the end of the world, which will soon take place. In this new movement, shamanism, Catholic symbolism, and the traditions of the original Hallelujah movement are combined. This cult was started by an old Pemon woman, who had visions of God. Later, a young prophet educated in Ciudad Bolivar codified a cosmological

scheme and distributed CDs to the believers, containing messages that the old woman had received from God.

Angelina Pollak-Eltz

See also Guyana; Latin America; New Religions; New Religions in South America; Postcolonialism; Venezuela

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HAMAS

The Arabic term *hamas* means “zeal” and is the acronym of the Harakat al-Muqawamat al-Islamiyyah (Islamic Resistance Movement), the largest Palestinian Islamic (Sunnī) resistance movement. While pursuing its main political objective—the establishment of a state based on the principles of Islamic law (or Shari’a) in all of pre-1948 Palestine—Hamas has resocialized the Palestinian public under Israeli occupation around an Islamic identity. Hamas’s political, social, and religious objectives are enshrined in both nationalistic and Islamic ideologies. These color the type of actions the movement promotes: jihad (or religious struggle) against Zionism and Israel, martyrdom as death for the sake of God, but also mundane involvement in party politics and the provision of welfare and charitable services to the Palestinian public.

Hamas first appeared under that name in the Gaza Strip at the beginning of the First Intifada (1987). Its founder, Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, a long-time member of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, called for military action against Israel, therefore breaking away from the traditional involvement of the West Bank branch of the Muslim Brotherhood in religious affairs, social work, and welfare. During the first Palestinian uprising (or *Intifada*) against Israeli occupation (1987–1993), Hamas members carried out several attacks against Palestinians suspected of collaborating with Israel

and against Israeli military and civilian targets. The movement's recourse to violence led the Israeli authorities to arrest and imprison Ahmed Yassin in 1989. Hamas rejected the 1993 Oslo Peace Agreements signed between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization. At the time of the Agreements, however, Hamas offered the Israelis a truce if they would withdraw from the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

In the following years, Hamas claimed responsibility for several dozen suicide attacks against Israeli soldiers and civilians both inside the Occupied Territories and in Israel proper. Attacks multiplied after the outbreak of the Second Intifada (2000). Although Israel, the U.S. State Department, and the Council of the European Union, among others, list Hamas as a terrorist organization, several analysts have argued that the initial development of the movement was indirectly supported by the leaders of the Israeli right-wing Likud party in an attempt to sabotage the Oslo process and to weaken Fatah, the mainstream Palestinian movement led by Yasser Arafat. Ahmed Yassin, between his release from prison in 1997 and his assassination in 2004 by the Israeli military, resumed his role as the movement's spiritual leader, repeatedly calling for armed resistance against the "Zionist entity" and justifying suicide attacks—including those by women as of 2002—on religious grounds. As of 2005, Hamas shifted its strategy toward more involvement in party politics and won a majority of seats in the 2006 Palestinian parliamentary elections. This electoral victory precipitated a halt of international aid to the Palestinian Authority and heightened political and military tensions between Hamas and Fatah, especially in the Gaza Strip. In 2011, however, the two groups joined forces in an uneasy coalition.

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See also Islam; Islamism (Political Islam); Jihad; Muslim Brotherhood; Palestine; Terrorism

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HARE KRISHNA (INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS)

The International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), popularly known as the Hare Krishna movement, was founded by A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (1896–1977), an Indian religious reformer. Prabhupada emigrated to the United States in 1965 and, a year later, founded his devotional movement for "the spiritual benefit of human society."

Now a worldwide confederation of Krishna devotees, ISKCON is essentially a monotheistic Hindu tradition in the Gaudiya Vaishnava tradition. Its connection to Gaudiya Vaishnavism comes through Prabhupada himself, who, as a primary disciple of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur, a renowned scholar and saint who founded an earlier ISKCON-like institution known as the Gaudiya Math, inherited the lineage mantle from his teacher.

Prabhupada founded ISKCON as a universalist institution, advocating *sanatana dharma* ("traditional religion," a term that the movement translates as "the eternal function of the soul") as opposed to sectarian concerns. Accordingly, he never identified his institution as a form of Hinduism. Instead, ISKCON teaches what Prabhupada called "the science of God consciousness." In other words, the institution eschews normal religious identification, such as Hindu, Jew, Christian, Buddhist, or Muslim, and, instead, focuses on the abiding truths and underlying threads that tie all religions together.

Along these lines, Prabhupada emphasized the general principle of glorifying God by chanting His holy name—"whatever that name might be according to one's respective religions tradition, whether Allah, Jehovah, Krishna or whatever." Similarly, he encouraged his followers to follow certain purifying principles that would be effective in any religious discipline, such as avoiding the consumption of meat, fish, or eggs; giving up illicit sex (sexual relations outside marriage); and doing away with lesser addictions, such as gambling and intoxication. These principles are followed by all ISKCON devotees.

Since ISKCON's founding, Srila Prabhupada and his disciples gradually attracted thousands of dedicated followers, with many more who casually consider ISKCON their religion. The exact numbers are not known. ISKCON boasts more than 100 temples and ashrams throughout the world, publishes scores of books through its Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, and manages numerous farms and vegetarian restaurants in most major cities. The organization soon began staging cultural festivals around the globe and serves millions of plates of vegetarian food offered to Krishna (known as *prasadam*). Along similar lines, ISKCON has branched out to include "Food for Life," an organization that feeds needy people around the world.

When Srila Prabhupada first incorporated ISKCON in 1966, he gave it seven purposes that define the institution to this day:

1. To systematically propagate spiritual knowledge to society at large and to educate all peoples in the techniques of spiritual life in order to check the imbalance of values in life and to achieve real unity and peace in the world
2. To propagate a consciousness of Krishna, as it is revealed in [India's ancient sacred texts, such as] the Bhagavad Gita and the Srimad Bhagavatam
3. To bring the members of the Society together with each other and nearer to Krishna, the prime entity, thus to develop the idea within the members, and humanity at large, that each soul is part and parcel of the quality of Godhead (Krishna)
4. To teach and encourage the *sankirtan* movement, congregational chanting of the holy names of God as revealed in the teachings of Lord Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu
5. To erect for the members, and for society at large, a holy place of transcendental pastimes, dedicated to the personality of Krishna
6. To bring the members closer together for the purpose of teaching a simpler and more natural way of life
7. With a view toward achieving the aforementioned purposes, to publish and distribute periodicals, magazines, books, and other writings

With these principles as its basis, ISKCON continues into the present day with new leaders trained by both Prabhupada and his disciples to carry on his mission.

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See also Hinduism; New Religions; New Religions in the United States; Popular Religion

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HAWAI'I

Hawai'i, the 50th state in the United States, is located in the northeastern part of the Pacific Ocean and comprises eight islands: Hawai'i (Big Island), Maui, Lanai, Molokai, O'ahu, Kaua'i, Ni'ihau, and Kanaloa (Kaho'olawe), in addition to several atolls to the west. Hawai'i is significant because it occupies a strategic position situated between North America and Asia. Hawai'i is where East meets West.

Ancient Polynesians in outriggers embarked across the Pacific Ocean. Each wave of migration brought people to New Zealand, Tahiti, Rapa Nui, Hawai'i, and other islands of Oceania. Travel between the islands continued until it dwindled, and each island developed a separate culture.

The *Kumulipo*, the indigenous Hawaiian creation chant, tells the story of how each of the islands was created by the mating of Wākea (sky god) and Papa (earth mother). One or two high-ranking *ali'i* (chiefs) ruled each island independently. Ancient Hawaiian society was a complex hierarchical structure bound by a series of *kapu* (rules) that governed their religion, politics, and social interactions. In 1778, Kamehameha I, a high-ranking *ali'i*, finished uniting the islands under his rule, with the exception of Kaua'i, and established the kingdom of Hawai'i. He completed

his conquest with cannons and weapons traded from European ships that made Hawai'i their port of call after Captain Cook's landing.

In one generation, the kingdom of Hawai'i underwent a massive societal and cultural shift. Indigenous Hawaiian society went from an agricultural, subsistence lifestyle to a global, capitalist society with Western politics, religion, and laws. The primary basis of this shift was disease. Diseases killed off 90% of the indigenous Hawaiian population while simultaneously lowering the birthrate of indigenous Hawaiian children.

A coalition of American businessmen, several of whom were descendants of the Protestant Congregationalist missionaries who arrived in 1820, supported by John L. Stevens, U.S. Minister to Hawai'i, and the U.S. Marines, overthrew Queen Lili'uokalani in 1893. The Republic of Hawai'i was established, and its government was annexed to the United States. In 1900, the U.S. Congress passed the Hawaiian Organic Act, establishing the Republic of Hawai'i as a territory of the United States. In 1959, Hawai'i became the 50th state.

The multiracial character of the Hawaiian population is a by-product of the need for cheap labor in the sugar plantations. Thus, the plantation owners imported a series of immigrant workers, including Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Filipino laborers, to work in competition with each other and indigenous Hawaiians. While some of these laborers returned to their country of origin and others immigrated to California, many stayed back in Hawai'i.

Prior to 1819, the traditional kapu restrictions prohibited men and women from eating together and regulated the consumption of certain foods. Queen Ka'ahumanu, Kamehameha I's widow, and his successor, King Liholiho, abolished the kapu system at a symbolic meal in which men and women of the royal court ate together. After this, the ancient indigenous religion ceased to be the primary religion practiced in Hawai'i. Shortly afterward, other missionaries arrived, and Protestant Christianity became the dominant religion of the islands.

Niccole Leilanionapae'āina Coggins

See also Missions and Missionaries; Pacific Islands/Oceania; Postcolonialism; United States of America

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HEAVEN

Most cultures have beliefs and practices relating to the existence of another life or world other than the present one. Usually, it is a state of existence into which the individual enters at death, a state somewhere, sometime, or somehow in which the individual hopes to be free from pain and anxiety. Etymologically as well as historically, the word *heaven* has denoted the Christian heaven, though the Christian heaven is closely related to Jewish and, especially, Muslim ideas. These monotheistic concepts envision the individual fulfilled and perfected in the presence of God. The "heavens" of Indic religions, though bearing some resemblance to these concepts, are fundamentally different.

Judaism and Christianity

In early Hebrew thought, life with God was considered in community terms: Israel as a nation had its covenant with the Lord, and the welfare of the community depended on whether it was following the covenant. From the sixth century BCE, the focus gradually shifted to individuals. The ideas of life after death and of resurrection became a prevalent discourse, including the idea of divine judgment of individuals. Talmudic Judaism continues to proclaim resurrection and the justification of the faithful.

Perhaps under the influence of Zoroastrianism, many nonbiblical Jewish writings between 200 BCE and 150 CE emphasized a cosmic struggle between good and evil spirits, a struggle in which each human chooses sides and, thus, is brought into eternal light or sent into eternal darkness. About the same time, gnostic movements added to this spirit-spirit dualism the idea of a conflict between spirit (good) and matter (evil), where salvation depended on freeing oneself from matter. In

contrast, although “soul” and “spirit” are often confused, both Jewish and Christian traditions tended to consider the soul as something integrated with the whole person, body and spirit. For Jews, Christians, and Muslims, heaven is, quite simply, God and those who are with God. Heaven is always theocentric, though the egocentrism of humans in practice often shifts the emphasis to *me*, with God as chiefly an aid to *me*.

In the Christian Bible and the Christian tradition, the Kingdom of Heaven or Kingdom of God is absolutely central. Whether heaven is a place, a state of being, or the state of the soul in the present life has never been settled, nor has the relationship between “afterlife” and “eternal life.” Heaven is *now* among us, it is an eternal state of being with the eternal God, or it is the “new heaven and new earth” at the end of the world. When viewed temporarily, the Resurrection, followed by the Last Judgment, puts the eternal seal on the state of the individual’s soul. Heaven is the joyous fulfillment of the loving person in the company of the loving God. This is known as the Beatific Vision (Catholic), the Vision of God (Protestant), or *theosis* (becoming infused with the divine; Orthodox). Even when in the presence of God, even in the highest spiritual state, the individual does not lose his or her identity but rather feels the inexpressible joy of experiencing the filling, the perfection, of the self in the mutual love between Christ and humans. Christian images of heaven include a city of gold and jewels, lush meadows and fountains, music and dancing, and joyful interaction among the saints.

For Christians, there have been two dominant afterlife narratives: Either the person who dies passes immediately outside time into eternity or else spirit and body are separated until the Resurrection, which would reunite them in one soul. In the latter view, some way to describe the state of the dead between death and the Resurrection was needed. Either the spirit sees God immediately, incomplete only in that it temporarily lacks its body, or the spirit “sleeps” until the Resurrection. Another question was the means by which a person attained God. Does God know in eternity who is saved and who is lost, and if so, does He predestine the salvation or damnation of each? Or does Christ, who wishes to save everyone, allow each to construct his or her own character by free will? Or—a minority but perennial view—does Christ’s

unlimited mercy mean that even the most wicked will ultimately be saved?

A historically marked question was the “location” of heaven. Until the 17th century, it was commonly believed that heaven was “up” in a literal as well as a metaphorical sense. Copernicus had challenged this view in the 16th century, and in the 17th century, the thinking about the direction of heaven began to shift. In the Ptolemaic model, the universe was thought to consist of a nest of concentric spheres, with the round globe of the earth at the center, extending upward through the moon, Mercury, Venus, the sun, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, and the fixed stars to the *primum mobile*, beyond which was nothing other than God and heaven. When the Copernican heliocentric system prevailed, the “upness” of heaven had to become metaphorical.

Islam

Islamic teachings hold that since God is eternal, it follows that He eternally knows who is faithful and who is an infidel (faithless). Moreover, God is active at every moment everywhere, and His will is present in every event that occurs. There is no cause or effect save that at each moment God wills what He wills, so that He is directly responsible for everything, including human actions. Yet infidels deserve damnation. Furthermore, there will be a resurrection and a last judgment in which evil deeds are weighed against good deeds. The tension between divine and human responsibility is thus fundamentally unresolved. Between death and resurrection, the individual is in an interim state; at the end of the world occur the Resurrection and the Last Judgment. Another tension is that at the judgment, God is both just and merciful; which quality He decides to exercise is His unpredictable and inexplicable choice. The human mind is wholly incapable of understanding God’s will or His works, so reason is inadequate, and the only proper way to heaven is complete submission to God at all times.

The Muslim heaven is often imagined as a place with lush gardens, parks, feasts, fruits, and beautiful virgins. As with Christian images, there is a tension between literal and metaphorical interpretation, but in fundamentalist Islam, as in conservative Christianity, the absolute power of God to do

whatever He wishes reduces the tension between the “normal” and the “miraculous,” thus rendering literal interpretation more plausible.

Hinduism and Buddhism

Whereas monotheistic heavens are centered on God, in the Indic religious traditions of Hinduism and Buddhism, the notion of God is either absent or entirely different. Furthermore, whereas in monotheistic visions of heaven, individuals enjoy their rewards in the presence of God, many Asian religions teach that the “I” or “me” must be dissolved before there can be an experience of eternal joy.

Extraordinary diversity exists in Hindu views of heaven, as in the religion as a whole. In the period of the Vedas (ca. 1500–800 BCE), rituals, including sacrifice, ensured purification so that the dead could enter the heavenly world above, where many gods and Yama (the first human) preside. Later, in the period of the Upanishads (ca. 800–350 BCE), heaven became only a temporary state between the death of the individual and his or her next incarnation. All life, all the universe, is in a constant cycle, samsara, in which suffering, pain, and death are inevitable. Happiness consists of moksha, release from the cycle of suffering through yoga (disciplined meditation) and good deeds. A good life improves one’s karma, which improves one’s next reincarnation until, after untold eons, one’s individual personality is absorbed when one’s atman is dissolved in Brahman.

Buddhism, based in Indic religious culture, shares many basic beliefs with Hinduism. Again, the aim is not heaven but passage through many heavens and incarnations in the quest for the enlightened wisdom and compassion that are necessary to escape the cycle of birth, pain, and rebirth. Some Buddhists teach that there are as many as 14 or 18 heavens but these are transitory and not goals in themselves. For Buddhists, the Christian and Muslim idea of heaven is vain, since wishing for a future existence only binds us more to the cycle of pain. As in Hinduism, karma is the engine of moral cause and effect: A life of wise compassion and selflessness is good karma for a better reincarnation. Good karma is accumulated and accelerated over many lives, the ultimate result being nirvana, a total lack of attachment to this world and, thereby, dissolution of the self. In Pure

Land Buddhism, the Buddha is almost like the Christian Jesus: Through Buddha’s inexhaustible merit and infinite compassion, He will save all creatures, especially those who call on Him in faith.

Evolution of Beliefs About Heaven

From the 18th century onward, secularization gradually shifted the hope for heaven to the belief in progress on earth. Though the vast majority of Americans believe in heaven, as do a smaller majority of Europeans, the meaning of “heaven” has changed. In contemporary Western countries, Asian religious ideas have influenced popular belief, and by the end of the 20th century, almost a quarter of Americans subscribed to some sort of notion of reincarnation.

Jeffrey Burton Russell

See also Christianity; Death Ritual; Hell; Hinduism; Islam; Judaism

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HEAVEN'S GATE

Heaven's Gate was a small new religious movement that combined UFO (unidentified flying object) lore with metaphysical and Christian themes and advocated the ascetic rejection of all “mammalian ways,” such as sexual relationships and ties with family members outside Heaven's Gate. The founders, Marshall Applewhite (1931–1997) and Bonnie Nettles (1927–1985), met in Houston in 1972 and in the years thereafter developed and taught a shifting and highly combinative theology, intermingling popular science fiction themes about extraterrestrial beings and spaceships

with strains of New Age spirituality, theosophy, spiritualism, and end-times Christianity. Applewhite and Nettles attracted significant media attention in 1975, after a lecture they gave in Oregon spurred some 30 audience members to abandon their worldly attachments and possessions as a precondition for conversion. Soon thereafter, the group essentially went underground, ceasing most proselytization efforts until the early 1990s and living in a series of isolated campgrounds, eventually settling in a rented mansion in the Rancho Santa Fe suburb of San Diego and running a successful web design business. Heaven's Gate gained national attention on March 26, 1997, when Applewhite and 38 group members were found dead in their Rancho Santa Fe headquarters (California), having committed suicide successively in groups by drinking vodka laced with phenobarbital. Each member wore a sleeve patch reading "Heaven's Gate Away Team."

Applewhite viewed himself as the second incarnation of Jesus Christ, come again to complete the project that Jesus left unfinished. He believed that he had been incarnated alongside his Heavenly Father in the guise of Nettles. Applewhite and Nettles believed that the Earth was on the brink of being "recycled" (refreshed through destruction), and consequently, their mission was to prepare as many people as possible to transition from the "Human Level" to the "Next Level Beyond Human." They viewed this transition as a physical rather than a spiritual process, which would come to pass when followers completed the necessary training and boarded a flying saucer or spacecraft bound for the Next Level, where Heaven's Gate members would spend eternity assisting beings on other planets to navigate similar evolutionary stages. While at the outset Heaven's Gate was somewhat loosely organized, after 1975 it became progressively more routinized, for instance, under the rubric "The Process," which involved a broad and changing set of practices such as working in pairs to renounce the manifold human traits and social ties anchoring members to the Human Level. The overall push toward androgyny paired with the rejection of sexuality eventually led Applewhite and several male members to undergo surgical castration. Many scholars have linked this process with Applewhite's prior struggles with his own homosexuality.

In the early years of Heaven's Gate, Applewhite and Nettles claimed to be the "two witnesses" referred to in chapter 11 of the Book of Revelation, who are said to arrive just before the end of days, counsel humanity through the use of tremendous prophetic powers, and be killed violently. Applewhite and Nettles expected to follow this trajectory and viewed their upcoming violent end as effecting a return (via spaceship) to the Kingdom of Heaven, from whence they came. However, this trajectory was interrupted by Nettles's unexpected death from cancer in 1985, which altered Heaven's Gate theology—Applewhite claimed that Nettles had "transitioned," but that the two remained in contact. By most scholarly accounts, Nettles's death also served to accelerate existent Heaven's Gate tendencies toward insularity and world rejection. The group's eventual mass suicide, which members viewed as the natural shedding of fleshly containers en route to the Next Level Beyond Human, was inspired by the arrival of the Hale-Bopp comet in 1997 and by rumors, widely reported in the media, that a spacecraft-shaped object was traveling in its wake.

Scholars of new religions attempting to analyze the causal scenario of the Heaven's Gate suicides have found it to be a fairly problematic case. The dominant explanatory models of violence/suicide in new religions have focused largely on opposition from the outside as a trigger, for instance, on anticult persecution or governmental pressure. While such theories of extrinsic causation appear to fit some of the most prominent cases of violent or self-destructive new religions—such as the Branch Davidians, the Solar Temple, Aum Shinrikyô, and, perhaps most notably, Jonestown—research on Heaven's Gate is also driving theory involving internal or intrinsic causal factors.

Steven Barrie-Anthony

See also Aum Shinrikyô; New Religions; New Religions in the United States

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HEBREW

The ancient Hebrew language is enshrined in the Hebrew Bible, known to Christians as the Old Testament. Modern Hebrew is a member of the Semitic language family and is spoken by approximately 13 million people worldwide, with most speakers living in Israel, where it is one of the two official languages of the country (the other being Arabic). One of the world's oldest living languages, it is the only surviving member of the Canaanite language subfamily that emerged in the second millennium BCE. It is often referred to as *Leshon* (also spelled *Lashon*) *HaKodesh*, or "The Holy Language," as the Bible and other religious texts are written in its classical or biblical form.

Hebrew is believed to have developed as an independent language in the 12th century BCE, when it branched off Phoenician, another Canaanite language. The earliest written evidence of Hebrew as a distinctive language comes from the Gezer calendar, which dates back to the 10th century BCE, around the time of David and Solomon's rule over the kingdom of Israel. From this time until the sixth century BCE and the Babylonian exile of the Jewish people from Israel, Hebrew flourished as both a written and a spoken language. While in exile, the Jews living in Babylonia and the few Jews who remained in Israel began to use Aramaic, another Semitic language, as their spoken language. Despite this, however, Hebrew remained as the language of prayer and writing for the Jewish people. It was not until the beginning of the Zionist movement at the end of the 19th century and the efforts of Eliezer Ben-Yehuda that Hebrew was revived as a spoken language among the Jewish people.

Hebrew is written from right to left. Its modern alphabet, or *alefbet* as it is called in Hebrew, was

developed in the third century BCE from the Aramaic script and contains 22 letters, 5 of which change form if found at the end of a word. It is, along with the sparsely spoken Yiddish, Ladino, and Judeo-Arabic, the only language that uses this alphabet today. As with most other ancient Semitic languages, the alphabet does not contain any vowels. In the eighth century CE, when Hebrew was already in decline as a spoken language, a system of vowels, called *niqqud*, was developed to make it easier to read and write in Hebrew. *Niqqud* comprises dots and dashes written above or below the Hebrew letters and is not normally needed by speakers to read and write the language, but it does aid nonnative speakers and children in learning the language and can usually be found in prayer books and scripture.

Modern Hebrew is regulated by the Academy of the Hebrew Language, which is largely concerned with coining Hebrew words for loanwords, mostly in the areas of science and technology. Since Hebrew is spoken almost exclusively in the state of Israel, which is geographically a rather small country, there are considered to be only two dialects in the language, Standard Hebrew and Oriental Hebrew. The two varieties are not regional dialects but rather a result of the different countries of origin of Israelis today, and they differ primarily in pronunciation. Oriental Hebrew is spoken by Israelis who immigrated to Israel from Arab countries, while Standard Hebrew, a more Europeanized version, is spoken by the Ashkenazi community. Increasingly, however, these differences in pronunciation are diminishing, and Standard Hebrew is becoming the dominant style spoken.

Zion Zohar

See also Bible; Israel; Jewish Diaspora; Yiddish

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HELL

Hell is envisioned in many religions as a state of being in the afterlife, one that is characterized by pain, suffering, deprivation, and separation. In most cultures, it has been imagined to be underground. In ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia, people who angered the gods and violated the cosmic order were believed to be tortured in darkness by scorching fire, serpents, and devouring demons. In other mythologies, the underworld was considered less negative than neutral. In Greco-Roman religions, for example, Hades was a realm of flitting shades who regretted not being alive but did not otherwise suffer. Still, Plato and other philosophers argued that cosmic justice required a moral basis for the assignment of rewards and punishments in an afterlife, and in later Greco-Roman religion, Hades was partly replaced by Tartarus, in which the wicked suffered fiery pains.

In the early Hebrew view, the shadowy dead dwelt under the earth in Sheol. Israelites faithful to the covenant with God would prosper on earth, while God's enemies would be annihilated. From the sixth century BCE, Hebrew thought moved in the direction of resurrection and judgment at the end of time. The judgment separated the faithful from the sinners, and sinners were punished below in a fiery hell called *Gehenna*. By the last two centuries BCE in Israel, the moral view had triumphed over the neutral view, and hell became "a divinely sanctioned place of eternal torment for the wicked." The view that all Jews would be resurrected in Jerusalem at the end of time has prevailed among Talmudic scholars and Orthodox Jews.

Hebrew religion is essentially monotheistic—there is but one God—but in the period 200 BCE to 150 CE, the imagery of hell was influenced by dualistic views deriving in part from Zoroastrianism (Mazdaism) and in part from reactions to the repeated devastation of the Israelite homeland, especially Jerusalem. Zoroastrians believed that there was a dramatic cosmic struggle between an absolute good god and an absolute evil god. Each community and individual had to choose which of these two gods to follow. For the Zoroastrians, the dead had to cross a bridge to get into heaven, and the wicked were thrust from the bridge into a

hell of scorching heat, freezing cold, filth, stench, disgusting food, and devouring demons.

By the second century BCE, the Hebrew concept of hell had become eternal: Once one cast one's lot with God's enemies, one became a slave of the darkness. Satan and his demons became prominent in this period, and to the fires and darkness of Gehenna were added numerous specific torments inflicted on the damned by the evil spirits: boiling pitch, lakes of sulfur, piercing irons, grilling, and flesh rending. This satisfies justice: The wicked may prosper in this life, but the faithful prosper eternally with joys forever denied to the wicked.

Christianity, which arose in the midst of a period of persecution of the Israelites, followed the Hebrew Bible closely while also being somewhat influenced by dualism. As heaven is the kingdom of God and his dwelling place, so hell is the kingdom and abode of Satan and his angels. Christians held that at the beginning of the cosmos, the angels were asked to make their eternal choice to be with God or not; those who chose not were hurled out of heaven into hell, where they remained forever, tormented themselves and tormentors of sinners. At the resurrection, the soul (the reunited body and spirit) will be judged. Despite the images of hellfire and brimstone, Christian hell is essentially the agony of eternal separation from the loving joy of God and the community of saints (those who are saved). Since heaven is eternal, so necessarily is hell: There is no way out. The spiritual fire is the realization by the damned that they are forever lost; it is accompanied by the subsidiary but real bodily fire: torture by the Devil and his angels, wailing and gnashing of teeth, the lake of fiery sulfur, the devouring worm or birds of prey. The intensity of the suffering varies according to the gravity of the sins: Dante saw various levels in hell down to the frozen, motionless center where Satan is embedded in eternal and unyielding ice.

Christians distinguish between the death of the body, in which body is separated from spirit, and the death of the soul, in which the whole sinner, body and spirit, is ruined. The way a human being shapes his or her character in this life determines his or her place eternally. In this life, the world is a mixture of good and evil, but God knows the difference, and in eternity, there are only the two kingdoms—that of God and that of Satan. One of

the perennial questions of Christianity is the relative emphasis on predestination or free will. God is eternal, so He knows all times and all souls in eternity, so it seemed to some theologians that God must at least know (if not actually choose) who is damned. On the other hand, Christ died to free all from bondage to sin. A vast number of solutions have been proposed over time, with the most influential leaning toward free will. God does not, it is argued, force anyone to love.

Another question is the time of judgment and the state of the spirit after bodily death. Some hold that at the moment of death, each individual is judged immediately (the doctrine of particular judgment) and passes immediately to heaven or hell; when body and spirit are reunited at the resurrection, the last judgment confirms the particular judgment. Another view is that the spirit “sleeps” in an interim state until it is reunited with the body.

Theologians of the first millennium, recognizing that everyone is flawed, argued that a moment of cleansing and burning away of faults must occur before a person could be in the presence of God. By the 11th century, the idea of a time frame for this purgation, and by extension a place for it—Purgatory—became dominant: Those with greater flaws had to spend more time there than those with lesser faults. Purgatory is not, however, an extension of hell but rather an extension of heaven, for everyone in purgatory is being cleansed to stand perfected with God in heaven. One gets out of purgatory, whereas one never gets out of hell. In most modern Christian theology, hell is a state of being rather than a place in the universe; one does not “go to” hell but constructs hell for oneself.

Muslim hell resembles that of Judaism and Christianity: It is a place of eternal separation from God and the community and a place of bodily torments, including burning winds, boiling waters, thorns, smoking fire, and agonizing food and drink including melted copper. Islam, which asserts the choice and action of God in every event, leans heavily toward predestination or, more properly, the uncaused and unfathomable action of God in every (apparent) human choice.

The hells of Eastern religions bear a limited similarity to Western hell. In the pre-Hindu period of the Vedas in India (ca. 1500–800 BCE), proper ritual was necessary to attain happiness: Those who were buried without full and proper ritual

were excluded from the orderly cosmic heaven of the god Varuṇa. Later, in the period of the Upanishads (ca. 800–350 BCE), hell became a function of moral failure. Like reincarnation, hell was a recurrent state as the soul worked its way toward moksha, which is release from samsara, the endless cycle of birth, death, and rebirth. For Buddhism, hells are temporary states on the way to liberation from the cycle of suffering, desiring, and ignorance. Liberation involves the dissolution of the “me” or “I,” so concentration on the self increases the length and degree of suffering in hell. The number of hells varies: Theravada Buddhism has eight hells beneath the earth, places of suffering for those with bad karma. The hell of Pure Land Buddhism resembles that of Western religions more than those of other Buddhists: It is a place of fiery torment. In neither Hinduism nor Buddhism is hell a permanent state of being.

In the contemporary emphasis in Western culture on the pleasures of this world, the idea of hell is unpopular, and it is avoided by preachers who want to reassure their congregations. Still, the majority of Americans believe in hell, and it is real for those who believe in God’s justice in separating the good from the evil. In most religious traditions around the world, there persists a notion of eternal damnation after death as well as an eternal state of happiness.

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See also Christianity; Death Ritual; Heaven; Hinduism; Islam; Judaism

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HENOTHEISM

The word *henotheism* is formed from the Greek roots *henos*—meaning one—and *theos*—meaning

god—and refers to the choice that an individual or a group makes to worship a single god within the context of a society that believes in and accepts the existence of a pantheon of gods. Henotheism differs from monotheism, however, in that monotheism describes a system of belief in which there is only a single god. Henotheism, in contrast, describes the decision to worship one particular god to the exclusion of worshipping any other god or gods that are thought to be part of a pantheon. The concept of henotheism is thus relevant to both ancient religious traditions and the modern global religious landscape, as it particularly describes a system of religious beliefs wherein other gods are acknowledged as not only existing but also being worthy of worship. The term has been used to describe the religion of the ancient Egyptians as well as modern Hinduism in India. The term refers to this acknowledgment of the existence of other gods even while an individual chooses to follow and worship one god, perhaps because an individual feels that this particular god deserves to be worshipped more than the other gods, or by larger groups of people, because the god in question is tied to a local or national identity.

The concept has its origins in ancient Egypt and Hermeticism and can still be found today in modern Hinduism and Daoism. Henotheism is perhaps the best term for the religious choice of the historical figure of Abraham; it was only later in their history that the ancient Hebrews shifted their henotheistic worldview to a monolatrous worldview; monolatry acknowledges other gods who oppose or challenge the ascendancy of the one true God and therefore should not be worshipped in kind. (Monotheism for the Hebrews did not come until after the period of Babylonian captivity.) Henotheism likewise typified the religions of the ancient Greeks and Romans and was a common religious philosophy in the pre-Christian Roman Empire.

The term *henotheism* was created by F. Max Müller, who was attempting both to explain the characterizations of the gods in the Vedas and to criticize Western religious exceptionalism, which had long taken for granted that monotheism as a concept was so well defined as to obviate the need for any other explanation of expressions of belief beyond the dichotomy of monotheism and polytheism. Müller conceived of henotheism as the practice of monotheism within the context of a

polytheistic society. In particular, he used the concept to illustrate the different conceptions of gods in the Vedas, who spring from the same Divine Power and are expressions of that power but who are not coeternal and who each have their own divine domain.

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See also God; Goddess; Monotheism

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HERESY

The word *heresy*—deviation from orthodox beliefs—comes from the Greek *αἵρεσις*, and its original meaning was connected with seizing, as in, for instance, seizing or taking a city—it was used in this sense by the Greek historians Herodotus and Thucydides. Metaphorically, it came to mean choice or preference, implying one's taking of a philosophical, political, or religious position that was different or separate from another—we find the word used in this sense by the ancient philosophers and historians Diogenes Laertius and Josephus. It is important to notice that the word as it was used by those ancient authors had no pejorative connotation; those writers did not imply that the preference being accorded was to a worse or erroneous position, only to a different one. The pejorative sense of *heresy* began to appear once it was used in the context of revealed religions, when the belief in only one true religion made all the different opinions not simply different but wrong.

The concept of heresy as both a theological category and a political strategy has been most

fully developed and systematized within Christianity. In the Muslim world, the idea of the heretic or infidel has been of great historical and religious significance, notably in the Sunni/Shi'a divide. The religions of East Asia, such as Buddhism and Hinduism, have historically been less concerned with orthodoxy; thus, the term *heresy* is not as useful in discussions of Eastern religions.

Heresy in Christianity

In the New Testament, the word is used with a pejorative connotation nine times: For example, the sects of the Pharisees and Sadducees are termed $\alpha\rho\epsilon\sigma\iota\varsigma$ (Acts 15:5 and 26:5, and Acts 5:17, respectively). In Acts 24:14, we find the term used once again in the context of the relationship between Christianity and Judaism—the Jews defines the Christian church as a heresy, and St. Paul rejects this definition by reiterating the “catholic” or universal character of Christianity.

The concept of heresy has always been crucial for any religion that was invested in creating a coherent doctrinal body by which it could define its own identity in opposition to other, different religious phenomena within its confessional boundaries and that could count on a relatively functional institutional system in charge of preserving the orthodoxy of that doctrinal body and eliminating the heretical component. The process of constructing the categories of *heresy* and *heretics* as a means to build, refine, and defend a religion's doctrinal identity is perhaps most visible in the history of the Christian religion. The dialectic between orthodoxy and heterodoxy was and, to a certain extent, still is pivotal in helping Christianity build its identity as the only true church and in conceptualizing its relationship to other religions. In this respect, it is significant that St. Paul, who was the first significant figure to understand the importance of constructing a Christian identity in opposition to Judaism, explained rather at length the meaning of heresy and its difference from *schism*: While the first was a permanent dissent, the second was only temporary (1 Corinthians 11:19).

After Paul, the concept of heresy, far from being marginalized, was further refined, adapted, and conceptualized. By studying the different theoretical and pragmatic approaches that the Christian

church took to the issue of heresy, one can see a series of snapshots of the most relevant developments of Christianity. For example, the construction and application of the category of heresy was of central importance for the Christian church at the beginning of its existence, when it needed to separate itself from Eastern Christianity and ally itself with the Western Roman Empire, as we can see in the manner in which the Christian church dealt with the question of Arianism, a complex set of beliefs regarding the nature of the Son and His relationship with the Father, which was condemned as a heresy at the Council of Nicaea in 325 CE. Before the condemnation at Nicaea, Arianism represented the prevalent doctrine on the Trinity in the East, where Christian theologians, steeped in Greek philosophy, sought to rationalize the relationship between Father and Son by claiming that they were not “consubstantial” (of the same nature) but that the Son was either a figure of speech—in the most radical version of Arianism—or of a “lesser dignity” of the Father—in the more Western-oriented forms of this doctrine. What was at stake was the relationship between Christianity and Greek philosophy; a school of Christian thinkers in the East believed that Christian doctrine should validate and perfect, not contradict, philosophical truths and propositions. In contrast, for the Western Christian theologians, eager to stress the diversity of Christianity with respect to both Greek philosophy and Judaism, it was pivotal to insist on the mystery of the Trinity even at the expense of a more logical rationalization of the relation between Father and Son. Moreover, the Western Christian church saw the need for and the possible advantages of a closer alliance with the Western Roman Empire after decades of persecution—one should remember that the Emperor Constantine, who was present at the Council of Nicaea and approved of its deliberations, had granted freedom of worship to the Christian in 313, with the famous Edict of Milan, or Edict of Toleration. The result of such a complex situation was precisely the condemnation of Arius as a heretic and of Arianism—in certain extreme forms—as a heresy. To be sure, the theological definition of orthodoxy and, by consequence, of heresy, cannot be reduced to a series of political or intellectual needs, since theology is not simply a product of political or social pressures.

Nevertheless, theological definitions do not simply imply the adoption of a certain language or doctrines, but they represent a key element of the process of identity formation of a religion, and as such, many different factors contribute to their elaboration and adoption.

The theological definition, however, is only the initial moment of the process that involves the construction of the category of heresy and its application for the strengthening of the orthodox religion. After defining what a heretic is, the subsequent step is to find means to eliminate him or her in order to ensure the preservation of the orthodoxy of the whole body of believers. In other words, the definition of heresy and the persecution of heresy are two moments of the same process of identity formation. Once again the history of the Christian church provides an example of how such dynamics of “forming a persecuting society”—to borrow the title of Robert Ian Moore’s influential book on heresy in medieval Europe—worked, as it could count on a relatively efficient institutional support rather early in its history, for reasons that scholars are still debating. Indeed, phenomena such as the creation of the tribunal of the Inquisition and the large-scale persecution of Jews, Muslims, and heretics throughout medieval and early-modern Europe can be considered as important components of the process of doctrinal, intellectual, political, and territorial consolidation of Christianity in the Western world. The tribunal of the Inquisition started out as a group of individual inquisitors, traditionally Dominicans or Franciscans, assigned usually by the local bishops to cover specific territories where some heretical beliefs were suspected to have spread. After the Council of Trent (1545–1563), it became a highly centralized organization headed by a congregation whose leader was the pope.

Even in the case of the persecution of heresy, as in that of the definition of heresy, one must not think that this was the simple result of decisions made by ecclesiastical leaders to consolidate their power. Rather, one should see this phenomenon as the result of the interaction between numerous factors, including the emergence and consolidations of opinions that either radically challenge or partially deviate from a given set of doctrines considered by a religious institution to be a fundamental part of its core set of beliefs, the doctrinal and

political need of the institution to define itself by identifying its enemies, and the existence of a series of institutional, structural, and logistical tools that allow the institution to eliminate the enemies once it identifies them.

Of course, Christianity is not the only religion for which the concept of heresy applies: Because of the intrinsic logic of the concept of heresy—a deviation from orthodoxy, that is, the right doctrine—every religion with a relatively coherent doctrinal body and with a relatively structured institutional apparatus in charge of reinforcing that doctrinal body presents heretical phenomena. For example, the sects of the Sadducees and the Pharisees within Judaism can be said to have had heretical elements in their doctrines, even if neither the Sadducees nor the Pharisees ever formed a separate community and hence neither of them can be properly called a heresy within Judaism.

Heresy in Islam

In the Islamic world, the presence of heresy, especially in its political rather than strictly theological sense, is highly significant. It manifested itself from the beginning of Islam and produced, together with many other divisions, that between Sunnī and Shi’ite, which is the source of a series of dramatic religious, political, and social conflicts around the world today. The split between Sunnīs and Shi’i took place in the seventh century, following the death of Muhammad. Shi’ites believed that the Prophet’s successor should have been Ali, a member of Muhammad’s family. Sunnīs, in contrast, contended that the elite of the Muslim community was in charge of selecting the most suitable candidate as Muhammad’s successor, regardless of family ties. The conflict between Sunnīs and Shi’i, then, was less a matter of theological differences and more a question regarding the political leadership of the Muslim community. Moreover, even though the conflict between Sunnīs and Shi’i was violent at the beginning, the Sunnī and Shi’ite communities coexisted peacefully until the 20th century, when the conflict started to be radicalized both in the local Middle Eastern political context and in the process of redefining the relationship between Islam and the West. A theological definition of heresy does not imply solely a decision over specific doctrinal

matters; rather, it is the result of a complex interaction of different factors.

The Concept of Heresy in Eastern Religions

When we come to the Far East, the category of heresy does not apply to most of the religious phenomena we encounter, for two reasons. The first reason has to do with the theoretical limitations that the concept of heresy presents when we try to use it to describe different doctrinal patterns, such as that of Hinduism or Buddhism. In those religions, the relative elasticity of the complex of orthodox beliefs allowed and still allows for a greater range of theological and philosophical debates within a religious tradition than within, for instance, Christianity. This means that in both Hinduism and Buddhism, we can see the proliferation of many sects and doctrinal schools, often in contrast with each other and at times violently and dramatically, but never completely, separated from the main tradition.

The second reason the use of the term *heresy* for these religious phenomena is improper has to do with the practical aspects of those traditions, in a liturgical as well as in a geopolitical and historical sense. The historical developments of the areas where those traditions flourished allowed a degree of tolerance between different religious traditions that we rarely see in the West. An important example of this is that of China, where Daoism and Confucianism, albeit different in terms of doctrinal elements and often engaged polemically with each other, nevertheless coexisted rather peacefully for most of their histories. This does not mean that in China there were never cases of persecution for religious reasons, but such episodes of persecution cannot be described in terms of a coherent and systematic persecution of heresy.

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See also China; Christianity; Hindu Orthopraxy; Hinduism; Islam; Monotheism

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HEZBOLLAH

Hezbollah (lit. “Party of God”), is a Shi’a Islamist group that emerged in Lebanon in 1982 and gained the status of a cohesive organization when it formally stated its goals in 1985. While U.S. and Israeli policymakers consider Hezbollah a terrorist organization, in Lebanon it is known not only for its political and militant activities but also for providing charitable social services and operating hospitals and schools.

Led since 1992 by Hasan Nasrallah, its secretary-general, Hezbollah’s spiritual leader is the Supreme Leader of Iran, previously Ayatullah Khomeini, and currently Ayatullah Khamenei. The organization has two parts: the first composed of those playing an official governing role and the second of Lebanese Shi’i who are loosely affiliated with Hezbollah and support its causes. A legitimate political party in Lebanon, Hezbollah has participated in the Lebanese political system since 1992.

The Shi’i are only one of several religious communities in Lebanon. As minorities, the Lebanese Shi’i have struggled for political representation. Globally, the dominant Sunnī Muslim community, disapproving of Shi’a Islam, has discriminated

against Arab Shi'i, contributing to Arab Shi'a poverty and political marginalization.

Several events mobilized the Shi'i in Lebanon, leading to the creation of Hezbollah. In 1978, Lebanon's leading Shi'a cleric, Musa al-Sadr, who had demanded greater political rights for the Lebanese Shi'i, disappeared in Libya under suspicious circumstances. The primary locus of inspiration for Hezbollah's foundation was the 1978 to 1979 Iranian Revolution, which inspired Shi'i everywhere to struggle against imperialism and oppression. Other factors include the 1982 Israeli invasion and occupation of southern Lebanon, in which thousands of Lebanese civilians were killed as a result of bombing raids.

Hezbollah's primary goal was to actively resist Israel's occupation of southern Lebanon, which ended in 2000. This group also opposes Israel's occupation of what it believes to be Palestinian territory. Hezbollah's primary enemies are the United States and Israel, which are believed by Hezbollah to have caused suffering to the Shi'i, the Palestinian people, and the broader Muslim community.

Hezbollah's violent tactics have divided (and at times polarized) Muslims as well as non-Muslims, provoking both support and condemnation. In the foundational period of Shi'a sacred history, key Shi'a leaders fought against Sunnī enemies and suffered a martyr's death. This collective Shi'a memory of struggle and martyrdom likely contributes to Hezbollah's insistence on active resistance, including its willingness to sponsor suicide missions.

In 1983, Hezbollah bombed the U.S. Embassy in Beirut, killing 63 people. That year, they also attacked U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut with truck bombs, killing more than 200 U.S. servicemen, and in another assault, 58 French paratroopers were killed. In 1985, they hijacked a TWA (Trans World Airlines) flight. Hezbollah has carried out many attacks against Israeli occupying forces, playing a part in Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon. In the summer of 2006, Hezbollah captured two Israeli soldiers, triggering a 34-day war between Lebanon and Israel, leaving more than 100 Israelis and more than 1,000 Lebanese dead.

Sophia Pandya

See also Islamism (Political Islam); Lebanon; Politics and Religion; Shi'a Islam; Terrorism

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HIJAB

Hijab, within contemporary discourse, refers broadly to modest Islamic clothing and more particularly to the head-covering practice of Muslim women. Although there are a variety of styles of Islamic headscarves or veils, hijab most often refers to the style consisting of a cloth wrapped around the head and neck, covering the hair, neck, and ears but leaving the face visible. The use of the hijab has been on the rise since the 1970s and is an important expression of modesty and faith for many Muslims worldwide.

In Arabic, hijab literally means partition, curtain, or barrier. Traditionally, the word was used to denote the illusory nature of the world, where creation is "veiled" from God, or in reference to the physical partition that divided the public from the Prophet Muhammad's wives, allowing them greater privacy from Muhammad's many visitors. Thus, hijab retains the meaning of barrier in both usages, whether in the metaphysical or literal sense. The word *khimar*, rather than hijab, is used in the Qur'an to signify the headscarf. However, the etymology and meaning of hijab expanded in Islamic scholarship to include the concepts of modesty and morality manifested in particular styles of religious clothing, including various types of head coverings.

The importance of modesty is clear in the Qur'an, although the requirement of veiling is contested. The *surha* (chapter) often referenced in regard to the issue of veiling is the *Surat an-Nur* (Q 24:30–31), which calls on believing women to lower their gaze, guard their modesty, and draw their *khimar* over their bosoms in order to dissuade excessive displays of their beauty. The practice of veiling was common in the Near East and predates the revelation of this sura. It is unclear whether the *Surat an-Nur* should be understood as a call for obligatory observance of the hijab or whether it is referencing common social practices

of the time to elaborate on the importance of modest social interactions.

The practice of veiling has taken on political importance in the modern era. The use of the hijab and what it represents has been highly debated. While some believe that it is a marker of cultural identity or religious adherence, a tool used to create and reinforce particular religious dispositions, or an act of religious freedom, others decry it as a patriarchal practice that discriminates against and subjugates women and as a sign of antimodern sentiments. Many countries have passed laws on the use of the hijab. For example, France, Turkey, and Tunisia have placed restrictions on the use of Islamic veiling in public, whereas head covering in public is mandatory in Iran. The public approaches to the Islamic veil can also be of political importance, especially when these interactions are in opposition to the social norm or governmental prescription. In Egypt, for example, the rise of the hijab on college campuses in the 1970s suggested discontent among Egyptian youth with respect to the overtly secular government and Western styles of dress in urban areas of the country. In contrast to Egypt, many women choosing to wear hijab in the United States argue that such a choice should be viewed along the lines of freedom of speech and religious pluralism promoted by the U.S. government. The complexity and diversity of the current hijab debate thus suggests that the practice must be understood in the particular location in which it occurs, with reference to the religious understanding it adheres to and the political and social environments that have produced the controversy.

Kendra Sarna

See also Burka; Gender; Iran; Islam; Islamism (Political Islam); Women's Roles

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HINDU LAW

In the Hindu cultural tradition, stretching over more than three millennia, dharma is the concept that is generally considered synonymous with law. Dharma is also more broadly and importantly rendered as moral obligation or righteousness, and more loosely as religion. As the moral foundation of the social order, dharma is an aspect of cosmological stability (*rita*), which in turn is comparable with natural law.

Traditionally, it was the king's duty (*raja-dharma*) to uphold the prevailing laws, to command, to protect, and, when necessary, to administer punishment (*danda*) for violations of established norms. The king had no legislative powers; his commands were divine commandments. He was guided by his advisers, who were Brahmans well versed in the laws available in the textual tradition comprising mainly the Dharma Sutras and the Dharma Shastras. The latter texts draw on the Vedas and ancient law books for appropriate behavior for each *varna* (social category) and for each stage of life (*ashrama*). They also provide guidance to "universal" laws (*sādhārana dharma*) that are binding on one and all. The most famous of the Dharma Shastra texts is the law book of Manu, *Manusmriti* (composed around the beginning of the Common Era).

The classical tradition of laws encountered a major challenge with the emergence of Muslim kingship in the subcontinent in the eighth century. Notwithstanding the pressure exerted on them by their advisers to apply Islamic laws to their non-Muslim subjects, Muslim kings generally refrained from doing so in civil matters. Various restrictions on the practice of their religion and nontraditional obligations toward the state (e.g., the payment of taxes, including the *jizya* in return for protection and exemption from military service) were, however, laid on them as the laws of the state.

Two hundred years of British rule (ending in 1947) saw significant developments in the scope and character of the laws under which the

expanding category of Indian subjects were governed. To begin with, serious but misconceived attempts were made to codify Hindu (and Muslim) personal laws by disregarding a vast body of relatively fluid customary laws and going back to the Dharma Shastras, so that disputes pertaining to caste, family, property, and other civil and religious matters could be settled according to traditional norms. After 1858, when the British Crown assumed direct responsibility for governance in the subcontinent, the jurisdiction of traditional courts was rapidly narrowed, and a body of uniformly applicable commercial, criminal, and procedural laws was codified and applied. Personal laws were, however, left largely untouched.

Soon after independence, a series of enactments radically altered Hindu personal laws by discarding the shastric framework. Caste (*varna*, *jati*), sectarian, and regional distinctions were abolished; dissolution of marriage was permitted; and women (wives, widows, daughters) were granted rights of inheritance. Although much altered, the Hindu undivided family and its tax privileges remain intact. Local customs also are allowed some scope in contentious situations. A common personal law now prevails among all Hindus.

T. N. Madan

See also Hinduism; Politics and Religion; Religion and State

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HINDU NATIONALISM

Hindu nationalism is the notion that politics should be organized in accordance to Hindu doctrines and

practices, including but not limited to the desire for a political state, specifically India, based on Hinduism.

The impulse for Hindu nationalism began as a response to British colonialism in the 19th century. As Western culture materialized in India, Hindus sought to affirm their identity as a religious and ethnic group. Many Hindus turned to religious revivals to “purify” Hinduism as a religion and India as a nation from perceived Western corruption. Hindu religious revivals were connected to regional and national pride as well as religious conviction. As a result of these revivals, Hindu nationalism emerged as a movement interested in ending foreign rule, reviving Hindu religious practice, and asserting a unified religious and political identity based on a shared Hindu heritage.

One of the most significant expressions of Hindu nationalism came from V. D. Savarkar’s 1924 book *Essentials of Hindutva*. Considering *Hindutva* as distinct from Hinduism, Savarkar defined a *Hindu* as one who considered India “Father and Holy land.” This definition included individuals who practiced religions other than Hinduism, notably Buddhism, Sikhism, and Jainism. As long as a religion’s origins began in the same geographical region as Hinduism, it too could be considered “Hindu.” Savarkar purposefully drew boundaries between those who “belonged to” India and those who did not. In their most militant interpretations, Hindu nationalists, with ideological roots in Savarkar’s work, believe that Christians and Muslims, whose holy lands are in the Middle East, are intruders who do not belong in India and cannot be fully loyal to it. Furthermore, individuals with “Hindu blood,” according to Savarkar, are superior to those lacking Hindu blood. This Hindu race and its common culture found in Hinduism amounted to a distinct Hindu civilization for Savarkar and his followers.

The organization that best represents the ideologies expressed by Hindu nationalists is the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), or National Volunteer Corps, founded in 1925. The RSS advocated a Hindu-centric Indian identity. For the RSS, India was a Hindu country with a shared religion, language, and ethnicity. This ideology was often expressed in the expression “Hindu, Hindi, Hindustan.” RSS, and Hindu nationalism more generally, emerged parallel to secular Indian

nationalism and Mahatma Gandhi's Congress Party. The Congress Party, unlike the RSS, advocated a universal Pan-Indian identity and secular government. Hindu nationalists at the beginning of the 20th century framed their identity and ideology in opposition to the Congress Party in general and Gandhi in particular as they campaigned for a Hindu-based Indian identity and government. In 1936, Laxmi Kelkar established the women's auxiliary organization to RSS, the Rashtra Sevika Samiti. Rather than advocate for women's rights, this organization focused on sustaining women's devotion to their families and the greater Hindu family. Samiti members emphasized the importance of women personally sacrificing for Hindu civilization as a fulfillment of their national duty, ethnic heritage, and spiritual role.

After Indian independence in 1947, the RSS formed political organizations including the Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS) and the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP). Since the formation of the BJS and VHP, RSS-inspired political and social organizations continue to emerge on both local and national levels. The proliferation of these organizations has produced a multitude of Hindu nationalist ideologies inspired by, though not necessarily completely based on, Hindutva.

Cara Burnidge

See also Gandhi, Mohandas; India; Politics and Religion; Postcolonialism; Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh; Reform Hinduism; Religion and State; Religious Nationalism

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HINDU ORTHOPRAXY

Orthopraxy, a term derived from Greek meaning "correct action/activity," is descriptive of religions that emphasize conduct, both ethical and liturgical,

as opposed to faith or grace. Hinduism is characterized more by what people do than by what they believe and is, therefore, often described as a way of life rather than a cosmology or theology. What people do is highly context specific, depending on who the actor is and in what place and time he or she is placed. Is the actor a man or woman, an adult or a child, a member of an upper or a lower caste? Is the actor at home, in a temple, or at a place of pilgrimage? Is it dawn or dusk, day or night, a normal time or an abnormal time (e.g., periods of personal ritual impurity or natural calamities)? Thus, an upper-caste woman may not cook or perform rituals during her menstruation, dietary restrictions are less stringent in the case of lower-caste people and during an acute famine, and the norms of righteous behavior are not the same for a child and an adult, a householder and a renouncer.

The religious life of Hindus involves the performance of life cycle rituals (*samskara*) and acts of piety. Important domestic rituals are centered on birth, initiation into adulthood, marriage, and death. These critical events are steps in a continuous process of the maturation of the body from a brute to a refined moral state. Both birth and death cause temporary pollution, and rites are performed for the restoration of normalcy. Initiations and marriages are highly auspicious events. Eventually, most Hindus cremate the dead body, and some consider this ritual (*anteshti*) a sacrificial offering to gods. The performance of domestic rituals requires the guidance of ritual specialists, the most notable among whom are Brahman priests, who offer their services to all upper-caste (or clean) families on a hereditary basis. Lower-caste people have their own ritual specialists.

Acts of piety have a wide range and may be exclusively personal or performed together with others, who may or may not be related to the performer by bonds of kinship. Periodic food offerings to one's ancestors (*sraddha*) are a common act of piety among upper-caste people. The most common expression of religious devotion is the *puja*, the ritual adoration of an idol or an anthropomorphic image of a god or goddess. A *puja* may be held at home, in a temple, or at a place of pilgrimage. Objects of nature, such as mountains, rivers, trees, animals, and the planets, among whom the sun is included, are also worshipped.

Throughout the history of Hinduism, temples and pilgrimages (*yātra*) have occupied a prominent place. Temples generally are exclusively sectarian and the “abode” of a Hindu god or goddess. Traditionally, lower-caste people were denied entry into upper-caste temples. One of the main planks of Mohandas K. (Mahatma) Gandhi’s campaign for religious reform was the throwing open of all Hindu temples. Pilgrimages to holy places have, however, always attracted Hindus of all castes from far and near. Thus, large numbers of Hindus gather periodically at the confluence of holy rivers at Haridwar, Nashik, Prayag, and Ujjain to celebrate the *Kumbha Mela*. While the great places of pilgrimage of course remain in India, Hindu temples, puja, and bhakti (deep personal devotion to a chosen deity or a holy person) have traveled with Hindu migrants to the far corners of the world.

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See also Heresy; Hindu Law; Hinduism

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HINDU TRADITIONS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

See Southeast Asia

HINDUISM

Hindus are today found virtually all over the world, as natives, as descendants of earlier

migrants, or as relatively recent arrivals. South Asia is, however, where most Hindus have always lived, where their old and new sacred centers are located, and from where they have migrated elsewhere, carrying with them significant elements of their cultural heritage (including religion and languages). With an estimated population of more than 885 million (13% of the human mass), Hindus as the followers of a world religion occupy the third place, behind Christians and Muslims. Table 1 presents the 2010 estimates for 12 countries with a sizable number of Hindus.

It may be additionally noted here that, according to the U.S. Census Bureau data for 2007, there were 2.57 million Indians counted; it is reasonable to presume that the great majority of them, perhaps well over 1 million, are Hindus. Pakistan, all but 5% of whose population of 175 million consists of Muslims, would be another country with more than 1 million Hindus.

Table 1 Countrywise Distribution of Hindus: Total Number and Share of Total Population

Country	Hindus	Share of Hindus in Total Population (%)
India	895,688,213	80.5
Nepal	23,022,208	80.6
Bangladesh	14,980,881	9.6
Indonesia	4,324,887	1.8
Sri Lanka	1,620,604	7.6
Malaysia	1,620,015	6.3
Mauritius	616,447	48.0
United Kingdom	611,132	1.0
Trinidad and Tobago	276,739	22.5
Fiji	263,577	27.9
Guyana	206,166	28.4
Suriname	131,867	27.4

Source: CIA, *The World Factbook* (accessed September 14, 2010, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook>), which provides countrywise data on total population and the share of various religious groups in it. The number of Hindus in each country has been calculated from these data.

The character and antiquity of Hinduism have been subjects of scholarly debate, particularly in the recent past. It has been argued that Hinduism is not a religion in the sense in which Christianity or Islam is so. It does not have a founder, a revealed book, or a set of fundamentals of belief and practice. Given its subcontinental spread and the presence of regional, cultural, and linguistic diversities, people who are called Hindus by others, and who identify themselves as such in everyday life and at decennial census enumerations, usually display much diversity along regional, caste, and sectarian lines in matters of religious faith and practice. Hinduism is therefore more a family of religions rather than a single, homogeneous faith. The presence of common elements cannot, however, be denied.

Definitional features of particular religions (e.g., Christianity and Islam) should not, of course, set limits but may provide cues to what may be deemed to be the religious life of Hindus. Moreover, Hindu sects usually have the aforementioned characteristics of the Abrahamic religions. Actually, the Vedas too are regarded as revealed scripture by textual pundits, but the Brahmanical notion of revelation is different in the sense that “knowledge” (*vidyā*) is believed to have been recovered spiritually by the ancient sages rather than received externally by them through a messenger. More important, perhaps, is the fact that today Hindus generally have little acquaintance with the Vedas. If one were to abandon the narrow approach and adopt a more general criterion, such as the notion of the “sacred” or the “holy,” Hinduism is as much a religion as any other.

The internal plurality of Hinduism was conceptualized by the sociologist M. N. Srinivas in a three-tier model comprising local, regional, and all-India or Sanskritic Hinduism. The diversities are most prominent if one focuses on the local level, and the common elements, at the subcontinental level. Enough historical evidence is available about the upward and downward passage of elements of belief and practice to constitute a single but heterogeneous Hinduism.

Besides its character, there is also the question of the historicity of Hinduism. The terms themselves—*Hinduism*, *Hinduismus*, *hindouisme*, *induismo*, and so on—were coined by Westerners (missionaries, Orientalists) in the late 18th and 19th centuries. It

does not follow, however, that the phenomenon that the term designates did not exist earlier. It is more accurate to recognize Hinduism as an evolving set of beliefs and practices going back to the religion of the Vedas (ca. 1500 BCE onward) and beginning to take a form that is today familiar as the Puranas (mythological tales and legends constructed around the theologies of the divinities Shiva, Vishnu, and Devi) came to be composed (300–600 CE). At the beginning of the 11th century, the Persian traveler-scholar al-Béruni observed that Hindus differed fundamentally from Muslims and Buddhists in matters of religion. Regional folklore and literatures throughout the medieval period also contain numerous references to Hindus and Muslims as religious categories.

By the early 19th century, educated Indians also had begun to use the term *Hinduism* alongside Hindu Dharma. During the struggle for the overthrow of colonial rule, religious identities (Hindu, Sikh, Muslim) were exploited for purposes of political mobilization. It was in this context that the term *Hindutva* (“Hindu-ness”) emerged to project Hindu claims of historical antiquity and cultural primacy. It was not a religious movement. Throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, however, Hinduism came in for many reformulations at the hands of social reformers, political leaders, and religious thinkers, attesting to its characteristically dynamic character. The migration of indentured labor, mostly Hindus, to various parts of the world under the auspices of colonialism gave Hinduism a global presence. The fascination in the West for the supposed emancipatory potential of devotional Hinduism during the heyday of the counterculture movement of the 1960s and the arrival there of significant numbers of educated Indians for work opportunities during the closing years of the 20th century gave a further fillip to this process.

Beliefs, Thought, and Practice

Beliefs and Rites

The beliefs that characterize Hinduism range from those that have implications for everyday life (practical religion) to those that constitute abstract metaphysics. We will first focus on the former. Thus, there is the fundamental notion that individual and collective life must be grounded in the

twin notions of righteousness and moral duty. The term *dharma* describes both and is generally employed in modern writings to also stand for the notion of religion. Hinduism is Hindu Dharma. The individual is wholly embedded in the collectivity, which is part and parcel of the cosmic order (*rita*). The latter admits of no arbitrariness and is akin to the notion of natural law.

Dharma literally means that complex of values and relations that sustains or upholds the social order or, in other words, produces and maintains social coherence. It is not all that different from the Latin *religio* for “obligation,” which is regarded by many modern scholars as the root of the word *religion*. Dharma is the foundational value orientation, and dharmic action is the primary goal of individual and social pursuits. The pursuit of dharma is an exercise in moral refinement, and as such, it is a this-worldly ethic.

Concretely, it entails in the case of the young the pursuit of knowledge (the study of scriptures and other forms of knowledge) and the acquisition of practical skills, which become the means of livelihood. Encompassed by dharma, then, is *artha*, or the rational pursuit in adult life of economic and political goals, and encompassed by both dharma and *artha* is the pursuit of pleasures, or *kaāma*. Dharma, *artha*, and *kaāma* constitute a hierarchy of values as well as of goal-oriented activities (*purushārtha*). A fourth goal is often added to these three, namely, moksha, or release from worldly existence, through spiritual endeavor that may include renunciation.

According to traditional sources, humanity shares physical needs with animals, but its defining quality is the capacity for dharma. There is a universally shared substratum of dharmic obligations (*sarva sādharan dharma*); there is considerable variation from person to person according to his or her stage of life (or *ashrama*, of which four are recognized, viz., *brahmacharya*, studentship; *grihasthya*, householdership; *vanaprastha*, retirement; and *sannyasa*, renunciation) and social status, most broadly defined in terms of one’s *varna* (Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaishya, Shudra). The compound term *varna-ashrama-dharma* captures this context sensitivity. Thus, the king’s dharma (*rāja dharma*) is to ensure that all his subjects are able to follow their traditional dharmas. Hindu society comprises numerous castes (*jati*), which are ranked

according to the *varna* scheme. General and specific obligations may be relaxed, however, in times of acute stress: For example, dietary taboos may not be enforced during a famine or epidemic. The fourth stage of life, renunciation, which entails withdrawal from social life, is governed by its own dharma or code of conduct.

Dharma is the value base for the performance of purposive actions (*karma*). In its most general connotation, *karma* is any action, but specifically it refers to the performance of life cycle rituals (*karma kānda*). Such rituals are many in number, beginning with those relating to conception and including birth, initiation (in the case of clean caste boys), marriage, and death rites. Postmortem food offerings (*shraddha*) are an important component of Hindu piety. The performance of these rituals is usually carried out under the supervision of Brahman priests, but lower-caste people who may not be served by them employ their own ritual specialists.

Related to the notion of *karma* as dharmic action is the idea of the fruits of action (*karma phala*). Inherent in the concept of *karma*, and of the actor as a moral agent, is the expectation that, besides its worldly consequences, every action carries a positive or negative moral load. It is one’s unalterable fate that the consequences of this accumulation (*sanchit karma*) must be enjoyed or suffered. It is rarely possible to fully discharge the obligation in one biological lifetime; one may have to be reborn to carry on this work, hence the notion of the endless cycle of birth, death, and rebirth, or transmigration of the soul (*samsara*). It is an ideal to obtain release (*moksha*) from this chain through spiritual endeavor, but this ultimately depends on divine grace (*anugraha*).

In an elaborate or simplified form, knowledge about the interrelated notions of dharma, *karma*, and *samsara* is widely distributed among Hindus generally. Indeed, these ideas find expression in all Indic religions. Foreigners also have noticed their prevalence. Al-Béruni (already quoted above) characterized the religion of the Hindus in terms of, among other features, belief in the divinity, soul, *samsara* or metempsychosis, and *moksha*. Some scholars of Indic religions have noted that the notion of *karma* is the closest that Hinduism comes to having a doctrinal foundation; indeed, *karma* and *samsara* have been said to together

constitute the most complete theodicy in the history of religion.

The religious life of the Hindus is dominated by the performance of life cycle rituals but is not exhausted by it. Like the followers of any other faith, they also accord great importance to piety in the hope of receiving divine benediction. While philosophical (Upanishadic) Hinduism is constructed round the abstract notion of an indefinable transcendental reality (Brahman), which is the essence of every individual's inner self (atman), in the lives of people generally, a loving and forgiving god or goddess, if approached with true devotion, is expected to be the redeemer. In view of the multiplicity of divine beings in Hinduism, a devotee can choose his or her favorite deity (*ishta deva/devī*). Vishnu in his 9 (or 10) avatars, notably as Rama and Krishna the heroes of the epic *Ramayana* (composed in many languages over the centuries) and the *Bhāgavata Purāna* (ca. 10th–11th centuries), respectively; Shiva; and Devi (again in many incarnations, as Durga in West Bengal, Meenakshi in Tamil Nadu, and Sharika in Kashmir) are the most widely adored deities.

The most commonly observed form of Hindu worship is the puja. It may be offered at home or in a temple. The object of adoration is an idol or anthropomorphic image (*mūrti*), or set of images, representing a deity or deities. The image is “brought to life” by appropriate mantras and treated like a special guest—bathed, perfumed, fed, entertained, and put to bed. The key idea is *darshan*, seeing and being seen by the deity. Devotees who do not favor image worship read the scriptures (the Bhagavad Gita, ca. 200 BCE, is a favorite text) or engage in the silent repetition of mantras (*japa*). Fasting as an act of piety or in expectation of boons is also common. All these are, of course, activities for the individual.

Congregational worship is less common. The most common types are pilgrimages to holy places (*tīrtha yātrā*), such as the confluence of Ganga, Yamuna, and the unseen Sarasvati at Prayag, and sound and light rituals called *ārti*, which may be held in a temple or any holy place. Devotees chant sacred verses, offer flowers, wave ghee lamps, blow into conch shells, and beat drums, usually at nightfall.

Trans-regional pilgrimages have, for more than a millennium (if not longer), played a crucial part

in producing a sense of common religious identity among Hindus of all castes and communities. While pilgrims are on the move everywhere and all the time, some destinations and certain auspicious occasions have special sanctity attached to them; going there, particularly on a very auspicious occasion, is therefore considered particularly meritorious. Beside Hardwar and Prayag in North India, Ujjain in central India and Nashik in the west also may be mentioned. All four are sacred places where rivers meet and where the periodic (astrologically determined) *Kumbha Mela* (special bathing festival) takes place, when ritual impurities and moral infirmities can be washed away.

Astrology plays a significant part in the religious life of the Hindus, particularly those belonging to the higher castes. The notion of ritual purity, a crucial element in the determination of status within the caste system, is supplemented by the concept of auspiciousness, which primarily is a quality of temporal events. Although a birth in the family causes ritual impurity, it is an auspicious event; a death too results in ritual impurity and is considered inauspicious; marriages are both pure and auspicious. Auspicious timings for important events (e.g., marriage) are determined by consulting an astrologer or an almanac. Astrologers also devise protective or curative rituals to ward off the evil influence of planetary movements on an individual's well-being.

Astrology and Ayurveda, or traditional Hindu (humoral) medicine, are mutually complementary bodies of sacred knowledge and practice. Their reach is generally confined to upper-caste people, who are served by Brahman priests. Lower-caste people have their own ritual specialists with distinctive methods of divination and the control of disease and misfortune. Expectedly, Brahmans look down on these specialists and their practices, but an outside observer would not find them all that different in their approach to situation management.

Systems of Thought

The highest forms of Brahmanical knowledge include grammar, logic, and metaphysics. Traditionally, six systems of philosophy (*darshana*) have been recognized, and they are concerned with ontological and epistemological questions. While the

Sāmkhya is considered the foundational system—it posits a dualism between matter (*prakṛiti*) and the self (*puruṣha*)—it is Vedānta, the monist system, that is the best known. The Vedic corpus contains theological affirmations, ritual procedures, and philosophical speculations. The latter were elaborated and formalized in the body of texts known as the Upanishads (secret knowledge). The Vedānta is a body of commentarial texts within the Vaiṣṇava tradition of the Upanishads, the Bhagavad Gita, and the Brahma Sūtra (a theological work concerned with the nature of Brahman, or the Absolute).

Internally diverse, Vedānta philosophy-theology comprises the Advaita (nondualist), *Vishishtadvaita* (qualified nondualistic), and *Dvaita* (dualist) traditions. Shankara (ca. 788–820 CE), the principal proponent of Advaita, is generally considered the most outstanding Indian philosopher ever. He asserted the ontological identity of the self (atman) and the Brahman, dismissing their separation as illusion (*māya*). It is the qualified dualism of Ramanuja (ca. 1017–1137 CE), however, which has been more influential among Hindus generally: His theology valorized the ideas of bhakti and divine grace.

Although Hinduism does not have an externally revealed scripture, from the time of Shankara, the Bhagavad Gita (“The Lord’s Song”) has enjoyed the status of the key text. Placed in the *Mahābhārata*, it is a discourse on the nature of dharma, karma, and moksha and on the importance of true knowledge, which alone can end ignorance and illusion. The moral agent’s true self (atman) is said to be imperishable: This and the obligation to perform the duties required by one’s true nature (*svabhāva*), socially manifested through the *varna* scheme, without concern for the consequences, are presented as an ethic of responsibility. True knowledge (*dhyāna*), appropriate conduct (*svadharma*), and ultimately divine grace received by embracing the path of devotion (bhakti) together constitute the Gita’s theory of action.

Although located within the Vaiṣṇava tradition—the teacher (guru) of the doctrine is Krishna, an avatar of Vishnu—the Gita has been honored by all Brahmanical traditions. Not only Shankara, Ramanuja, and the dualist Madhava (12th to 13th centuries), all from South India, but also the outstanding Shaiva philosopher Abhinavagupta (ca.

960–1050 CE) of Kashmir wrote commentaries on it. In the 20th century, spiritualists like Sri Aurobindo, popular teachers like Swami Prabhupada, founder of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON; see below), and political leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi have offered their interpretations of the text. Gandhi acknowledged it as a source of enlightenment and comfort and read it as a discourse on the values of detachment and nonviolence or compassion in the discharge of one’s duties.

Medieval and Modern Developments

In the absence of a founder, a single foundational text, a minimal set of fundamentals, and a church-like organization, Hinduism as a body of belief, thought, and practice has been singularly nondoctrinaire and open. It has a history. The sources of its dynamics have been internal and external. Hinduism has grown through a ceaseless intercourse between regional Brahmanical traditions and local traditions. It even borrowed from Buddhism and Jainism, which grew out of and in significant respects in opposition to it. Historians have noted both the absorptive capacities of Hinduism and its syncretistic tendencies.

The foregoing characteristics of Hinduism are perhaps best illustrated by the ideals of bhakti or religious devotion. Some of the earliest Vedic hymns of praise or solicitation, addressed to the powers of nature anthropomorphized as gods, may well be considered the seeds of this perennial spirituality. These seeds germinated in the soil of Tamil Nadu, India, nearly 2,000 years ago, spread elsewhere, and enlivened both Vaiṣṇava and Shaiva traditions. Bhakti has produced some of the world’s most ecstatic religious poetry, with the human longing for union with the divine as its core theme. It considers all devotees equally worthy, irrespective of caste and gender. By medieval times, bhakti had become a subcontinental phenomenon, which had been enriched by the encounter with Sufi Islam. New sects that maintained an ambiguous relationship with Hinduism (e.g., the Kabir Panth) emerged. A syncretic sant (“seeker of truth”) tradition also took shape in North India between the 15th and 17th centuries, which derived its constitutive elements of faith and practice from Vaiṣṇava bhakti, Sufi Islam, and a yoga cult.

Indeed, a new religion was born in this setting of immense religious fervor. Nanak Dev (1469–1539 CE), an educated Punjabi Hindu of Khatri caste, who was familiar but largely dissatisfied with both Hinduism and Islam as practiced in his time, laid the foundations of a new religious tradition, which his followers called the Nanak Panth and is now known as Sikhism (from the word *sikha*, disciple). While the four major Indic religions—Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism—clearly are distinct from one another, they share some key ideas, such as dharma and karma, and practices, notably pilgrimage to holy places.

Modern developments in Hinduism had their origins in the impact throughout the 19th century of Western scholarship, political ideas, and Christianity. The emergence of interest in Sanskrit language and literature and Hindu philosophy followed the establishment of the colonial administration and went hand in hand with proselytization by Christian missionaries. Early appreciation of the benefits of British rule and admiration for certain aspects of the Christian faith gradually gave way to religious reform and revivalism and nationalist stirrings among educated Hindus.

The founding of the Arya Samaj by Dayananda Sarasvati (1824–1883) in western India and its successes in northern India represented the revivalist-reformist response to the challenge of the West; the projection of Vedantic Hinduism as the religion of humanity by Swami Vivekananda (1870–1902) was a modernist response. Confronted in Punjab with a situation in which missionary activity had the tacit support of the colonial administration, Dayananda adopted a two-pronged strategy. First, he called on Hindus to return to the “true” Vedic religion and to abandon later mythology and ritualism; second, he introduced the procedure for reconversion through a ritual of purification. Adopting a stance of total intolerance toward Islam and Christianity, he stressed the importance of solidarity among the followers of the Vedic religion, whom he called the Aryas, “noble people.” The Arya Samaj did not explicitly have political objectives, but it created an organizational framework that was later used by others for such purposes.

In Bengal, efforts to produce a syncretic religion from elements drawn from Vedanta and Unitarian Christianity did not long survive their initiator,

Ram Mohan Roy (1772–1833). A more strident reassertion of Vedanta as the one true, complete, and universal religion, which was yet tolerant of other religions, was made by Vivekananda. His most urgent concern was to purify Hinduism of Puranic and other accretions and to rid Hindu society of internal divisions. More important, perhaps, he put forward the ideal of service to humanity as the highest form of spiritualism, claiming that it was rooted in the teachings of his spiritual master, Ramakrishna. The Ramakrishna Paramahansa Mission, founded in 1897, became a movement that today has a worldwide presence.

An honest, nonegoistic concern for the sufferings of others was identified as true religiousness by Mohandas Gandhi (1869–1948), better known as the Mahatma (“great soul”), a term of great respect generally applied to holy persons among Hindus and bestowed on Gandhi by the distinguished *littérateur* Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941). Gandhi considered himself a Hindu, not merely by birth but by conviction. He rejected the authority of tradition and scriptural texts and subjected every belief, convention, and practice to the test of moral reason and, eventually, the conscience. It is thus that he came to reject the ritual of animal sacrifice and the practice of untouchability (avoidance of direct contact by upper-caste Hindus with lower-caste people).

Gandhi studied the scriptures of other major religions and acknowledged deep indebtedness to Jainism and Christianity. From the former, he adopted the doctrine of the “many-sidedness” of reality (*anekāntavād*), and from the Sermon on the Mount (in the New Testament), he derived the strategy of nonviolent passive resistance. He regarded all religions to be true, since the final objective—the search for Truth—was the same, and at the same time imperfect, because of the limitations of human understanding. Gandhi regarded religious plurality a human treasure, even a divine blessing, and stood for participatory pluralism. He considered conversion from one religion to another a matter of conscience but believed it unnecessary. The correct approach, he maintained, was to refine one’s religious sensibility within the framework of the tradition into which one was born.

Gandhi rejected the separation of religious and secular life. Politics was, he said, the form in which

dharma presents itself in the modern age. His worldview was religious, but he supported the concept of the secular state and expected that it would completely refrain from interference in religious affairs. He deemed it as the moral responsibility of Hindus as the majority community of India (both before and after the partition of the subcontinent in 1947) to provide protection to all religious minorities. It was this that led to his assassination in 1948 at the hands of a Hindu bigot just before the commencement of a multireligious prayer meeting.

Hinduism, it seems, has been presented to its followers as a way of life by three kinds of exemplars, namely, those who focus on practice, like Gandhi did; those who stress on introspection, as Sri Aurobindo (1872–1950) did; and those who place personal experience above all other kinds of religiousness as Ramana Maharshi (1879–1950) did. Aurobindo maintained an evolutionary perspective both on external reality as an expression of the Absolute and on the maturation of spirituality. He thus opposed those elements of Advaitic thought that posit the notion of illusion in appearances. The Maharshi (“great seer”), however, remained firmly committed to the unity of Brahman and atman.

Among the religious teachers active in India in recent years was Sathya Sai Baba (1926–2011), who had a vast following at home and abroad. He was reputed to possess miraculous powers; it was his support to educational and health care institutions that perhaps is the more notable aspect of his mission. Other Hindu religious teachers also were active in the second half of the 20th century, but some of them chose to work abroad, where their appeal was greater among those not born as Hindus. Tradition does not, however, recognize formal conversion as legitimate.

Gurus apart, Hinduism’s vitality results from the activities of Hindus generally. Old divinities sometimes come alive again, as is illustrated by the emergence in recent years of Vaishnav Devi as a beneficent goddess. Hundreds of thousands of pilgrims visit her shrine near Jammu every year. Not so long ago, a new goddess, Santoshi Ma, was added to the pantheon, but her cult seems to have weakened. Big and small temples are coming up everywhere, pilgrimages attract millions, and all-night bhajan-singing neighborhood groups are

common. In short, Hinduism is well and alive today at home and abroad.

Hinduism as a Global Religion

Traditionally, birth was the only way one could acquire Hindu identity, but one could lose it through many kinds of misconduct, one of which was the crossing of the seas. The Hindu way of life could be lived only in the sacred land of India, known to the ancients by names such as Jambu Dvipa and Bharatvarsha. Transgression of the rules was uncommon but not absent.

As early as the fifth century BCE, a Hindu prince is said to have settled in Sri Lanka. Later, in the first century CE, a Brahman adventurer founded a kingdom comprising Cambodia and the adjacent lands. Archaeological and cultural evidence testifies to the widespread presence of Hinduism and a rich civilizational synthesis in Southeast Asia. Its greatest monument is the world heritage site of Angkor Vat, a temple complex built by the Hindu king Suryavarman (1112–1152 CE).

Hinduism as a live religious tradition, which is traced back to the ninth century, survives among more than 3 million Hindus of the island of Bali (Indonesia), constituting 92% of its population. Among them, Brahman priests occupy a central place in society, but non-Brahman ritual specialists also exist. Temple rituals and ancestor worship are prominent features of Balinese Hinduism. Purā Besākih, a complex of 22 public temples, where Shiva-Rāditya, Brahma, and Vishnu are worshipped, is highly revered. Ancestor worship distinguishes between those ancestors who are in the process of being purified and those who have been fully purified and attained divine status as a deva.

In more recent times, from the early 19th century onward, European colonizers carried indentured Indian laborers, mostly Hindus, to faraway places such as the Caribbean Islands, South Africa, and Fiji. Voluntary migrations also occurred, for instance, to east and central Africa and Southeast Asia. As these migrant communities stabilized, their social and religious lives underwent changes marked by the effort to both preserve old Hindu elements and adopt local elements.

A most significant event in the globalization of Hinduism was the 2-year stay of Swami Vivekananda in the United States, where he went

in 1892 to attend the first World Parliament of Religions. His inclusive message of religious pluralism aroused considerable interest in Hindu philosophy and yoga (techniques of physical self-discipline and mental concentration). He established the Vedanta society for the propagation of Advaita (humanity incarnates the divinity) and social service as the true religion.

Yoga has found wide appeal in the West. In 1959, Maharshi Mahesh Yogi (d. 2008), the originator of Transcendental Meditation (TM) arrived in the United States. Claiming Vedic inspiration, he asserted that TM was a scientifically validated method of self-improvement. Other gurus focused more on piety. The most successful of them was Bhaktivedanta Swami Prahbupada (1896–1977), who reached the United States in 1965 and established the ISKCON (also known as Hare Krishna), teaching theistic devotionalism constructed around a cult of the Vaishnava god Krishna. This is now an international movement. TM too found followers in Europe and the United Kingdom. The Swaminarayan sect (established in Gujarat in the early 19th century) reached Britain in the 1950s, where it now has a large following among Indian immigrants.

The closing decades of the 20th century witnessed the migration of relatively large numbers of highly educated and professionally competent Hindus to the West, particularly the United States. While regional community, caste, and linguistic divisions among them seem to be weakening, a rich, although abridged, religious life survives. Newly built temple complexes have become a crucial symbol of Hindu identity. Indeed, serious observers claim that Hinduism is being institutionalized as an American religion within the framework of multiculturalism. It is noteworthy that Hindu migrants who support right-wing politics in India are enthusiasts of globalization and proud of Hinduism as a world religion.

T. N. Madan

See also Dharma, Karma, and Samsara; Hare Krishna (International Society for Krishna Consciousness); Hindu Law; Hindu Nationalism; Hindu Orthodoxy; India

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HIROSHIMA AND NAGASAKI

At the close of World War II, the United States conducted atomic bombings against the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The events served as tests for nuclear technological experimentation and military action to end combat in the Pacific Rim. The sheer magnitude of these attacks has not only given rise to global and international peace movements but also acted as a symbol for religious movements geared toward pacifism and the safeguarding of life in general. In particular, the Buddhist organization Soka Gakkai International has made antinuclear proliferation a central feature of its religious objectives. Indeed the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki elicited a variety of critical responses from religious leaders abroad, including the theologian and member of the Federal Council of Churches Reinhold Niebuhr, who called the events “morally indefensible.”

A technological development enterprise called the Manhattan Engineers District, also known as the “Manhattan Project,” was commissioned by the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada to create the first nuclear bomb. Under the direction of

General Leslie R. Groves and the physicist J. Robert Oppenheimer, the Manhattan Project continued for 5 years between 1941 and 1946. The output of the project was considered a viable option in ending World War II by dropping nuclear bombs on the Empire of Japan. In spite of extensive admonition about the development of nuclear weapons from prominent figures such as Albert Einstein and Leo Szilard, President Franklin D. Roosevelt allowed the project to continue.

In 1945, U.S. President Harry S. Truman authorized the use of nuclear weapons on Japan. At 8:15 a.m. on August 6, 1945, a U.S. B-29 bomber, dubbed the “Enola Gay,” released a uranium-based bomb over Hiroshima. The bomb, known as “Little Boy,” killed an estimated 140,000 people. The subsequent radiation and lack of immediate medical attention may have increased this toll by another 60,000 in the years that followed.

After the Hiroshima bombing, Emperor Hirohito had yet to react under the Potsdam Declaration, which outlined the conditions of Japan’s surrender. At 11:01 a.m. on August 9, 1945—just 3 days after the Hiroshima bombing—the United States released yet another bomb, this time over Nagasaki. This plutonium-core bomb, named “Fat Man,” killed an estimated 80,000 people from either the impact itself or the ensuing radiation.

On August 13, 1945, Emperor Hirohito accepted the terms of the Potsdam Declaration and formally surrendered on September 2, 1945. After the surrender, Japan was occupied from 1945 to 1952 by the Allied Powers, led by General Douglas MacArthur, the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers.

Today, the hypocenters (ground zero sites of the explosions) of both Hiroshima and Nagasaki have been designated as monuments that include museums full of artifacts and interactive educational material as well as parks and a variety of landmarks that memorialize the devastation caused by the events while reminding the world of the dangers of war and mass destruction. In addition to prayer vigils during each anniversary of the Hiroshima bombing, attendees practice Tōrō Nagashi, a spiritual ritual of floating illuminated lanterns in the water to honor the memory of the deceased.

Salvador Jiménez Murguía

See also Cosmic War and Cosmic Conflict; Japan

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HOA HAO

The Hoa Hao messianic sect emerged in Vietnam under the social, economic, and political conditions engendered by colonization and World War II. Hoa Hao was influenced by the peasant psychology of the pioneers in the Cochinchina region of South Vietnam, revealing a new form of popular nationalism clustered around the figure of a Vietnamese Buddhist messiah.

In 1939, while on a pilgrimage to heal persistent illnesses, the young peasant Huynh Phu So—native from the village named Hoa Hao—became enlightened. He then began preaching about the apocalypse to peasants and also offered his healing powers.

As a communitarian and considerably autarkical movement, Hoa Hao represents a semifossilized form of a local myth that presages a new millennium and the arrival of the “Future Buddha” (Maitreya). Hoa Hao Buddhism significantly maintains the millenarian tenets of the Maitreya myth, its way of dressing, and its very simplified social and ritual organization, with the messiah figure as a reference. Although clergy and the pagoda are absent, a committee of advisers operates in each hamlet, village, district, and province.

This messianism played an undeniably strategic role in the process of decolonization, particularly through the sect’s control of a large part of South Vietnam’s “rice basket.” Huynh Phu So was more or less consciously an instrument of the Indo-China policy pursued by the foreign powers. Indeed, proclaimed as the “living Buddha” by worshippers, his influence worried the French authorities, who placed him in jail and in a psychiatric hospital. The Japanese, however, set him free

in exchange for his support. In 1945 and 1946, he used his religious charisma in the service of the Viet Minh but was murdered by this ally the following year. His death contributed to the expansion of the movement, which soon joined the camp opposed to the Viet Minh. The members of his family remained the guarantors of exegesis.

The Hoa Hao community underwent several periods of oppression as a result of the policy adopted by the Ngo Dinh Diem regime (1955–1963) and, subsequently, at the hands of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam beginning in 1975. The 2 million worshippers were legally recognized only in 1999. Rejecting the government takeover of the movement's religious (and economic) affairs, several followers committed self-immolation in 2001.

Hoa Hao activism is perennial not only in Vietnam but also among the boat people community settled in the United States, where followers, in conferences and on websites, demand respect for religious freedom and human rights in Vietnam. However, the original tenets of Hoa Hao Buddhism—particularly its attachment to the soil of the Mekong Delta and to the traditions of precolonial life—have been lost in the United States. In Vietnam, Hoa Hao is not very visible in public life and is usually confined to households. Only recently have followers in Vietnam created an online presence for the promotion of their messiah.

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See also Cao Dai; New Religions; Politics and Religion; Theravada Buddhism; Vietnam

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HOLIDAYS

Almost every religion has special days that indicate important symbols of its belief or important

events in its history. These days differ from one religion, or even from one culture, to another, but the English word *holiday* maintains its connection to “holy day.” Religious holidays symbolize major components of faiths and make people gather together under a “holy” mood.

Holidays in Islam

Islam has two holidays according to the Qur'an and Prophet Muhammad. One of them is Eid ul-Fitr. It is celebrated after Ramadan, the ninth month of Hicri, the lunar Islamic calendar. During Ramadan, Muslims fast from sunrise to sunset, with the exception of little children, travelers, and ill people. Eid ul-Fitr is celebrated for 3 days. Sadaka-i Fitr (charity) and Zekat (obligatory alms) are often given to the poor on Eid and before Eid.

The other holiday in Islam is Eid ul-Adha. It lasts 4 days beginning on the 10th day of the last month of the Islamic year, which is also the month of the hajj, the pilgrimage to Makkah (Mecca). Eid ul-Adha symbolizes for Muslims the faithfulness of Prophet Ibrahim in being ready to sacrifice his son Prophet Ismail to God. Thus, sacrificing a lamb, a sheep, or a camel is meant to show the faithfulness of Muslims to God. The meat is shared among the family, neighbors, and the poor according to the Qur'an.

As preparation for the Eids, Muslims clean their houses and get new clothes and gifts for their families and friends. The celebration begins with Eid prayers offered at large mosque gatherings. Mosque members wear their best clothes to give thanks to God.

Holidays in Christianity

Christmas is one of the most widely celebrated holidays of Christianity. It is a celebration of Jesus' birthday. The period of Advent (from the Latin word for “coming” or “arrival”), in which Christians prepare for the coming of Jesus, lasts between 3 weeks (if December 25 falls on Monday) and 4 weeks (if it falls on Sunday). This period also is a time of preparing the inner self to receive Jesus in spirit. Christians celebrate Christmas in their own homes with the family. They give presents to their families, relatives, and friends as a symbol of the personality of Jesus. Christmas trees are customary symbols of this holiday.

Easter is another holiday of Christianity. It celebrates the resurrection of Jesus after his crucifixion. Lent is the time of spiritual and physical preparation for Good Friday and Easter Day.

The holiday of Ascension celebrates the resurrected Christ's ascension into heaven. Pentecost commemorates the gift of the Holy Spirit to the disciples following the ascension. Also called Whitsunday (White Sunday), Pentecost traditionally was the day on which new members to the church were baptized and admitted to the church.

Thanksgiving is not a religious holiday of Christians but commemorates a meal shared between the Pilgrim Fathers and Native Americans in the 17th century, though it has subsequently become a time to thank God for the blessings of a prosperous life. It is also a holiday in American civil life. Halloween is another nonreligious (to most people) holiday with different myths about its origins, though the term comes from the "hallowed eve" before All Saints Day, a time to remember the Christian saints and, by extension, all revered ancestors. A longtime belief is that the spirits of death come out on Halloween. Nowadays, its celebration is marked by somewhat macabre fun.

Holidays in Judaism

Holidays in Judaism usually celebrate historical, traditional, or national events, except Yamim Nora'im (High Holy Days), which begin with Rosh Hashanah, the 1st day of Tishri (the 1st month of the Jewish lunar calendar), and end with Yom Kippur, the 10th day of Tishri. Holidays are celebrated by Jews generally with praying in the synagogue, fasting, burning candles, and being together for family meals. Work is forbidden on almost all holidays.

Apart from the minor festivals, Judaism has six main holidays. The first is Rosh Hashanah (Hebrew for "head of the year"). It is a celebration of the birthday of the world. Except when the holiday falls on the Sabbath, the shofar (a trumpet made from a ram's horn) is blown to signify "waking up" to God.

The second high holiday is Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement). It is perhaps the most important holiday in Judaism. It is a day for atonement, including fasting and confession of sins to God.

Pesach (Passover) celebrates the beginning of the harvest season and the deliverance of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. The seder, which is both a meal and a religious service, is important in this holiday.

Sukkot (Hebrew for "shelters" or "booths") begins on the 15th day of Tishri and lasts 7 days. Jews build temporary structures outside their homes during the holiday to remember the hard days of the Israelites in the desert.

Hanukkah (the festival of lights) is not a major holiday, but it is widely known, perhaps because it comes near Christmas. It is celebrated for 8 days and 8 nights to commemorate the dedication of the second temple.

Purim celebrates the deliverance of the Jewish people from destruction planned by the Persian officer Haman, as told in the Book of Esther.

Holidays in Hinduism

Hinduism has different local and regional festivals all across India to honor deities related to a particular area or community, to celebrate a stage in the agricultural calendar, or to commemorate historical figures and events. Hindu holidays are celebrated with a wide variety of rituals, including worship, prayer, processions, bonfires, music, dancing, eating, drinking, feeding the poor, and giving presents.

Holi is a popular holiday celebrated throughout India on the full-moon day in the month of Phalgun of the lunar Hindu calendar. It is celebrated with bonfires, singing of devotional songs while following the pilgrimage routes, and throwing of colored water and powder on other people.

Divali is another Hindu holiday, commemorating the return of the god Ram to his home after the battles described in the Hindu epic *Ramayana*. It is a festival of lights and is celebrated traditionally for 5 days. The fourth day of Divali is a day of family celebrations, marked by giving gifts to one's children and wife.

Other major Hindu holidays include the following:

Dassera—the victory of Rama over the demon king Ravana

Ganesha Chaturthi (Ganesha Utsava)—the festival of Lord Ganesha

Krishna Jayanti—the birthday of Lord Krishna

Kumbh Mela—a pilgrimage made every 12 years to four sacred cities in India

Mahashivaratri (Shiva Ratri)—great festival of Lord Shiva

Navaratri—festival of Shakti (in Bengal) or Rama’s victory over Ravana

Raksābandhana—renewing bonds between brothers and sisters

Rama Navami—the birthday of Lord Rama

Holidays in Buddhism

Holidays in Buddhism are many, and they differ from one region to another, like the Buddhist calendar. Thus, there are different Buddhist holidays in southern, northern, and eastern Asian Buddhist countries.

Buddhist holidays begin with a visit to the local temple, where one offers food or other items to the monks and listens to a talk on dharma. Distributing food to the poor to earn merit, circumambulating (walking around) the temple three times in honor of the Three Jewels, chanting, and meditation are other holiday rituals.

The most important holiday of Buddhism is Vesakha Puja (also known as Wesak Puja), which celebrates the birth of Buddha as Prince Siddhartha, his enlightenment, and his passing into nirvana at death and falls on the full-moon day of the month of Vesakha (the first month of the southern Asian Buddhist lunar calendar). Vesakha Puja is celebrated in temples, where people gather to pay homage to the Buddha with flowers, incense, lamps, and food. Houses and temples are decorated with flowers and candles or strings of light as symbols of the Buddha’s enlightenment. It is a time to focus the mind on Buddhist doctrine.

Other major Buddhist holidays include the following:

Ancestor Day (Ullambana)—to honor ancestors and easing the suffering of unsettled spirits

Dhamma Day (Asalha Puja Day)—to commemorate the “turning of the wheel of the Dharma”

Kathina Ceremony (Robe Offering Ceremony)—to honor the role of the Sangha

Sangha Day (Magha Puja Day or Fourfold Assembly Day)—to commemorate the Buddha’s visit to Veruvana Monastery

Holidays and Globalization

Holidays are a significant means of socialization in a religious and cultural environment by remembering important events, being together, sharing food, gifts, and time, and so on. Many of them have the same rituals to provide social solidarity. Thus, holidays have importance in every society to carry religious and, consequently, cultural values from one generation to other.

Holidays are also concrete indicators of the effects of globalization on cultural life through changes in their celebration due to the process of globalization. To illustrate, some holidays are celebrated by different religious groups, such as Christmas. In Western countries, the main reason for this may be non-Christians wishing to be a part of the society they live in. But Christmas is also celebrated in some countries with non-Christian majorities, with its meaning changed or adapted to regional religious traditions. For example, in Japan, celebrating Christmas has become part of social life as a symbol of modernity; however, it was converted to *natara* or “Our Lord’s Birthday” when it came to Japan in the 16th century. Especially at the end of the 19th century, the celebration of Christmas became widespread, and today it is celebrated throughout Japan. Also today, in a consumption-oriented world, it is seen by many as an opportunity for shopping, having good food, spending leisure time with friends, and enjoyment. As another example, in Britain, schools celebrate the Chinese New Year and Divali as a result of the multicultural student population in the schools.

We can see interaction between major religious traditions such as Buddhism, Daoism, and Shinto. This interaction can be seen in the practice of Buddhism alongside Daoism in China and Shinto in Japan or in the celebration of holidays and some common festivals such as New Year or Ullambana with equal enthusiasm by these traditions.

Holidays also can be indicators of social reflection, such as Ganesha Chaturthi in India. According to Victor Barnouw, this holiday primarily focused

on family worship until the 20th century. After that time, it appeared to have taken on a public character, giving rise to nationalist sentiments. Today, it has lost its political appeal.

Holidays are important occasions in social life, bringing people together. Studying holidays provides opportunities for understanding cultures, religions, and societies, particularly the ways in which meanings and rituals change over time and in increasingly globalized contexts.

Banu Gurer

See also Christmas; Easter; Festivals; Pilgrimage

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HOLISTIC SPIRITUALITY

Holistic spirituality is an umbrella term encompassing a broad range of beliefs and practices that have grown in popularity in Western European countries and the United States since the counter-culture movements of the 1960s. These beliefs are primarily orientated toward the attainment of wholeness, health, and the well-being of “body, mind, and spirit.” Holistic spiritualities place an emphasis on self-realization, connectivity, and personal experiences of God, the supernatural, or the sacred. They explicitly reject the Neoplatonic/Cartesian mind-body dualism identifiable within some strands of Christian and Western philosophical traditions. For these reasons, the relationship of holistic spirituality to organized religion, and particularly to wider trends in Christian spirituality since the 19th century, remains an area of considerable debate. This has led some commentators to distinguish holistic spirituality as an “un-churched

spirituality” or “lived religion,” while others treat it as coterminous with New Age, Eastern esoteric, and “subjective-life” spiritualities.

Embodiment is a primary preoccupation within a holistic spirituality, and the body is privileged as a site for access to the inner life of emotions, self-validation, and spiritual experiences. Holistic spiritualities have become pervasive within a variety of settings, including the New Age, neo-Paganism, and complementary and alternative health care practices. A common strand across these eclectic movements is a stress on the notion of “well-being,” which is realized by the attainment of harmony with one’s “authentic” or inner self through attention to feelings, intuitions, and bodily sensations or ailments. Self-expression and gradual self-realization are deemed overarching priorities. In some settings, an awareness of the unity between the body and spirit might also find extension in a relational connectedness between the individual and others, including nature and the cosmos. Recent scholarship has drawn attention to the markedly gendered popularity of holistic spiritualities in a post-Christian setting and has argued that women embrace these forms of an embodied, expressive spirituality as a mechanism for negotiating the “dilemmas of selfhood” and the conflicting demands of contemporary femininity.

In view of the diffusion of religious traditions, ideas, and practices grouped under this term, there is a tendency in some of the sociological literature to dismiss holistic spirituality as unduly fragmented, inherently consumerist, and incapable of transmission. Such studies characterize it as a “pick-and-mix,” syncretic movement with low salience and little to distinguish it from the individualistic, consumerist practices promoted by global capitalism. While there certainly is a propensity for a holistic, well-being culture to be annexed by consumerist narratives, recent studies have also identified a deeper strand within this spirituality and a common, core emphasis on immanentism and the “sacralization of the self.” There has been a marked growth in this form of spirituality in most Western European countries from the 1980s, as well as the emergence in North American “churched Christianity” of a form of spirituality that is questing, questioning, and attracted to embodied and expressive belief. As such, this is a transnational movement with implications for the

study of mainstream religious affiliation as well as spiritual searching and meaning making outside institutional and traditional settings.

Alana Harris

See also Consumer Culture; Gender; Global Capitalism and Religion; New Age Movements; United States of America

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HOLOCAUST

The Holocaust refers primarily to the effort to destroy the European Jewry under National Socialist German rule during World War II, an attempt that horrified the world, gave momentum to the ending of the war, and spurred the establishment of an independent state of Israel. The term stems from the Greek word *holokau[s]ton*, a translation of the Hebrew word *olah*, meaning a burnt sacrifice offered whole to God. Used before for other human catastrophes, after 1945 the word *Holocaust* began to be employed exclusively for the persecution and annihilation of the European Jews by National Socialist Germany after 1933 and is, nowadays, widely accepted as the global coin for these events. While some scholars include the millions of other victims, for example, gypsies or Soviet POWs (prisoners of war), for others, the Holocaust specifically denotes

the systematic extermination of approximately 5.7 million Jews from 1941 to 1945.

The National Socialists defined Jews by the religion of their parents and grandparents. Therefore, many Christians of Jewish origin also became targets of the radical expulsion policies after 1933 at both the national and local levels in the German state. The Nazis attacked not only individual Jews but also their religious institutions and set ablaze more than 1,000 synagogues in Germany and in recently annexed Austria during the notorious *Kristallnacht* of 1938. The next radical steps of segregation, the ban on Jewish businesses, forced labor, and expropriation, were first introduced in greater Germany and later in all countries occupied by the Third Reich. When most emigration routes were blocked and Poland was brutally conquered in the fall of 1939, the Germans forced hundreds of thousands of Polish Jews to live in ghettos or labor camps. During World War II, an estimated 1 million Jewish forced laborers toiled for the German economy in Europe. The genocide started with mass shootings by SS (Shutzstaffel) and security police squads during the German invasion of the Soviet Union in the summer of 1941. Between 1942 and 1944, millions of Jews deported from all over Europe—even with the help of allies such as Slovakia and Vichy-France—were extinguished in the gas chambers in death camps at Auschwitz, Sobibór, and Treblinka.

Neither the Protestant nor the Catholic churches in Germany or other European countries spoke out effectively against the persecution and mass murder. Only a few Christians stood up and helped the Jews survive. Theologians of all religions continue to debate the horrible events and especially the question of how one can still believe in God after this terrible human catastrophe.

Wolf Gruner

See also Anti-Semitism; Germany; Human Rights; Israel; Judaism; Protestant Christianity; Roman Catholicism

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HONDURAS

In the Central American country of Honduras, the population was predominantly Roman Catholic until the 20th century. In the 19th century, several Anglican, Methodist, Adventist, and Baptist missionary centers were established in the country, but their number and impact remained marginal. It was only in the 1980s, with the growth of the Protestant denominations, that the Honduran religious landscape began to change. According to local polls, in the 1970s, 96.3% of the population declared that they were Catholic, but by 2007, around 36% had embraced Protestantism. These numbers should, however, be used with caution as lack of research and accuracy makes quantification difficult.

Several analysts highlight the role played by the U.S. government in the initial expansion of Pentecostalism in Honduras, supposedly to support Nicaraguan contra revolutionaries and to undermine the influence of Liberation Theology among the rural poor. Others explain the high conversion rates as an effect of an aggressive proselytism involving the mass media, and some others stress Protestantism as an identity phenomenon allowing urban and rural poor to rebuild solidarity networks.

Nowadays, most Honduran Protestant churches are Pentecostal. The theological frontier between Pentecostalism and neo-Pentecostalism is not easy to define. Both embrace Spirit-filled worship and organize around principles such as direct personal experience of God and separation from community life. Neo-Pentecostals, however, are more inclined to embrace the “prosperity doctrine” and to develop specific practices such as “money contracts.”

Differences across social lines appear to be more significant. Pentecostals are mostly poor and uneducated preachers who minister among poor brethren. Their networks provide help with health and family problems and support young people seeking to avoid or escape gangs. Neo-Pentecostal churches, on the other hand, try to extend their influence to the economic elite and the middle class and to

increase their influence through hundreds of primary schools, Bible schools, universities, clinics, and service centers throughout the country.

Since 1880, the year of effective religious disestablishment, the Honduran state defines itself as secular, and laws regulating the Church are no longer central to the political debate. Nevertheless, the Catholic Church has historically exerted a significant influence in the political process.

In recent years, evangelical leadership has become more involved in the political arena. In 2005, several Protestant preachers ran unsuccessfully for election as deputies to the National Congress. More recently, the evangelical Christian sector has expanded its traditional lobbying activities, against same-sex marriages and abortion, to join civil society in the fight against corruption.

However, the question remains whether the evangelical Christian sector will be able to exert its influence on the Honduran state as the Catholic Church had done in the past—for example, during the 1960s, when Catholic religious activity started to support radical reform in the Honduran countryside, well before its counterparts in Latin America.

Karen Bähr Caballero

See also Evangelical Movements; Latin America; Missions and Missionaries; New Religions in South America; Roman Catholicism

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HONG KONG

Hong Kong, the former British port and colony has since 1997 been governed by China as a Special Administrative Region. It contains a

greater diversity of religions and sects than any other Chinese city. All religious groups, including those banned in mainland China, operate freely. However about 60% of the population of 7 million people claim “no religion” on surveys.

Hong Kong’s people are known in Asia for their pragmatism, but below the surface of this pragmatism lies a deep and diverse milieu of religious hopes and fears. Many people who claim “no religion” on surveys also believe in supernatural retribution, fear ghosts, occasionally visit temples, and worship ancestors by burning paper goods for their use in the afterlife (including paper cars, houses, servants, computers, and even airplanes).

Much religious activity in Hong Kong has roots in Chinese “folk religion.” There are more than 300 temples dedicated to Daoist, Buddhist, or folk religion deities. Most are small, with only a handful of large “god palaces” scattered around the territory. Worshipers at these temples seek help and advice from the gods (some of whom are deified humans) for their problems in family, business, or education, using divination sticks to get the god’s answers. In some of these shrines, human spirit-writers channel messages from the deity to worshippers, holding a stick that writes the deity’s messages on a table.

Hong Kong’s rural villages still conduct periodic festivals every 8 or 10 years to cleanse the district of accumulated spirits and ghosts, calling the gods for that purpose and meanwhile entertaining them with Chinese opera performances, which can also be enjoyed by the villagers. (The gods’ statues are provided with good seats for these performances.)

Self-identified Protestants and Catholics constitute about 12%–15% of the population but are disproportionately represented among cosmopolitan portions of the Hong Kong elite, partly because schools run by Christian organizations, established before the rise of free, public high school education, were one of the main routes into universities and the professions. Evangelical Christian groups are growing, appealing particularly to educated young people. Some meet in schools or rented quarters in office buildings. In one urban district, there are five floors of small churches competing with each other in the same building.

Self-identified Buddhists constitute no more than 12%–15% of the population. Buddhist leaders are

now sometimes vocal in public affairs. Buddha’s birthday has been added to Hong Kong’s public holidays, and an exhibition displaying a relic of Buddha (a finger bone) was a major event. Some Buddhist organizations benefit from elite patrons, and from good connections with the mainland Buddhist Association, but they are not as wealthy and active as Buddhist organizations in Taiwan.

For Muslims, local worship sites include a large mosque in Kowloon, which serves mainly South Asian residents. Other religious groups include Jews, Sikhs, and Zoroastrians. Some of these families have prospered in Hong Kong for more than 100 years as merchants and traders.

All these religious groups do business and worship without serious disputes. The rule of law, religious freedom, and a secular state with no religious agenda are key reasons for this harmony among Hong Kong’s diverse religions.

Graeme Lang

See also China; Chinese Popular Religion

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HUMAN RIGHTS

Human rights law asserts that governments have an ethical and legal duty to ensure the necessary social conditions for human dignity. In international law, these rights are affirmed in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in implementing treaties. Historically, religious traditions have taught duties, not rights. Now, however, many religious leaders support human rights law, and major religious organizations include human rights in their ethical teachings.

International Law

In the West, the commandments in Scripture and duties defined by social status ordered traditional societies, but these were challenged in the 18th

century by those demanding civil rights. In 1775, the signatories to the American Declaration of Independence affirmed, “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.” A decade later, French revolutionaries proclaimed that “the rights of man” were natural rights and are intrinsic to the humanity of each person.

In the 19th century, as Western societies became more diverse and secular, the claim that rights are God-given gave way to the notion that civil and political rights are rooted in our human nature as reasoning, autonomous persons. By the 20th century, legal rights were understood as the liberties guaranteed to citizens by their governments. This theory of positive law prevailed until after World War II, when the victorious Allies confronted the horrifying fact that Nazi Germany had acted legally, by German law, in committing what the Allies identified as “crimes against humanity.”

In 1948, the United Nations General Assembly approved the Universal Declaration of Human Rights without a dissenting vote. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), which came into force in 1976, are the main treaties implementing this declaration.

The ICCPR and the ICESCR begin by affirming the right of self-determination of all peoples “to freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.” Both covenants also assert the right to non-discrimination, which the Universal Declaration defines as protecting and realizing human rights “without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.” The civil and political rights asserted in the ICCPR include the rights to life, liberty, security, protection against torture and arbitrary arrest, equal protection of the law, freedom of movement, participation in government, religion, freedom of opinion and expression, freedom of assembly and association, and ownership of property.

The Universal Declaration also affirms economic, social, and cultural rights. Everyone “is entitled to realization, through national effort and

international co-operation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.” Also, every person has “the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favorable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment,” the rights to leisure time and education, and

the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.

The ICESCR asserts a standard of progressive realization to secure these human rights.

Religious Support

In 1945, O. Frederick Nolde, who represented the Protestant denominations forming the World Council of Churches (WCC), persuaded a reluctant U.S. secretary of state to endorse including human rights in the United Nations Charter, and leaders of the fledgling WCC rallied support in Europe and the United States for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The American Jewish Committee backed these initiatives, but Catholic and Muslim leaders withheld support because the Universal Declaration did not affirm that human rights come from God.

Christians

The WCC, which includes Orthodox churches as well as Protestant denominations, has endorsed human rights campaigns around the world. More conservative Protestants, however, are critical of international human rights law because it does not affirm human rights as God-given. Since Vatican II (1962–1965), the Catholic Church has included the moral presumptions of human rights law in its ethical teachings, and Catholics in many places have risked their lives advocating for economic, social, and civil rights.

Jews

Jews embrace the human right of self-determination, which is affirmed in both the implementing covenants of the Universal Declaration. Yet many Jews also believe that God's "gift" of land to their ancestors, which is recorded in the Torah, gives the Jewish people a divine right outweighing the moral and legal claims of Palestinians for their land and human rights. Nonetheless, Rabbis for Human Rights, an Israeli organization of Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform Jews, argues that Jewish moral teaching supports recognizing universal human rights and, thus, requires supporting the political right of Palestinians to their own state.

Muslims

Muslims believe that all human rights come from Allah, so wherever Muslims who support human rights find a conflict between international law and their understanding of the Qur'an, they reject international law and support the Qur'an. Some Muslims believe that the Qur'an commands them to resist and fight non-Muslims in times of war, when Islam is threatened, which is how they see the danger posed today by secular Western culture. Other Muslims see the United Nations as creating a period of relative peace, which allows Muslims to struggle to protect Islam without engaging in war. Unlike international law, the Qur'an asserts separate and unequal rights for men and women, which is why some Muslims believe that the legal rights of women should not be equal to the rights of men.

Hindus

Traditional Hindu teaching explains why each person should accept the duties of one's caste to improve one's karma and, over many lifetimes, escape the cycle of rebirth. When India achieved independence, its new constitution established a secular government and guaranteed international human rights (including the right to religious freedom for the many religious minorities of India). The constitution also outlawed caste discrimination among Hindus. There is now a strong movement among Hindus to make their tradition the official religion of India, but thus far, democratic elections have confirmed the country's secular government

and facilitated the largely peaceful transfer of power in a society with more than 1 billion people who speak more than 800 languages.

Buddhists

Traditional Buddhist teachings do not speak of rights, and many contemporary Buddhists oppose identifying the dharma with any specific set of moral and legal claims. Nonetheless, soon after Indian independence, 4 million Hindus of the Untouchable caste were persuaded by B. R. Ambedkar, an Untouchable who drafted the Indian constitution, to convert to Buddhism as a way of affirming their human rights. Countries with large Buddhist populations have ratified human rights treaties but often have not adequately enforced these moral presumptions of international law. This is, of course, also true of nations with populations that are largely Christian, Hindu, Jewish, or Muslim.

Chinese

In traditional Chinese society, acting in harmony with Dao did not involve asserting rights, in either Daoist or Confucian teachings. In the 20th century, however, war and revolutionary struggles led to a Chinese-controlled government in Taiwan, which proclaims civil and political rights, and to the People's Republic of China on the mainland, which asserts economic, social, and cultural rights. Also, some Chinese reformers have argued that human rights may be derived from the duties of Confucian ethics.

Others

Historic minority traditions and new religious movements generally endorse international human rights law and benefit wherever the right to freedom of religion or belief is enforced.

Summary

Traditional religious teachings do not recognize human rights, and until very recently, religious leaders have resisted the secularization of society, which has fostered human rights. But now that international law affirms universal standards for human dignity, there are leaders in every historic religious tradition who argue that at least some of

these rights are implied by the duties and commandments of their ethical and spiritual teachings. Religious institutions, however, have given only limited support to political efforts to protect and progressively realize the civil, economic, and social rights asserted by international human rights law.

Robert Traer

See also Politics and Religion; Religion and State; Religious Freedom; Religious Minority-Majority Relations; Secularization; World Council of Churches

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HUNGARY

Known as “the final fortress of Western Christianity” by its citizens, the central European country of Hungary has understood itself as a Christian country since 997 CE. Today, many Hungarians have left off direct involvement in religious institutions but remain informally bound to their local churches through life cycle rituals. Though large portions of the population claim no religion (and approximately half of the Hungarians surveyed in 2005 claimed to not believe in God), nearly 85% of the populace assert allegiance to a religion. Fifty-two percent of Hungarians identified as Roman Catholics, 16% as Hungarian Reform (a Calvinist denomination), 3% as Lutheran, 3% as Greek Orthodox, and less than 1% as Jewish, a significant change from the historic number of Jews in Hungary. There are also small Buddhist and Islamic communities, and Hungarians are

thought in general to be less devout than other European adherents. Roman Catholicism, the Reform Hungarian Church, Lutheranism, and Judaism constitute what are known as the “historic” Hungarian religions and garner between them 93% of the total state financial support to religious groups. Considering the small proportion of the population that Judaism now claims, surprisingly Hungary for many years housed the largest Jewish population in the world next to Russia, and many Jews persecuted in the 19th century found refuge in the country. Budapest has the largest synagogue in Europe, and the special place of the Jewish people in Hungary is still evidenced in its laws, even though the Jewish community was decimated by genocidal Nazi policies during World War II.

The kingdom founded in 997 CE by King István, who would later be canonized by the Roman Catholic Church as Saint Stephen, persevered over 900 years. Predominantly Catholic until the 16th century, Hungary was affected by the Protestant Reformation as well as the Counter-Reformation. During the 16th century, nearly all the populace of Hungary converted first to Lutheranism and then to Calvinism, but by the 17th century, the country predominantly returned to Catholicism. Hungarians were never unified under a religious banner again, however, and especially in Debrecen, known as the Calvinist Rome, significant Protestant communities still endure. One of the great cultural centers of the world, the Kingdom of Hungary ceased to exist in 1918 under the rule of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. After World War II, Hungary was occupied by the Soviet Union and witnessed the communist rule of János Kádár, under whom traditional national consciousness weakened, as well as religious worldviews and values. In 1989, Hungary became the first country to lift the Iron Curtain, and in 1999, it joined NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization), later becoming part of the European Union in 2004.

Though Hungary has a long history of Christianity, it is the short period of socialism that has shaped the state’s position on religion in the 21st century. Hungary financially supports churches and parochial schools in recompense for their dissolution during the campaign against religion in the socialist regime. Support fluctuates with the

current economic status of the country, and the difficult financial straits Hungary found itself in the first decade of the 2000s resulted in the constriction of that aid, amid outcries from religious communities. The country is also engaged in an ongoing process of litigation seeking to return property that was seized from churches in the middle of the 20th century.

The government pursues a strong policy of religious toleration and criticism of extremism and intolerance, to the point of awarding prison time for denying the Holocaust. In spite of this program, the right-wing Jobbik Magyarországért Mozgalom nationalist party, known for its anti-Semitic and anti-Roma agenda, won 12% of the Hungarian parliament seats in 2010. Its rise coincided with the growth of extremist groups during a period of political friction and economic uncertainty, and while the conservative center-right Fidesz-KNDP party won approximately a two-thirds majority, the growing tide of extremism continues to worry the tolerant factions of the nation.

John Soboslai

See also Christianity; Eastern Orthodox Christianity; Economic Issues and Religion; European Union

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HYBRIDIZATION

Hybridization is the act, process, and outcome of multiple elements from diverse backgrounds combining and interacting to create something new. Religions, identities, peoples, social practices, cuisines, music, the arts, and styles of dress and speech can all be hybridized through the meeting and intermingling of various cultural practices and social products. Through hybridization, elements identifying a culture, practice, or people become fused, combined, or melded with other social elements and peoples. On a macrolevel, communities may embrace or deny impeding cultural influences based on social expectations, historical factors, and contemporary power relations; on a microlevel, individuals may face hybridization and expected assimilation of familial practices through processes of intermarriage, migration, intercultural adoption, living and traveling abroad, education, linguistic and social studies, or religious conversion. Colonization, transmigration, and globalization have all greatly influenced the ways in which individuals and cultures interrelate and transform.

Hybridization can occur by coercion or cooperation; it can serve as a vehicle of social collusion or integration—sometimes, it is both. For example, the demands of the transatlantic slave trade forced displaced west and central Africans to interact with Spanish, French, English, and Dutch colonizers of the Caribbean, who, following the ban on slavery, often shipped indentured servants from China and India to work the land. Because of this history, a person can find Chinese-Latin fusion cuisines in Dominican-neighborhood NYC (New York City) restaurants just as easily as passing by community botanicas catering to Caribbean practitioners of Vodou and Lukumí, hybrid religions intermingling African and Amerindian traditions with the pantheon of Catholic saints. When cultures meet, the interaction forces a re-identification of both communities; whether choosing to separate self-identity from the other culture or people or, instead, embracing newfound practices, self-definitions within a community are refashioned based on the intercultural relationship. As communities unite, exchange, or cross-pollinate ideas and materials, groups can become syncretized or,

in clashed response, cleave to tradition in the face of perceived threats to cultural stability.

Discussions of societal hybridization spawn questions regarding the assimilation, appropriation, and acculturation of practices and peoples within and through the process of interrelationship. In cases where the empowered and disempowered, or the colonizing and colonized, are pitted against one another, some scholars view interactions from a top-down approach: Colonizers primarily influence the colonized because of their position of power. Other scholars recognize that cultural interactions are a two-way street, and despite disenfranchisement or minority status, the music, art, food, lingo, ideology, and ontology of the colonized can diffuse and engage the masses within both colony and metropolis. Either way, the impacts of cultural hybridity become ever present within a globalizing market that promotes the

multinational exchange of goods and ideas through mass-market consumption. Hybrid uses of global products, locally interpreted and culturally integrated, become reflections of community struggles between cultural fluidity, commercial accessibility, and social stability.

Christi M. Dietrich

See also Assimilation; Bricolage; Diaspora; Global Religion; Multiple Modernities; Religious Identity; Syncretism; Translocalization

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IBN KHALDŪN (1332–1406)

Ibn Khaldūn, Abd al-Rahmān ibn Muhammad (born in Tunis in 1332 and died in Cairo in 1406), is recognized as one of the world's major thinkers and the most famous of Arab historians. His thought bridges the gap between cultures and the intellectual traditions they foster.

Early in his life, Ibn Khaldūn engaged actively in political affairs and showed deep interest in revolutionary changes in North Africa and Muslim Spain. He studied medieval structures that hindered political, economic, and social development.

For his time, Ibn Khaldūn was an exceptionally rational thinker, best known as the author of the *Muqaddimah*, where he describes the science of society and civilization as a prolegomenon to the study of history.

The *Muqaddimah* is the introduction to his masterpiece *The Book of Exemplaries* (*Kitāb al-ʿIbar*), a thesis on the history of the world. As its subtitle notes, it treats the historical narrative (*Khabar*) concerning Arabs and Berbers, in addition to those people contemporary with them, who gained historical significance by their assumption of power.

In his scientific study of history and society, Ibn Khaldūn integrated elements of traditional political philosophy. For this, he introduced a conceptual framework without which we would fail to understand the whole of his political and social theory. Examples include the concepts of *ijtimāʿ insāni* (“human society”), *mulk* (“power”), *ʿumrān* (“civilization”), and *ʿasabiyya* (“solidarity” or “social cohesion or force”).

His universalist approach is the earliest example of a systematic and complete study of human society as such. His general hypothesis about the evolution of civilization and history still represents one of the first attempts to provide a rational explanation for human history in its entirety.

He lived during a period of turmoil and stagnation. In his analysis, he emphasized social structures and provided an explanation for the sequence of political, social, and economic disasters that punctuated the history of North Africa over a period of several hundred years. After initial periods of growth, the history of countries in medieval North Africa (the Maghrib) is characterized by a downturn in economic and social development, or even by a phase of stagnation or outright decline. Of essential importance to Ibn Khaldūn's theory is his idea that the evolution of societies and civilizations is cyclical. The cyclical theory he viewed as concerned with the whole of civilizational change over time.

According to Ibn Khaldūn, religion plays a role in the foundation of power and states but only insofar as it makes social forces more powerful and only to the extent that it is a supplementary force. Ibn Khaldūn regards the ideal unification of politics and religion as a utopia.

His ideas remain a subject of contemporary interest and importance. They can be incorporated into a dynamic intellectual movement because they resonate with our understanding of the problems that we confront in the early 21st century. Ibn Khaldūn's science of culture ultimately functions to illuminate the science of good governance.

Majeda Omar

See also Islam; Islamic Modernism; Liberal Islam; Religion and State

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ICELAND

Iceland is a relatively isolated country located on an island in the North Atlantic Ocean. It is one of Europe's smallest nations, with a population of only 290,000 inhabitants in 2005. More than 90% of the relatively homogeneous population are registered as members of the National Lutheran Church, and there is a widespread faith in a unique Icelandic spirituality. At the same time, Iceland is a highly secular society.

Icelanders tend to think of themselves as Christians. In a Nordic survey from the mid-1990s, 42% of Icelanders reported that they saw themselves as "a confessing Christian," 53% as "Christian in your own way," and only 5% as "not Christian." The people of Iceland are among those who score the highest in European surveys on faith in God and belief in heaven and life after death.

According to most Icelanders, religious faith is a private matter not necessarily demonstrated by going to church. Only 10% attend Sunday services once a month or more, whereas a much higher proportion participates in rites of passage arranged by the Church of Iceland, the state Lutheran church. Almost 95% of newborn children are baptized in the church, and the same number are confirmed at the age of 14. Most weddings and practically all funerals take place in the church. Thus, Christian rituals are important in family life.

A unique feature of Icelandic religious life is the relatively widespread faith in spiritualism, which was introduced in the early 20th century. It became popular among the growing bourgeoisie and intellectuals, including some theologians. According to spiritualism, the deceased live on as spirits that

contact people on earth on special occasions. In contemporary Iceland, funerals are often accompanied by séances, where a medium will provide proofs that the spirit of the deceased is still alive. Icelandic theologians no longer harbor an interest in spiritual activity, but it constitutes a part of popular religion. Spiritualism of this sort may be related to Iceland's long tradition of concern for ancestors.

Iceland is also a modern and secular society where its citizens harbor a materialistic lifestyle. Science and technology helped raise Iceland from a poor, agricultural society to a prosperous nation in 50 years. Icelanders tend, therefore, to score high on faith in science and technology. Religion has never been the subject of political and cultural controversies due to several historic factors. In the early 20th century, the socialist movement refrained from critiquing religion and the church; no major evangelical movement propagating dogmatic Christianity emerged; and the Church of Iceland has been rather liberal. Contemporary Icelanders embrace modernism and traditional Christianity with a focus on bridging the past and future—common themes in Icelandic culture.

Inger Furseth

See also Ancestors; Nordic Countries; Protestant Christianity; Spiritualism

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IGREJA UNIVERSAL

The Igreja Universal do Reino de Deus (IURD) is a Latin American Pentecostal Christian movement (founded in 1977 by Edir Macedo) that by 2010 had more than 6 million adherents in most parts of the world. It is similar to some neo-Pentecostal churches

in the sense that it is more interested in alleviating current human problems (e.g., poverty, unemployment, hunger, and illness) than in effecting the salvation of sinners, spiritual conversion, and moral purification. Demons and evil spirits, not the people themselves, are considered responsible for sins and crime. They are believed to possess human beings, who then become evildoers or get sick. They have to be exorcized by pastors because only they have the spiritual power for this task. This operation, however, comes with a price. The war against demons (their version of Liberation Theology) is all-important. The other aspect of neo-Pentecostalism is the “theology of prosperity,” stating that everyone has the right to enjoy life here and now rather than waiting for rewards after death. Happiness can only be achieved, however, by generous contributions to the church. The beliefs in magic and witchcraft, common in Latin America, are taken for granted.

Most adherents of the IURD are members of an urban lower middle class, who participate in emotive ceremonies, which help them to overcome stress and fear. They are active actors in these rituals: By order of the pastor, they raise their arms, move their body, sing, and shout; these movements have therapeutic effects on the faithful. After a session, a generous contribution is expected, which helps the IURD to finance radio and TV programs in order to attract more believers. Those who are cured tell their histories on radio and TV—how miracles happened that changed their way of life.

The church is directed by its founder from his headquarters in Brazil. Many young pastors all over the world are Brazilians who received a short intensive training at home, although in recent years, many native assistants in other countries also became “leaders.” The larger churches, often lavishly decorated former movie theaters, are open seven times a week, offering three daily services. In each meeting, a large number of pastors and their assistants, elegantly dressed and well-groomed, take part and pray over the faithful, touching their heads or embracing them. Each day a new topic is treated: problems in the family, lack of work, a fight in the family, and so on. On Tuesdays, the sick are cured, and on Fridays, evil spirits are exorcised. Those who are supposedly possessed by demons are manipulated by the pastors when they suddenly act wildly or when they enter in an altered state of consciousness. Supposedly, the

spirits speak from the mouth of the possessed, entering into conversation with the pastors. They explain why they are present and where they come from. These shows are watched with great excitement by the audience. Finally, the “war” is over; the discussions end: “The spirits are burnt” (*queima-queima*).

Money is collected several times during each session. All kinds of activities are invented to raise money. For example, a bowl with water from the Jordan River is placed on the altar. Those who are willing to pay \$50 can now wash their hands in the bowl. Afterward, others paying \$20 have the same privilege, and at the end, those who pay \$10 are also admitted, but of course, the spiritual power of the water has decreased. Blessed medals are given away, protecting the believers against evils, like amulets. At other times, pieces of cloth are distributed and should be placed on one’s body to cure a pain. The following week, the cloth has to be returned in an envelope, which also contains money.

The IURD is opposed to Umbanda, Candomblé, and other African Brazilian religions, perhaps because they offer similar rites and services to adherents. They also wage war against evil spirits, which have to be eliminated with the help of prayers, magic rites, and blood sacrifices. For neo-Pentecostals and Umbandistas, exorcisms and spirit possession are well-known rituals as many have participated in occult ceremonies before. The religious discourse is similar in Cuban Santería and the Cult of María Lionza.

The IURD founded the Asociación Benéfica Cristiana in most Latin-American countries; through this institution food, medical drugs, and clothing are distributed three or four times every year to the poor. These events receive wide publicity on TV and radio.

Over the years, the IURD adopted different names in Latin America, such as Oración fuerte al Espíritu Santo (“Strong Prayers to the Holy Spirit”), Pare de Sufrir (“Stop Suffering”), and Centro Mayor de Ayuda Espiritual (“Major Center of Spiritual Help”). The English name is Universal Church for the Kingdom of God.

In each country, the church is supervised by a Brazilian bishop, who is careful not to interfere in local politics. In contrast, the IURD in Brazil has an increasing influence in national politics. The

most important Brazilian TV enterprise is in the hands of this church. It is said that Lula da Silva became president only with the help of the IURD.

The IURD is a multinational institution, with increasing economic power; it is a religious super-market that offers new ways to solve the multiple problems of our times and has become popular by offering a contemporary relevance and immediacy, which members found lacking in their churches of origin.

Angelina Pollak-Eltz

See also Brazil; Latin America; New Religions in South America; Pentecostal Movements; Pentecostal Movements in Latin America; Popular Religion

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IMMIGRATION

The legal and illegal, forced and voluntary migration of individuals, families, and whole communities across national borders and indeed across hemispheres has had a dramatic influence on the current shape of religion in both sending and receiving countries. While humans have always been mobile, contemporary migration is uniquely marked by economic, social, cultural, and religious globalization as well as highly efficient and relatively inexpensive travel and communications technologies.

Immigration to settler or predominately immigrant-receiving countries such as Canada, the

United States, and Australia was once based on racially and religiously discriminatory practices that guaranteed that these states would remain almost exclusively White and Christian. However, since the late 1960s, most of these societies have moved toward relatively liberal, market-driven, and rights-oriented policies. While the United States is still one of the most common destinations for the world's immigrants, it also attracts large numbers of illegal immigrants (mostly from Latin America), a reality that has spawned major political debates around civil and conventional religion in the United States. In western Europe, post-World War II labor shortages and economic expansion led to an influx of former colonial subjects who were familiar with the language, legal framework, and political culture of their colonial masters; the long-term ramifications of this form of immigration has become a fraught topic throughout the West.

In general, these changes in immigration policies and practices in the West are related to three main changes in the religious and social spheres. First, at the political and legal levels, there is de-Christianization, as many states move (unevenly) toward the increased differentiation of "church" and "state." Second, de-Europeanization of Christianity occurs, as Christian immigration from Asia and Africa redefines Christianity in the West. Third, immigration increases the size and proportion of non-Christian communities in the West; as such, many scholars and policy makers now question whether Western institutions and laws are capable of adequately accommodating the religious diversity generated by post-1960s immigration patterns.

From the perspective of the source countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, immigration to the West/North is associated with new transnational forms of religious, economic, political, and cultural identification in which notions of home, self, and religiosity are subject to constant negotiation. Finally, while the post-September 11 "securitization" of non-European and non-Christian immigration to the West reminds us to pay attention to political turmoil and changing immigration patterns when we reflect critically on contemporary religion, scholars of religion are just beginning to come to terms with the complex implications of increased human mobility.

Paul Bramadat

See also Global Religion; Pluralism; Refugees; Transnational

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INCAS

The ancient South American religion of the Incas encompasses both political and spiritual elements as an integral part of the largest empire in the Americas, historically beginning in 1438 with the rise to power of Emperor Pachacuti Yupanqui. Governing more than 906,000 square miles of South America by the time of the Spanish conquest in 1532, the Inca Empire, or *Tawantinsuyu*, held a general belief system and series of religious practices that intertwined with the ideology of the ruling elite. While this ruling class called themselves *Incas*, the term was not a widespread cultural denotation; instead, individual descent groups retained the names that tied them to their region of origins. The religious beliefs and practices discussed here were spread by the Incas but without the need for active evangelization as the Incaic religion grew out of and accommodated the long-standing religious culture of the South American peoples they conquered.

Western South America was home to complex civilizations since at least 3000 BCE, referred to as Andean cultures. None of these cultures, including that of the Incas, developed a writing system, necessitating the scholar to seek information from extant material culture, archaeological investigations, the writings of Spanish missionaries and other chroniclers of the Colonial Period, and contemporary

ethnographic comparisons. Ancient Andean societies were agriculture based, despite the environmental difficulties of life in the harsh coastal desert, the thin air of the mountains, and the recurring El Niño weather events.

With their capital in the central Peruvian highland Cuzco, the Incas developed systems to control, supervise, and organize their massive empire, much of which centered on management of religious symbols and rituals. Water scarcity was a consistent problem in the ancient Andean world, and water gods and goddesses were worshipped, mythologized, and given sacrifices in the hope of ensuring human survival. With elaborate canal systems, the Incas managed this crucial resource and the religious import it carried. A number of imperial holidays publicly placed the Inca emperor as the regulator of agricultural life, who ritually planted and harvested the first ears of corn every year.

The Inca emperor was more than just the singular man who controlled the vast empire and its subjects. The emperor embodied complementary spiritual and physical presences that were widely accepted as part of the Andean worldview. Male and female forces were one major aspect of the duality central to Andean understanding. The Inca emperor was balanced in this way by his wife, connected spiritually through ceremony and physically as his full-blooded sister. Furthermore, the Inca emperor's tacitly understood supernatural descent allowed him to embody the complementary corporeal and divine realms. With parentage claimed to be from the sun deity *Inti*, the Incas emphasized his role in agricultural welfare.

Inti was the patron deity of the Incas but was only one of the forces that made up the complex Incaic supernatural realm. The supernatural was a constant and very real presence in Andean life, consisting of two main categories: deities and animistic forces taking physical form or *huacas*. Notions of duality and complementarity were central to religious beliefs. All things, whether supernatural, mundane, political, or social, existed in a crucial balance of forces such as male and female, good and bad, civilization and disorder, upper and lower, dry and wet, highlands and lowlands. Maintenance of this balance was essential to life and the prevention of chaos. Each deity had a complement that checked his or her power. The principal deity of the Incas was *Viracocha*, a creator god who initiated

life, according to differing accounts, on an island in Lake Titicaca in Bolivia or nearby. After creating life and instituting human civilization, Viracocha played a passive role in everyday occurrences and was worshipped for his act of origins. When conquering a new territory, the Incas established Viracocha as a central deity, requiring reverence to this symbolic presence of the Inca Empire. Other deities played a significantly active role in the lives of Inca subjects, wielding both destructive and beneficial powers over the agriculture-based society. The earth-mother goddess, *Pachamama*, was an active counterpart to Viracocha, receiving constant praise and gifts to ensure her beneficence. *Mamaquilla*, the moon, was the sister-wife of Inti, marking agricultural time as a necessary complement to the sun. A dualistic set of deities had jurisdiction over water: the male thunder and rain, *Illapa*, and the female ocean and streams, *Mamacocha*. These and other deities were added to the pantheons of conquered territories. If a particular region already worshipped gods similar to the Incaic deities, they would be renamed to comply with imperial consistency.

Perhaps the most complex aspect of the Incaic religion was the huaca, which, although physically and spiritually present, active, and having individual personalities, was not a deity. This term characterizes a spiritual essence that may inhabit a wide variety of inanimate objects or deceased beings. Elements of the landscape, particularly those that have unusual markings or physical developments, including specific mountains, streams, and rocks, among others, could be designated a *huaca*. Huacas were an important part of the complementary Incaic worldview, with many considered to be siblings of individuals in political power. As indelible parts of the natural landscape, the uprooting of huacas by Inca military forces, often as part of the conquest process, brought the land and the people of a specific territory under Inca rule, literally and metaphorically. The deliberate mistreatment of a huaca was a particularly harsh punishment. Huacas most likely existed in Andean religious belief and practice for thousands of years, as archaeological sites are often arranged around natural objects.

The deceased could also be a huaca, either as a mummy or as a part of an existing sacred place. Although there was an Incaic afterlife, the dead participated fully in life as mummies, huacas, or

entombed individuals. Death was not an ending but a point of transition between life and residence with the ancestors. The Incaic spiritual realm was divided into the upper, lower, and living worlds, but the spirits of the dead never left the Earth. Ancestors were provided food, corn beer (*chicha*), utensils, and sacrifices. Mummies of past Incas took part in rituals, festivals, and feasts and were even brought on visits to other mummies and huacas. Incas held their lands after death, forcing each newly ascended Inca to gain new land tribute.

Deities and huacas were worshipped in similar manners, with prayer, sacrifice, and ritual taking place at the location of their residence. Deities and mummies resided in specially built temples, cared for by religious specialists. Religious specialists consisted of priests and priestesses, sorcerers, and the Inca themselves. Sorcerers, often the elderly or disabled, were sought by the public for all major life decisions. These individuals cast lots or performed other methods of divining to determine outcomes and omens of specific actions. A class of priests and cloistered women cared for deities and huacas, ensuring that they were properly fed and clothed, received adequate sacrifices, and honored with appropriate prayers. Sacrifices of food and chicha beer were shared between the religious specialists and the supernatural.

Sacrifice took a number of forms in Incaic religious practice. Frequent offerings to huacas and deities involved the provision of food, alcohol, coca leaves, domesticated animals, or people. Such provisions were set aside in all territories controlled by the Incas, consisting of approximately two thirds of a region's agricultural production. Each of these sacrificial items was integral to survival, and their donation to the spiritual realm was an act of surrender, sharing life with the supernatural to create a cyclical balance between worlds.

Equilibrium and order defined the Incaic worldview, since ages of time were ended by cataclysmic events, or *pachakuti*. The need for organization extended to space and time, exemplified by the *ceque* system, which emphasized the connection between politics, religion, and space. Ceques, or sight lines, originated at Cuzco and stretched to the limits of the empire. These lines related directly to the ritual calendar as each ceque had a huaca associated with it and a day of the year on which

this huaca was honored. Other viewing points in Cuzco determined the solar calendar on which the agricultural cycle and associated rituals were based. A lunar calendar of 12 months determined annual celebrations, many of which related to the Incas' political and social role within the mundane and supernatural worlds.

Following the Spanish conquest, the Incas and their subjects retained a considerable degree of their indigenous religious beliefs and practices. The deep-rooted ties to ancestors, origins, and place continued to play a significant role in the agrarian lifestyle of the Andean peoples, who actively celebrated their land and history and both ancient and historic ancestors.

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See also Ancestors; Bolivia; Chile; Ecuador; Indigenous Religions; Latin America; Peru; Sacred Places

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culture. The very term *India* and its cognate terms, *Hindu* and *Hindi*, are global words, since they were applied to the people, culture, and language of the Indian subcontinent by people viewing it and entering it from outside. For this reason it is hard to define exactly what Hinduism is, though the census figures confidently record some 80% of India's population of 1.2 billion people as Hindu. Another 13% are Muslims; 2.3% are Christians; and less than 2% are Sikhs. Smaller numbers are listed as Jains, Buddhists, and Jews.

By definition, the traditional religious culture of India is the one associated with its cognate term, *Hinduism*. The terms *India*, *Hindu*, and *Hindi* all come from the name of the Sindus (Indus) river. Foreigners entering the subcontinent from the northwest regarded the people in the region of the Indus and beyond as *indus*—the Hindus, who by extension, lived in the land of *India*. The word was used by the Greek historian Herodotus in the fourth century BCE. The Greek general Alexander the Great entered the subcontinent around 326 BCE.

Ancient India Influenced by Aryans

It can be claimed that the very origins of India's cultural history are due to the global transmission of peoples and their traditions. Though indigenous cultural elements in the Indian subcontinent can be traced back thousands of years—the relics of a civilization found at the sites of Harappa and Mohenjo Daro give evidence of a thriving civilization some 2,000–3,000 years BCE—the rise of a distinctive religious and linguistic tradition that identified with Hinduism and Sanskrit texts begins with the influx of people and ideas from the northwest passage into the subcontinent sometime after 2000 BCE.

These people and their culture came from what is modern-day Iran, and in fact, the name Iran is cognate with the name of these people, the *Aryans*. They provide a connection that links together the cultures of Europe, Central Asia, and South Asia, a connection that is implied in the term *Indo-European* to describe the ancient substratum of culture that lies beneath both Indian and European regions. The Aryan connection can be seen in the linguistic similarities that are found between many modern European languages and the languages of North India. The gods of the ancient Indian scriptures, the

INDIA

The religious life of India is both ancient and diverse and increasingly plays a role in global

Vedas, bear striking resemblances to the Greek, Roman, and even Norse gods, providing another illustration of this ancient transregional connection.

Indian Origins of Global Buddhism

As trade routes developed between Europe and Asia, India was able to influence global cultural currents, as well as being influenced by them. By the sixth century BCE, land routes through Central Asia became established that brought both merchandise and cultural elements from one region to another. These various trails and transfer points were later collectively known as the Silk Road due to the popularity of Chinese silks, porcelains, spices, and other consumer goods that were transported overland to Europe. The Silk Road also connected to trade routes in India and Persia. The “road” was in fact a series of crisscrossing trails and roadbeds traversed by a series of local transporters who would hand off the goods to neighboring carriers and thus enable materials to traverse the entire distance.

These trade routes served political and cultural purposes as well as economic ones. Local military leaders would establish kingships that spread to conquering regions along the trade routes. Religious and other cultural ideas traveled as well, often intertwined with economic and military aspects of social expansion. It was along these routes—and linked with these political and trade patterns—that the religious tradition known as Buddhism flourished and spread from India throughout Asia. This is arguably India’s largest gift to global culture.

The Buddhist tradition begins with the teachings of Siddhartha Gautama, known as the “enlightened one”—the *Buddha*—in North India in the sixth century BCE. Within the Indian tradition, the Buddha’s teachings are regarded as a part of the sixth-century heterodox rebellion against Brahmanical Hinduism that also included the radical teaching of Mahavira, the prophetic founder of India’s Jain tradition. Like the Jain teachers, the Buddha instructed his followers to shun the ritual worship of anthropomorphic gods and the strict social discipline required by Brahman priests and instead concentrate on meditation practices aimed at a transforming the soul toward a state of existence where gods and rituals mattered little. Though many of the fundamental

elements of Indian spirituality remained a part of Buddhist teachings—including the concept of the karmic cycles of existence and the dharmic requirements of ethical living—the Buddhist philosophy was one that could be accepted and practiced by anyone and anywhere, and not just the Hindus of India.

Because of the universality of its teaching, Buddhism became a portable form of Indian religiosity. Its ideas and teachings traveled both by sea and by land. It spread throughout the Indian subcontinent and then south to the island nation of Sri Lanka and east to Southeast Asia, including Borobudur in what is modern-day Indonesia. It traveled north along the Silk Road to Central Asia and then east to China, Korea, and Japan.

There are different strands of Buddhism. The Theravada Buddhism of Southeast Asia focuses more on the monastic tradition, the Mahayana Buddhism in China and Japan has developed notions of celestial Buddhas and saintlike Boddhisattvas, and the Vajrayana Buddhism of Tibet has features from Himalayan animism. Yet the varieties of Buddhism share a central reverence for the Buddha’s teachings, and one could argue that what culturally unites Asia—and by implication three fifths of the world’s population—is the Indic cultural values transmitted through Buddhist tradition.

Curiously, Buddhism—as an explicit religious tradition known by that name—died out within the Indian subcontinent within centuries after the first teachings. Some scholars claim that the central ideas of Buddhism—the focus on meditation practices and the reverence of spiritual masters—survived in other forms, in, for example, the teachings and practices of the Nath yogis. Buddhism as a religion was revived in postindependence India in a self-conscious way by the author of India’s constitution, Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar, who converted to Buddhism and urged those Indians who, like himself, had been born into the lowest “untouchable” castes to convert to Buddhism as a protest against the Hindu protection of India’s caste society.

India’s Christian and Jewish Communities

Though they account for only a few percentage points of India’s population, the communities of Indian Jews and Christians are testimonies to India’s role in ancient forms of cultural globalization. Jews

came across the Indian Ocean from the Middle East as early as the first Jewish diaspora, the Babylonian captivity in the sixth century BCE. Although there were several pockets of Jewish culture in India from ancient times, the best known were the Cochin Jews of Kerala in the southern tip of the subcontinent.

Christians have been in India almost from the time of Christ. Legend has it that the apostle Thomas came to India in the first decades after the death of Jesus. Though it is impossible to historically verify the visit of Apostle Thomas, it is certain that the Christian community in Kerala dates from the first century. The Thomas connection is enshrined in the name of one of the oldest Christian communities in the region, the Mar Thoma Church. Much later, in the 17th century, Catholic priests arrived with Portuguese traders and created a thriving Christian community in the port colony of Goa, south of Mumbai. After India became a British colony, a small army of Protestant missionaries descended on the subcontinent, reaping a harvest of conversions in several parts of North India, especially among Brahmans in Bengal and lower-caste communities in the Punjab. Baptist missionaries began proselytizing in the mountainous areas of northeast India, which developed the highest proportion of Christians to the general population of any region in India. At the turn of the 21st century, tensions between Hindus and Christian converts in tribal areas in the state of Orissa led to attacks on the Christian communities.

India's Role in Global Islam

Another great cultural tradition to come to India from outside the subcontinent and become integrated into Indian society is Islam. Muslim traders came to the western shores of India as early as the seventh century, where some established permanent colonies. The great impact of Muslim culture, however, occurred during the Mughal rule from the 16th to the 19th centuries. Emperors from Persia set up vast imperial headquarters in Delhi, Agra, and elsewhere, and the great architecture of the Mughal period, including the Taj Mahal at Agra, is enduring evidence of the impact of Mughal political rule. It also had considerable impact on Indian society as the mass conversions to Islam undoubtedly took place during this period.

By the time of India's independence in 1947, 25% of the population of the subcontinent was Muslim. This created a problem for the British, who attempted to disengage from colonial rule and allow India to govern itself. The British were persuaded, however, that the Muslim minority within the country would not receive a fair status within Hindu-dominated India. Despite the protest of Mohandas Gandhi and other nationalist leaders, the British persisted with the idea, and on the eve of independence, they created two countries—a Hindu-dominated India and a Muslim-dominated Pakistan, which had both a Bengali and a Punjabi wing. The partition of the country into those two new areas of Pakistan created the largest migration of peoples in history—some 8 million people moved from one area to the other, and perhaps as many as 1 million were killed in the violence that ensued. Later, the Bengali section of Pakistan seceded and became an independent country—Bangladesh.

Despite the loss of millions of Muslim citizens who migrated to the newly created Pakistan areas of the subcontinent, India after independence still had a sizable Muslim minority—some 15% of its population. In 21st-century census returns, the number of Muslims in India was more than 160 million, which makes India the third largest Muslim country in the world, after Indonesia and Pakistan. Muslims in India are integrated into all regions of the country, with concentrations in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, and Kashmir. Indian Muslims contribute to all aspects of Indian culture, politics, scholarship, and the arts. Reserved seats for Muslims in state legislatures and the national parliament ensure representation. Muslims have served in cabinet positions and have been elected president of India.

Global Spread of Sikhism

Though they are less than 2% of India's population, Sikhs have had a significant impact on India's political life in the last decades of the 20th century and have been a disproportionately large percentage of the Indian community living in diaspora around the world. The homeland of the Sikhs is the Punjab region of northern India where a series of teachers—a lineage of 10 founding gurus—developed a sizable group of disciples (*sikhs*) in the

16th and 17th centuries. The 10th guru, Gobind Singh, declared that after him there would be no more gurus; rather, the loyalties of the Sikhs were directed toward the community itself (whose members all took his own last name, Singh) and to the sacred book, the Guru Granth Sahib, which was a compilation of poems from medieval Indian saints in the Hindu and Muslim devotional traditions.

Sikh leaders honed their martial skills in skirmishes with Muslim Mughal forces, and Sikh kingdoms were the last to fall to British colonial rule in the 19th century. The British valued Sikh participation in the Indian army, and Sikhs posted in Singapore and other British military bases around the world began a pattern of overseas Sikh migration. In the last decades of the 20th century, a group of separatist Sikhs led by Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale came into confrontation with the Indian state over the idea of creating a new Sikh nation, Khalistan. The confrontation came to a head in 1984 with the invasion of the central Sikh pilgrimage center, the Golden Temple in Amritsar, by the Indian army; in retaliation, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was assassinated later that year by Sikhs who were her own bodyguards. In the 21st century, the state has prospered economically, and India's dramatic industrial and technological development was orchestrated by a Sikh economist, Manmohan Singh, who was designated prime minister of the country.

Global Spread of Hindu Teachers and Fellowships

Since Hinduism is essentially the religious culture of India, it has been fairly landlocked, and the ideas associated with the offshoots of Hinduism, such as Buddhism, are the ones that most easily travel abroad. Yet some aspects of Hindu philosophy, culture, and religious practices have been admired and adopted in the West and elsewhere. In the 19th century, the American Transcendentalists Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau had a deep appreciation for Vedantic ideas of ancient Hindu philosophy. At the World Parliament of Religions held in Chicago in 1893, Swami Vivekananda mesmerized the audience and helped stimulate a new interest in Hindu ideas in the United States. The Vedanta Society was soon established in the United States and Europe.

The radical culture of the 1960s kindled a new interest in Indian teachings in Europe and the United States. A succession of Hindu holy men and women began touring the West, giving initiations and developing a large international following. Among the better known were the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, a teacher of Transcendental Meditation, who received support from the famous musical group, the Beatles; and Swami Bhaktivedanta Prabhupada, the founder of the International Society of Krishna Consciousness—better known as the “Hare Krishna” movement, from the names for God used in the members' familiar chant. Other famous and sometimes controversial holy men from India who had a large following abroad were Meher Baba, Bhagwan Sri Rajneesh, Satya Sai Baba, and Sri Sri Ravi Shankar.

India in the Era of Global Religion

In the 21st century and the global era of fast communications and easy mobility of peoples, Indian culture and ideas travel through the Internet and videos and are transported wherever Indians settle abroad. Outside India, Indian immigrant communities have become the majority in the Indian Ocean island nation of Mauritius, and constitute about half of the population of the Pacific island nation of Fiji and a sizable percentage of the Caribbean island nation of Trinidad. Large Indian immigrant communities have been established in Singapore, Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Though many of these communities have built Hindu temples, Muslim mosques, and Sikh gurudwaras in the traditional styles, others have been attracted to forms of Hindu religiosity that seem particularly appropriate to expatriate societies. These are the congregational fellowships of groups such as the Radhasoami and Swaminarayana movements—the latter known as BAPS (*Bochasanwasi, Shri Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha*), which has built enormous temple complexes in London, Atlanta, and elsewhere around the world.

At the same time that Indian culture and society are reaching out, global forces have affected India. The rapid urbanization and middle-class growth due to new economic development, especially in information technologies, has created problems of social and cultural dislocation. New religious and

political movements have arisen as a result. The global pattern of radical extreme religious politics that has developed within Christianity in Europe and the United States, in Islam in the Middle East, and in Buddhism in Japan has also been an element in Indian politics at the turn of the 21st century. Conservative Hindu religious movements such as the *Vishva Hindu Parishad* have bolstered a right-wing political movement, the *Bharatiya Janata Party*, which formed the ruling coalition in the Indian parliament from 1998 to 2004. The Bharatiya Janata Party received some of its financial backing from expatriate Indian communities located in New York, London, Toronto, Houston, and elsewhere around the world. In this way, some members of the global Indian community helped support a movement that, paradoxically, purported to protect India from the homogenizing forces of globalization.

Mark Juergensmeyer

See also Bangladesh; Hare Krishna (International Society for Krishna Consciousness); Hindu Law; Hindu Nationalism; Hindu Orthodoxy; Hinduism; Mahayana Buddhism; Pakistan; Radhasoami; Sikhism; Southeast Asia; Theravada Buddhism; 3HO (Sikh Dharma Fellowship)

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INDIGENOUS RELIGIONS

The term *indigenous religions* refers to the religious traditions of non-European peoples indigenous to Africa, Asia, Australia, and the Pacific Islands. Recently, for political reasons, both inside and outside the university, and because of the reality of globalization, some native populations of North America—that is, Mexico, the United States, and Canada—have begun identifying themselves and their religious traditions as indigenous as opposed to Indian, Aboriginal, Amerindian, Native American, or First Peoples. Although indigenous peoples throughout the world have little in common in regard to culture and language, many of these societies have had to contend with one form of western European colonialism or another. In most cases, European colonialism was anything but benevolent, and Christian missionaries—both Catholic and Protestant—sought out indigenous souls to save from their traditional ways, which were considered to be the product of either absurd superstitions at best or satanic influence at worst.

Though indigenous populations are different from one another and vary from locale to locale, the common legacy of early modern and modern colonization creates many similarities that allow for scholars who study them—most of whom are Europeans or neo-Europeans—to place native-born, non-European populations and their languages, cultures, and religions into a singular category called indigenous. Although scholars are not necessarily in agreement with what makes an indigenous population indigenous—that is, outside the history of colonization or the potential for being colonized—there is some agreement on what makes a religion indigenous. In general, indigenous religions are autochthonous; most are polytheistic, and sacred stories and histories are passed down orally or through verbal communication. This entry discusses indigenous religions within the context of geographic locations, deities, and orality and touches on the future of these religions.

Lands

Autochthonous means that these religious traditions originate from a particular geographic location, its climate, landscape, flora, and fauna. Ilocanos, for

instance, of the northern Philippines inhabit a mountainous region filled with rivers and streams wherein the staple crop is rice. The Ilocano word for both “meaning” and “essence” is *kababagas*, the root word of which is *bagas*, “rice.” The word *kababagas* is used for mundane, religious, and spiritual purposes. For Ilocanos, then, given the region that they inhabit, there is no life either for the community or for an individual without rice. The same can be argued about Mesoamerican peoples—Mixtecs, Nahuas, and Otomis—about maize, before and after the Spanish conquest. Another example is the Aymara-speaking people of the Andes. They believe that the mountains and streams (*Huacas*) surrounding their respective communities or villages (*Ayllu*) are deities that formerly walked the earth before the existence of humans. The *Huacas* act as protectors of the communities, making certain that the rains replenish the soil and that the crops arrive on time. Each *Ayllu*, then, developed a relationship with its divine protectors. Religious specialists or leaders were expected to care for *Huacas* and interpret their messages. In this way, religious worldviews are linked to the lands that gave birth to them. If the tradition was removed from the land, in many cases, the religion and its myths, rituals, and rites would lose their meaning.

During Spanish colonial rule in the Philippines and the Americas, Catholic missionaries discovered early the connection between religion and land. As a result, the missionaries actively removed indigenous peoples from their villages to facilitate their conversion to Christianity. In some instances, this worked and only scant traces of the indigenous religious tradition remained, which was usually incorporated into Catholicism. This occurred especially with the Nahuas. However, many populations returned to their lands and continued their traditional religious practices. The Maya and Hopi, for instance, resisted removal—sometimes violently—and were able to retain many of their traditional practices.

Colonization and Removal Attempts

In the case of the Maya, in 1545, a year before Francisco de Montejo’s conquest, the Franciscans, a Catholic missionary order, arrived. In the early 1550s, the Spanish missionaries began to round up

the children of the Maya nobility and place them into newly built Franciscan convents in order to convert them to Christianity. By 1555, the Franciscans decided to try another way to convert the Mayas. They decided to forcibly remove the Mayas from their respective *cahs* (“villages”) and place them near the convents to facilitate conversion. The Mayas were forced to move from their ancestral territory, give up their personal possessions, give up their *milpas* (“lands”), destroy their homes, and leave the burial grounds of their parents. The Franciscans would call these forced relocation areas congregations or reductions.

In this way, the missionaries had easier access to the Maya. In 1562, some Franciscans claimed to have found evidence that the people were still practicing their traditional religion in caves. When Diego de Landa, the Franciscan’s provincial in the Yucatan, heard of this, he immediately notified a number of Spanish land owners and crown authorities to seek and destroy any or all elements of the “idolatry.” Backed with the power of the Spanish Crown, Landa began to round Mayas up and ask them to identify those people who participated in “pagan” rituals. This was the start of the Episcopal Inquisition. He tortured Mayas in the thousands: men, women, and children. Many committed suicide while in Franciscan custody.

A common torture was the hanging of Mayas by their hands and the slow and deliberate placement of stones on their feet. The lash was a favorite torture employed by the missionaries. After having whipped a Maya, turpentine was poured onto his or her body. Some Mayas had converted to Christianity prior to these events. However, for Diego de Landa, all Mayas were in some way guilty of idolatry. By August—the campaign began in May—Landa and his Franciscans started receiving outlandish claims about Mayan religion. The most outrageous was that the Mayas were sacrificing their own children. This outraged the Franciscans, and the campaign intensified. Mayas were now being summarily executed. This continued until Archbishop Francisco de Toral arrived to take control of the Yucatan province. His first order of business was to put the campaign to an end. Landa was sent to Spain for a review by the Council of the Indies. He was cleared of all wrongdoing. Although a church council in Mexico City in 1539 declared that Indians could not be

subjected to torture, it said that it could exercise parental discipline. The ruling was subject to interpretation. The Franciscan order in general supported Landa and the campaign of his Franciscans against idolatry. After Toral died in 1561, Landa was invited back to the peninsula by the Franciscans and was asked to take over the job left vacated by Toral. Landa became the bishop of the Yucatan.

As for the Hopi, the Franciscans arrived in 1629, and within a few years they had established a mission at Oraibi called San Miguel. Friar Francisco Porras, Andres Gutierrez, and Cristobal de la Concepcion were the first three missionaries to begin the conversion process in Hopi territory. The priests demanded tribute and fresh water from more than 50 miles away, and they assaulted Hopi women, young and old. Though Friar Porras was poisoned to death, the missionaries kept coming. In 1680, envoys from the Pueblos came and told the Hopis of planned assault on the Spanish missions, which successfully drove the Spanish out of New Mexico.

In 1700, the Spanish and the missionaries would return. This time, however, they set up camp in Awat'ovi and converted many Hopis. The Hopi elders asked the Franciscans to leave their territory, but they would not. Again, the missionaries started to abuse the women and to demand tribute. The Hopis asked the Christianized Hopis to rise against the Spanish, but they refused. In late 1700, all the Hopi villages together assaulted the Christian village of Awat'ovi, killing every Christian Hopi and Spanish missionary. Women and children who could sing the ritual songs were spared from slaughter. This was decisive; the Spanish would never seriously attempt to colonize the Hopi again.

Deities

Philippine Islands

The Tagalogs of the central Philippine Islands who still maintain their traditional beliefs have a number of deities. Their creator deity is called Bathalang Maykapál or Bathala. Although this deity is neither male nor female, Bathala is usually referred to as a male. He not only created the universe, but he looks over all that he has created. He is the most powerful deity in the Tagalog pantheon. There are other important deities: Idiyonale, Sidapa, and Balangáw. Idiyonale, usually represented as a

female, is the deity of fertility, agriculture, and farming. Sidapa is the deity of death; he not only claims the dead but escorts the souls to the Tagalog afterlife. Balangáw is the deity of warfare. There are a number of other deities that guard, protect, and inhabit rivers, streams, lakes, ponds, caves, trees, hills, and mountains. These deities are not to be confused with the souls or spirits of ancestors.

The Igorots of the island of Luzon in the Philippines call their supreme deity Cabunian. This deity interacts less with human beings than the Tagalog deity. Cabunian is primarily associated with the sky and all that it contains. They believe in personal deities—that is, they believe that each person has his or her personal deity, much like a spirit guide. This personal deity can be an ancestor, an animal, or an inanimate object. Personal deities are usually assigned by an elder or religious leader after a young man or woman has successfully undertaken a rite of passage such as a puberty ceremony for women or a hunting expedition for men.

For the Tagalogs and the Igorots, as with many other indigenous peoples, the souls of ancestors are revered and, in more extreme cases, worshipped. The spirits of ancestors can be either beneficial for an individual or community or detrimental to the spiritual and physical well-being of an individual or community. Whether a particular spirit is beneficial, benign, or malevolent is usually determined by a religious leader. Interactions, ritually or otherwise, are governed by complex rules and mores, thereby requiring that a specialist interpret the intent and origins of a particular spirit. Religious leaders base their interpretations and judgments on weather conditions, the behaviors of insects and animals, and natural occurrences, such as earthquakes and volcanic eruptions.

West Africa

The Yoruba and the Ibo have creator deities not unlike the Tagalogs. The prime deity of the Yoruba is named Olorun; he is above all other deities and is considered the source of all life. He is a kind and loving deity who values human life. The Ibo's supreme deity is called *Chukwu*, "Great Creator." As with Olorun, all life, including the souls of human beings, comes from him. As with the Tagalog, there are numerous deities that are responsible for the guardianship of landscapes and

natural occurrences. Ancestor spirits are both revered and feared, depending on the circumstances. Again, a religious leader is usually called upon to interpret the intent and origins of a particular spirit. Despite popular misconceptions, the creator or supreme deities of indigenous religions commonly bestow on mankind moral and ethical teachings. Although both Olorun and Chukwu, it is believed, are interested in the everyday lives of human beings, personal deities are important. As with the Igorots, these spirits act as guardians and protectors of humans throughout their adult life. This is common to West African religions.

West African indigenous religions were greatly affected not only by Western colonialism but also by the transatlantic slave trade. Indeed, many indigenous African religious traditions were violently transported to Europe and the Americas during the early modern period. Many of these religions took on new forms under the condition of slavery. Although some elements of these traditions died, other elements survive today in African American Christianity. Even more, in some areas of the Americas, indigenous or Native American traditions merged with African traditions.

Orality

Indigenous religions are largely dependent on orality—that is, the verbal communication of sacred stories, histories, myths, rites, and rituals. For many indigenous cultures, orality is privileged over literacy. In the Philippines, prior to the arrival of the Spanish, literacy was common among some of the indigenous populations, with these populations having created and maintained their own syllabary. In Mesoamerica, hieroglyphic writing was common. For many indigenous peoples, the landscape in itself acts as a sort of sacred text. The names of places, or place names, denote historical events or convey moral imperatives that can be translated or interpreted by religious leaders. In this way, language and land become interrelated. For the Western Apache, hills, valleys, and mountains all have place names that mean something religiously and historically. In many instances, an Apache elder simply needs to point to or mention a particular hill, valley, or mountain to convey a moral lesson to an errant youth. What that elder points to or mentions is not simply a landscape

feature, but he or she may be referring to a story about an ancestor, a deity, or animal, or even an actual historical event that occurred either decades or centuries ago. For the Western Apache, then, sacred stories are contained within the land itself. According to the anthropologist Keith Basso, these stories are kept alive by elders who communicate them in the language of the people. To lose the language is to lose the stories.

Morality

Many indigenous stories are concerned with morality—that is, communicating the right and proper way to interact with fellow humans, nature, and deities. Moral laws are common to indigenous religions. The laws for Nahuas, Incas, Ilocanos, and Tagalogs regarding sexuality, for instance, were noted by early modern Catholic missionaries to be stricter than those of even medieval Christianity. Among the Nahuas, couples who refused to have children were executed or exiled from the community, which certainly meant death; for the Incas, adulterers were tortured to death by having heavy stones tied to the offending parts of their bodies; for Ilocanos, rapists were executed, and their corpses were displayed in front of their family home; and for the Tagalogs, lazy people were sold into slavery and only freed after having demonstrated a value for work. In most cases, however, the missionaries saw this as nothing more than a ruse perpetrated by Satan. Moral teachings and laws, as understood within indigenous religious traditions, emphasize balance and harmony. Within indigenous religions, deities are not angered or personally insulted if an individual or a community fails to obey a moral imperative; rather, a balance is upset, and disharmony is the consequence, thereby forcing a restoration of balance. In many indigenous religions, life and events are cyclical and even minor deviations from the norm or tradition can interrupt the natural cycle of life or events. This partly explains the harshness with which infractions of moral laws were punished. If a natural cycle is interrupted, then the whole community suffers.

Religious Leaders

Religious leaders are responsible for teaching and interpreting moral laws. Becoming a religious

leader is a difficult task. Most individuals—both male and female—who become religious leaders are trained from childhood. Among the Coastal Chumash, for example, leaders begin apprenticeship at the age of 5, and it continues for 15–20 years. For some indigenous peoples, leadership is hereditary, but usually anyone who demonstrates a talent for a leadership role is given an opportunity to train. There are individuals who are strictly trained to be storytellers; some, healers; some, prophets; some, interpreters of the deities; and some, guardians of sacred sites or objects. Without the luxury of books, indigenous leaders are expected to memorize countless songs, dances, stories, myths, and rituals. Those leaders trained to be healers are expected to memorize all the names and uses of all the plant life within their respective territories. Indigenous leaders, then, are guardians of their respective languages, making certain that those of their words that contain knowledge about beliefs, rituals, and medicine are preserved. This partly explains why when missionaries sought to convert indigenous peoples, the destruction of the language was second only to the removal of the population from their lands.

The Future of Indigenous Religions

The future of indigenous religions looks bleak. The economic forces of globalization are seeking out new markets, new resources, and new lands. Missionaries are still searching out new souls to convert to Christianity, and developing nation-states are engaging in assimilation projects to strengthen their national unity. Many indigenous languages have become extinct and with them cultures and religions. In places such as Peru and Brazil, indigenous peoples are still being forced from their lands. Many indigenous peoples in South America and Asia are deracinated—that is, they are indigenous people who are not associated with any tribe or group. They are what the Spaniards during the colonial period used to call “wandering Indians.” Although some peoples, such as the Chamorros of Guam, have attempted to restore their language and the heritage that comes with it, most indigenous peoples have not had the opportunity to do the same.

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See also Africa; Guam; Mexico; Native Latin American Religion; Native North American Religion; Philippines; Shamanism; Spain; Violence

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INDO-EUROPEAN RELIGION

Originally a linguistic category, Indo-European (or Proto-Indo-European) has been employed by scholars to explain commonalities in linguistics, material culture, religion, and politics attested in various sources across Europe and Asia.

Historical and Geographical Parameters

The specific historical and geographical borders that circumscribe the category Indo-European remain contested and inconclusive. A vast number of works have been produced to reconstruct the lives of

Indo-European peoples. Although linguists and archeologists are often at odds, there can be no doubt that striking similarities are attested in both language and material culture from diverse locations.

Indo-European peoples generally refers to pre-historic peoples who lived in geographic regions extending from western Europe to North India. The evolution of the classical 10 branches of Indo-European languages span a wide range of history—from approximately the 19th century BCE to the 14th century CE. However, the category usually refers to groups of people that lived during the ancient period (spanning approximately from the fifth to the third millennia BCE).

Indo-European can be distinguished from sub-categories, such as Indo-Iranian, which represents a more delimited category. Indo-Iranian generally refers to a family of languages (most notably Sanskrit and Avestan) and concepts that developed in Central Asia and North India beginning in approximately 2000 BCE. However, some argue that Indo-Iranian languages evolved, at least in part, from a preexisting Central Asian substratum and not directly from Indo-European migrations.

Though it is unlikely that they will ever reach an absolute consensus, linguists and archeologists alike continue to refine our understanding of Indo-European origins.

Historical Significance

Linguistically, approximately half the world's population speaks a language categorized as Indo-European. Likewise, contemporary religious traditions preserve certain deities, beliefs, and practices that can be traced to Indo-European culture. As such, Indo-European sources reveal perhaps the earliest known instance of global religion.

Indo-European elements found in art, historical, textual, and archeological sources from Mesopotamia, Greece, Egypt, Persia, India, the Middle East, and other regions depict common deities (most notably a sun deity), the use of ritual sacrifice as a means to preserve righteousness, narratives of an epic final battle, and, as noted most famously by Indo-European scholar Georges Dumézil, a tripartite organization of society. Many vestiges of these elements can be found in religions today, though they have been appropriated over time in theologically and culturally specific ways.

Regardless of the debates surrounding the historical and geographical parameters, the term *Indo-European* continues to serve a valuable purpose in academia. Scholars use the category to indicate that their subject matter under investigation does not represent an isolated instance but, rather, has parallels attested elsewhere, usually in multiple sources from diverse regions.

Holly Grether

See also Ancient Near Eastern Religions; Aryans; India; Iran

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INDONESIA

Indonesia is the fourth most populous nation and the largest Muslim country in the world. Of the 245 million Indonesians (2008 figure) an estimated 86% or 211 million are Muslims, 6% Protestants, 3% Roman Catholics, 2% Hindus, and 3% other or nonspecified. There are about as many Muslims in Indonesia as in all Arab countries together. Most of the Muslims in Indonesia are Sunnīs. Indonesia has up to now resisted the introduction of Shari'a legislation, at least at the national level. State and religion are separated. This is enshrined in the constitution of 1945, and it also forms the basis of the national ideology known as Pancasila. The Indonesian national motto is *Bhinneka tunggal ika*, or "Unity in diversity." The census of 2000 determined that there were people of 1,072 ethnicities, living on more than 6,000 Southeast Asian islands, but there is also an enormous religious diversity. Every recognized religion has

contributed one or more holidays to the national public holidays. In several areas of the archipelago, non-Muslims have a majority. The majority of Balinese are Hindu, while the majority of Bataks of west Sumatra, Dayaks of Kalimantan, Torajas of central Sulawesi, Minahassa of north Sulawesi, and Papuans of west Papua and Papua are Protestant. Flores has a majority that is Roman Catholic. In the Moluccas, the numbers of Christians and Muslims are more or less equal. The Minangkabau and the Acehnese of west Sumatra, the Sunda of west Java, the Madurese of Madura, and the Buginese of south Sulawesi are mostly Muslims.

Pancasila

Pancasila (Sanskrit, lit. “five principles”) is the state ideology of Indonesia, influenced by Hinduism and *kejawen*, the traditional religion of the Javanese. The Pancasila ideology is a compulsory subject at schools and universities. It is a crime to distort, undermine, or deviate from the ideology. The Army has to preserve the existing social order, including this ideology. Pancasila is supposed to guarantee peace, harmony, and national unity. It is a form of civic religion. In the period of the New Order government (*Orde Baru*, 1965–1998), all religions had to include it as their basis (*azaz*). The first *sila* or “moral precept” is the belief in the Lord, who is One (*Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa*). This conflicts with the beliefs of nontheistic religions, such as Buddhism or Confucianism. Muslims doubt whether Tuhan Yang Maha Esa can be identified with Allah, revealed in the Qur’an. Since the fall of the Suharto regime, however, criticism has been allowed. Muslim organizations and churches abolished in their constitution the reference to Pancasila. Muslim militants have been using the new freedom of the press and of organization to press for changes in the law to accommodate Shari’a. In 1999, Shari’a was introduced in the Indonesian territory of Aceh. At the same time *pela gandong*, the peaceful coexistence of Christians and Muslims in the Maluku islands, broke down, leading to a bloody conflict between the adherents of the two religions.

Animism

The oldest religion of Indonesia is animism. It is characterized by a belief in a magical causation. It

believes in the power and efficacy of witchcraft or sorcery (*ngelmu* or *sibir*), of the witchdoctor (*dukun santet*), black magic (*guna guna*), and amulets (*azimat* or *jimat*). Also, white magic is practiced, such as fortune telling, love magic, healing massage, and other forms. *Rapuh* is a sorcery designed to make victims suffer throughout their lifetime, while *sibir* is believed to have the power to kill persons from a distance. A more sophisticated version of this system of belief is *kejawen* or *kebatinan* (lit. “inwardness”). This is the mysticism of the Javanese higher class (*priyayi*). These beliefs and practices are still very much alive. The *Slametan* communal feast, for instance, is still the core ritual in Javanese society. It is celebrated at births, circumcisions, marriages, and deaths but also on Muslim holidays and on specific occasions such as in preparation for a long journey or at the opening of a new shop. The ceremony consists of speeches, prayers, Arabic chants, readings from the Qur’an, the burning of incense, and the eating of a meal consisting of rice cones and meat. The spirits are also supposed to take part in the meal. The ceremony aims at appeasing spirits and celebrates fellowship among the participants. In several areas, the tribal religion is still alive, such as with the Kombai and Korowai of southern Papua, the Punan of Kalimantan, the Sakkadei of the island of Siburut off western Sumatra, the Kubu of Sumatra, and the majority of the people of Sumba.

Hinduism

Hinduism came to Indonesia probably in the first century CE with traders, sailors, scholars, and priests from India. Through adaptation to the existing culture, a mixed Hindu-Javanese civilization emerged. The cult of Shiva, as protector of the state, became important. When Buddhism came to Indonesia in the 6th century it coexisted with Hinduism and sometimes merged with it. In the 13th century, the Majapahit kingdom in east Java brought central Java under its control under King Hayam Wuruk and his chancellor Gajah Mada. It fell around 1400 CE to attacks by Muslim kings from their coastal strongholds. The Hindu influence lasted for 16 centuries and left its traces till the present day. The Hindu epics, the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, became ingrained in the culture and worldview of the Javanese through the *wayang*

kulit (“leather puppets”) shadow shows and the dance shows (*wayang orang*). These are still played and are very popular. When Java was conquered by Muslim armies, the Hindu princes fled to Bali, where Hinduism has maintained itself till today. About 88% of the 3.5 million (2007 figure) inhabitants of Bali is Hindu. However, only the Tengger priests of Mount Bromo (east Java) remained Hindu. Their population is about 600,000. The Baduy of Bantam, west Java, still adhere to a form of Hinduism known as *Agama Sunda Wiwitan*.

Hindu influence on the Indonesian worldview and ideas about the role of the state and of the army has been pervasive. For instance, the Garuda bird in the coat of arms of Indonesia is the bird that is the vehicle of Vishnu, the protector of the state. For soldiers, on occasion, the Hindu caste term *ksatriya* is used. The Pancasila ideology has borrowed not only the Sanskrit terminology from Hinduism but also some of its ideas. The Hindu Mataram kingdom existed in central and east Java from the 8th to the 10th century CE. It left us the great temple complex of Prambanam near Yogyakarta. A recent feature in the spread of Hinduism is the construction of Hindu temples on ancient sacred places in Java, for example, on the slope of Mount Sumeru. This has led to a wave of conversions in villages surrounding the temple. In the 1970s the Torajas of central Sulawesi and the Taro-Batak of west Sumatra and in 1980 the Dayak of Kalimantan had their traditional tribal religion recognized as a form of Hinduism.

Buddhism

Mahayana Buddhism arrived in Indonesia in the 6th century and came directly by sea from the Indian subcontinent. The kingdom of Sriwijaya with Palembang as its center accepted Buddhism under the Sailendra rulers. It existed from the 7th to the 13th century, with the 9th century as its golden age. This kingdom, built around 780 CE, has the Borobudur, the largest Buddhist stupa (monument) in the world. It has 1,500 reliefs and 505 statues of the seated Buddha. In the middle of the 14th century, Buddhism flourished in Minangkabau of western Sumatra. After the 1965 anticommunist coup d'état of Suharto, the people of Indonesia had to adopt one of the then five official religions. Atheism was no longer allowed. This led to a growth in the number of Buddhist adherents. A large

number of the present-day Buddhists in Indonesia are people of Chinese descent, who follow Theravada Buddhism.

Islam

Islam came to Indonesia in the beginning of the 13th century as part of the great wave of expansion to the East, which made the Indian Ocean a Muslim inner sea. The expansion was a side effect of trade. Muslim preachers were themselves sometimes traders, or they were Muslim teachers, doctors, blacksmiths, or interpreters. They mediated between the local princes and the traders, and in this way, they could influence them. Samudra in Aceh was one of the first cities to become Muslim. By the end of the 13th century, Islam had been established in north Sumatra. By the 14th century, Islam had established itself in northeast Malaya, Brunei, the southern Philippines, and among some courtiers of east Java. In the 15th century, Islam came to Malacca and other areas of the Malay Peninsula.

It is still unclear exactly when and how Islam spread over the archipelago, but it was a slow and relatively peaceful process. Islam came to Indonesia at a time when it had already undergone considerable development. The Muslim teachers came from India and did not find it difficult to connect to local forms of Hinduism and animism. Their Islam had an Indian character. Often, it was the rulers who were first converted and then the population. According to a myth, Java was converted by the Wali Songo, nine scholars, who were traders but also princes. The tradition calls them *raja-pandita* or priest-kings. They made conversions by allowing traditional customs. They built mosques with a three-layered roof, symbolizing the three layers of reality according to Javanese cosmology. Later, Muslims of high birth from Hadhramaut, in southern Arabia, entered Indonesia. They settled in Palembang and the trading ports of Java and Madura. They established the Muslim state of Siak on Sumatra and of Pontianak on Kalimantan. The ports of Tuban, Giri, Gresik (close to Surabaya), and Demak became the center of independent Muslim states. By the end of the 15th century, some 20 Muslim kingdoms existed. The ruler of Demak managed to defeat the ruler of the Hindu kingdom Majapahit in 1468. Demak expanded to west Java among the Sunda, and along with it Islam also expanded.

In the 20th century, several Muslim organizations were founded to uplift the masses, with projects in the area of education. NU (*Nahdlatul Ulama* or the “Awakening of Ulemas”) is the largest Muslim organization in Indonesia. It was established in 1926 in Surabaya. NU’s first president was the ulema Hasyim Asy’ari. It is, with a membership of 60 million, one of the largest independent Islamic organizations in the world. Most of the members are villagers with emotional ties with a local *pesantren* (“Muslim school”) and its teacher, or *kiyay*. It aims to conserve and preserve Islamic religious culture, and it organizes *pesantren*. NU preaches tolerance and moderation and accepts pluralism in the interpretation of the Qur’an. Its theological concepts derive from, inter alia, the Sufi tradition of al-Ghazali and Junaid Al-Baghdadi. It is opposed to Wahhabism and the Salafi form of Islam.

A second organization is the Persyarikatan Muhammadiyah, or Muhammadiyah, which means “followers of Muhammad.” It has 29 million members and represents mainly urban Muslims. It was founded in 1912 by Ahmad Dahlan in Yogyakarta. It rejects all innovations in religious worship that do not have an authority in the Qur’an. It rejects also all teachings based on superstition or fantasy, by which is meant the syncretism of Javanese Islam with its Hindu-Buddhist background. It encourages appreciation and mastery of science and technology. It also aims to foster greater unity and cooperation among members of the Muslim community at the level of individuals, groups, institutions, and law schools. It runs at present around 5,754 schools and several Muslim universities. It also has a social and medical program with hundreds of medical clinics and hospitals. In 2006, Din Syamsuddin, the head of Indonesia’s Council of Ulama, was elected as a chairman, steering the organization into a more conservative course.

Roman Catholicism

Roman Catholicism came to the Indonesian archipelago in the 16th century—with the coming of the Portuguese from their outposts in Goa, India, occupied in 1510, and Malacca, occupied in 1511. In 1546 to 1547, Francis Xavier traveled in the Moluccas, making many converts. By the end of the 16th century, there were an estimated 30,000 Catholics in Indonesia. In 1605, the Dutch conquered Ambon,

and Catholics had to convert to Protestantism. Only in Flores and Timor, still under Portuguese protection, could Catholicism maintain itself. Catholic mission work was forbidden till the middle of the 19th century. Then, Jesuits entered to take on pastoral work and mission work. Later, other missionary societies also entered the mission field, especially in areas that had not yet been Islamized. Dutch Missionaries of the Sacred Heart began work on the Kei islands and south and west New Guinea at the turn of the 20th century. The Capuchins (OFM Cap) began later work in Kalimantan and Sumatra, while the Fathers of the Divine Word (*Societas Verbi Divini*, SVD) worked in Nusa Tenggara (Lombok, Sumba, Sumbawa, Flores, and Timor). Several orders were active in Java in the field of education, health, and pastoral work. Roman Catholicism has made little headway among the Javanese. Yogyakarta became the center, “the Indonesian Rome,” with many universities, colleges, convents, and publishing companies. Java produces now about 40% of all the priests. However, Flores remains its stronghold, with 40% of all the Catholics of Indonesia living there.

Protestantism

Protestantism came to the archipelago with the Dutch East India Company (VOC) in 1602. In 1605, Ambon, the center of the spice trade was conquered from the Portuguese, and the existing Catholics were asked to convert to Protestantism, the ruling religion of Holland. In the 17th century, the Bible was translated into Malay. Till the first decade of the 19th century, not much was done on mission work, though an Indian Church (*Indische Kerk*) emerged for the Dutch living in Indonesia and their servants and workers. Mission work started in the 19th century. Dutch missions concentrated exclusively on work in Indonesia. Protestant missions became the pioneers in the area of education, mission work, ethnography, and language research. By the end of 1938, there were 2,825 mission schools with 214,000 pupils in the territory. They concentrated on areas not yet reached by Islam. They were quite successful in the conversion of complete ethnic groups, where religion and ethnic identity fused. The Dutch Bible Society was from the beginning of the Dutch presence in the archipelago very active in the production of Bibles and religious literature in local languages.

Confucianism

Confucianism is confined to people of Chinese descent. In 1900, its followers set up the Kongfuzi Social Society Organization or *Tiong Hoa Hwee Koan* in Jakarta, which aimed at introducing the teaching of Kongzi (Confucius). In 1955, the society was renamed the Supreme Council for Confucianism in Indonesia or *Majelis Tinggi Agama Khonghucu* (MATAKIN). Confucianism was, however, declared illegal during the New Order period (1965–1998) with its many anti-Chinese measures. In 2000, Confucianism was again recognized, and it received the status of one of the official religions. In 2007, the Chinese New Year was officially celebrated for the first time, and this date has been added to the official list of public holidays.

Recent Developments

There is increased religious freedom in Indonesia since the fall of the Orde Baru regime in 1998. Soon after the fall, several extremist religious organizations emerged, which were prepared to realize their aims with the use of violence. Indonesia's Council of Ulama has condoned the use of violence in some of its fatwas. Some of the organizations that endorse violence are the Front for the Defence of Islam (*Front Pembela Islam*); the Holy War Army (*Laskar Jihad*), led by Ja'far Umar Thalib, which is strongly influenced by the most puritan form of Wahhabi Salafism; and the *Majelis Mujahadeen* and *Jemaah Islamiyah*, with its leaders Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakar Ba'asyir. The latter organization was implicated in the Bali bombings of 2003 and other terrorist attacks. The Laskar Jihad sent in 3,000 Muslim warriors from Java to Ambon, where it was responsible for most of the bloodshed in the period 2000 to 2001. The government is monitoring the activities of these movements closely. Ja'far Umar Thalib was arrested in 2002, and Abu Bakar Ba'asyir was sentenced to imprisonment. Since his release, he has not stopped demanding the introduction of Shari'a. There is now a risk of Shari'a legislation being introduced through the backdoor in the regencies, based on powers given to local governments in the regional autonomy legislation, even though matters of religion remain a national matter. From 2004 to 2007, 110 churches were closed in Indonesia as a result of attacks by radical Muslim groups or by

local governments coerced by these groups. In June 2008, a law was passed to ban proselytizing by the small Ahmadiyya Islamic movement.

At Ipenburg

See also Christianity; Civil Religion; East Timor; Islam; Mahayana Buddhism; Religious Nationalism; Roman Catholicism; Southeast Asia; Theravada Buddhism; Vajrayana, Tibetan

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INDUS VALLEY CIVILIZATION

The well-developed ancient urban civilization of the Indian subcontinent, the Indus Valley civilization or Harappan culture dominated parts of Afghanistan, India, and Pakistan between 2600 and 1900 BCE. Mohenjo Daro and Harappa were the two largest cities. The archaeological findings had given a fairly good picture of the urban planning, economy, society, and religion of the people belonging to the largest Bronze Age civilization of Asia. Information about religion and religious life were deduced from seals of burnt clay, figurines, images of stone, and other artifacts. These exquisitely constructed material objects provided proof of the existence of religious life in the Indus Valley civilization.

The engravings on seals depicting animals, flowers, and other symbols had not only artistic value but were also a pointer toward religious beliefs. These helped reconstruct the religion of the civilization, even though the writing system was still undeciphered. One common animal on the square seals was a mythical unicorn. Bulls, elephants, rhinoceroses, doves, rams, dogs, and snakes were also present on some seals. Some of the animals were three headed; there were tigers with horns and a bull's head with a human torso, all of which suggested specific religious beliefs. The trees, particularly the *pippal* tree, were sacred symbols. Some of the clay figurines of men and women that were found might have been used in rituals. Phalli and female sex organs made of stone were also discovered, which suggested that these were objects of worship. Serpent worship was prevalent, as could be seen from the figure of a deity with a hooded cobra. There was a picture of a nude female with a plant emerging from the womb on one of the Harappan seals. On the reverse, there was a male holding a sickle-shaped knife and a female with raised hand. This suggested that human sacrifice as well as worship of an earth goddess was prevalent. The most striking deity of the Indus Valley culture was the horned God sitting in a Yogic posture surrounded by animals such as elephants, tigers, buffalos, rhinoceroses, and deer. This was taken to be a proto-Siva image. There were some similarities to religious beliefs of the Sumerian civilization. A seal from

Mohenjo Daro depicted an attack on a horned tiger by a figure that was half woman and half bull figure. This was suggestive of the mythology of Goddess Aruru. A seal found in Chanhudaro showed a bull and a woman in a sexual position. The former represented the heaven and the latter earth. This duality was similar to the creation myths of the Rig Veda and Atharva Veda.

That the Indus Valley people believed in life after death was evident from burial sites. Some of the graves contained pottery, ornaments, and mirrors intended for use in the afterlife. The practice of burial of the dead body was replaced by cremation in the late Harappan period. Burial urns containing ashes were also found. In the Rig Veda, it had been mentioned that the ancestors performed both *anagnidagdha* ("burial") and *agnidagdha* ("cremation"). A wide range of Hindu beliefs are thought to have Harappan origins, including the proto-Siva form, serpent worship, the practice of painting dots on the female forehead, and the swastika symbol. There is a clear link between the religious tradition of the Indus Valley and the development of Hinduism.

Patit Paban Mishra

See also Aryans; Hinduism; India; Indo-European Religion; Pakistan

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INQUISITION

The term *Inquisition* refers to a development in European Christianity (particularly in the Middle

Ages) during which both secular authorities and members of the Roman Catholic hierarchy cooperated to suppress heresy and punish heretics.

The Inquisition developed within the context of the various cultures with which Christianity came into contact as it spread throughout the western part of the Roman Empire. Beginning as a small and persecuted sect within the Roman Empire, Christianity grew as a result of persuasion by word and example. The role of Christianity changed dramatically in the fourth century as the church began to merge with the state after Constantine legalized Christianity (ca. 314) and, later, Theodosius made it the official religion of the empire (380). The church absorbed much of the Roman legal tradition as well as the customs of Germanic tribes as these formalized during the Middle Ages. The notion of the church as *societas perfecta* (“perfect society”) served as the sacred canopy under which people lived, recognizing little distinction between the sacred and secular authorities. As a result, challenges to the faith were also seen as grave threats to what was perceived as universal order.

Beginning as early as the 11th century, Catharism and Waldensianism were two early, prominent heretical movements that challenged the *societas perfecta* and that were variously challenged by ecclesiastical and secular authorities. Drawing on a variety of sources, including Roman law and other legal traditions in the areas of what would become France and England, Alexander III at the Council of Tours in 1163 issued the first general legislation against heresy by the Holy See.

The term *inquisition* itself comes from the Latin verb *inquirere* (“to inquire”) and *inquisitio*, which referred to a legal procedure in classical Roman law. Pope Innocent III (1198–1216) formalized the procedure of the Inquisition by drawing on this Roman legal tradition. Especially important was his decretal *Vergentis in senium*, issued in 1199, in which he equated heresy with the doctrine of treason in Roman law, arguing that treason against God was a far greater offense than treason against the emperor, which was punishable by death. Those convicted of heresy, he later decreed, were to be turned over to secular authority for punishment. Eventually, torture was ruled to be an acceptable means for extracting confessions. Varying according to place and time, punishment could include excommunication, loss of property, and even death.

There was no universal, centrally organized Inquisition; inquisitions took shape in particular places at particular times, extending into France, Germany, Spain, Portugal, and Italy. The brutal Spanish Inquisition is perhaps the most famous, extending as it did to their territory in the Americas. Ferdinand and Isabella, with the approval of Pope Sixtus IV, sought out and persecuted Jewish converts, or *conversos*, who were the principal target, and later Muslim and eventually Protestant inhabitants of Spain. Both groups were ultimately driven out of Ferdinand’s domain. The Spanish Inquisition was not abolished until 1834. The Inquisition started in Italy in 1542 and was formalized in 1588 as the Congregation of the Holy Roman and Universal Inquisition, or Holy Office, in response to the Protestant Reformation and the rise of modern science, famously trying and convicting Galileo Galilei. The Roman Inquisition underwent several modifications over the centuries, most recently in 1965 when Pope Paul VI renamed the office The Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

Nicholas Rademacher

See also Authority; Christianity; Encyclicals; Heresy; Human Rights; Judaism; Religious Freedom; Roman Catholicism; Spain; Tolerance; Torture; Vatican City State and the Holy See; Vatican Council, Second

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INTERMARRIAGE

Intermarriage, also known as interfaith marriage, interreligious marriage, or mixed marriage, is a civil or religious union of two persons who individually adhere to different religions, faiths, or belief systems. Possible tensions arise relating to issues of premarital sexual relations; the wedding ceremony; observing religious celebrations, rites, and rituals; and the spectrum of religiosity within the joint household that can include extended family members and children. As most marriages

are performed with a blend of civil and religious ceremonies, there are various ways in which religion is negotiated postmarriage, especially as the religious laws of one partner's faith may forbid such a marriage. These options include the following: conversion to the religion of the spouse, two distinctly different religions practiced within the same household, a civil ceremony held in lieu of a religious one, or an amalgamation of various practices specified according to the couple.

Global religious pluralism has created new possibilities for intermarriage between diverse traditions, such as Hinduism and Judaism, or Christianity and Islam. However, against this trend, there is concurrent disaggregation of religious identities and systems, creating in turn global conflict and contention between faiths. From birth until death, the rites and passages observed within a human's life cycle all become points of potential contestation. Within certain traditional religious establishments, the view is held that intermarriage is detrimental to the values, identity, and overall continuity of the religion. Some religious leaders, however, welcome the expansion of their faith and view intermarriage as a natural expression of their beliefs and as an opportunity for spiritual growth.

The faith in which children are raised often becomes a source of conflict. For example, even though all three Abrahamic religions arguably recognize intermarriage within the bounds of their doctrine, each also has strict rules regarding children and which parent's religion the child will follow. While different movements within Judaism have differing views regarding children and who can be considered Jewish, traditionally, Jewish status passes through the mother. A child is considered Jewish as long as the mother is Jewish. In Islam, all children must be raised as Muslims regardless of which spouse is Muslim.

A Jewish marriage is considered to be a contract between two Jews and as such, intermarriage as well as sexual intercourse with a member of a different faith is forbidden and technically illegal under Jewish law. Denominations within Christianity vary on this issue. Some churches forbid intermarriage, although interchurch marriage, or a marriage between Christians adhering to the principles of different Christian denominations, is allowed. The Roman Catholic Church, however, deems all unions between Catholics and baptized non-Catholics as

mixed marriages for which special permission is required. In both Orthodox Christianity and Judaism, marriage is limited to members of the respective religions as rabbis and ministers are not allowed to officiate a marriage between partners of different religions. While the biblical passage most often cited for this stance is 2 Corinthians 6:14, most Christian churches support members who take part in intermarriage, citing 1 Corinthians 7:12–14. In contrast with the Orthodox branch of Judaism, Reform, Progressive, and Liberal rabbinical associations do not forbid members of their congregation from marrying people of different faiths, even though there is an absence of a common perspective within these movements.

Because Islam presents a nuanced perspective as to what constitutes a nonbeliever, there is debate about whether intermarriage is allowed. While intermarriage between believers and nonbelievers, who are termed as *Kuffar/Kuwaffir* and *Mushrikeen/Mushrikat*, is explicitly prohibited for both men and women (Qur'an 2:221), some adherents of Islam believe that Muslim men are allowed to marry non-Muslim women, specifically chaste or pious Jewish and Christian women, as the Qur'an refers to Muslims, Jews, Sabians, and Christians collectively as the "People of the Book" (Qur'an 5:5). The People of the Book are in their own category of non-Muslims but may also be considered believers by God. As an extension of this reasoning, intermarriage is denied to Muslim women. However, some adherents do point out some of the Qur'anic passages on pluralism that address the People of the Book as believers for evidence that the Qur'an allows both genders to participate in interfaith marriage; specifically, these passages are Qur'an 2:62, 3:110, 3:113, 5:69, and 5:82.

Within the dharmic traditions, Buddhism and Hinduism allow interfaith marriage. This is because Buddhism is not a family-centered religion, and marriage is not viewed as a religious act, duty, or obligation. Some of the reasons why Buddhism does not possess doctrinal standards or institutionalized models of the family are the role of renunciation, detachment, and the individual's pursuit of enlightenment. Hinduism teaches that the Ultimate Reality can be worshipped in many forms and thus allows interfaith marriage. Because the Abrahamic faiths do not allow worship of iconography, however, complications in an interfaith marriage may arise

with forms of worship involving puja, or offering prayers to an image or other symbol of the god serving as a means of gaining access to the Divine.

Due to heightened globalization in the 21st century, the world of today and the future is becoming not only more homogenized but also more fragmented, as identities and values are perceived to be threatened. The phenomenon of intermarriage is becoming more commonplace and is thus challenging embedded cultural and social norms and traditional taboos.

Sara Kamali

See also Christianity; Diaspora; Global Religion; Islam; Judaism; Multiculturalism; Multiple Faiths; Pluralism; Tolerance

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INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is an organization headquartered in Washington, D.C., whose purpose is to ensure international monetary cooperation, promote the growth of international trade, ensure the stability of financial exchange, provide assistance for countries in debt, and ultimately advance global financial stability. It monitors the economic progress of countries and provides technological assistance and training. In 2010, 187 nations belonged to this organization. The ways in which people practice and understand religion can transform as a result of changing

economic circumstances. The policies of the IMF, which have a deep impact on the developing world, should also be understood as a causal force of religious change.

In 1944, delegates from 44 nations convened in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, to put together agreements that would finance Europe's reconstruction and prevent future global economic depressions. The United States and most of the world had been ravaged by the Great Depression of the 1930s. Europe had recently suffered two world wars. Those present felt that global collective action was necessary to safeguard the world's economies. Both the IMF and the World Bank were founded at this conference with that aim.

Critics of the IMF have argued that its policies further Western corporate interests and elites of the developing world at the expense of the poor. Despite the fact that most member countries are from the developing world, the United States and Europe wield the most voting power at the IMF, pointing to a power imbalance inherent in its structure. While earlier IMF policies reflected the view that expansionist government policies would encourage economic growth, currently, IMF policies reflect neoliberal ideology. The IMF's lending policies have been widely criticized as creating and sustaining relationships of dependency, in which developing countries, in no position to protest against IMF policies, have to accept belt-tightening austerity measures in order to qualify for aid.

In the global era, IMF policies and the speedy pace of globalization have created rapid social change and instability in many parts of the developing world. Contemporary movements of religious revivalism can be understood, in part, as a response to these changes. From the 1990s onward, the IMF's policies in the Middle East have been blamed for the higher levels of unemployment, worsening poverty, and ensuing anti-Western sentiment. Islamic political groups have consolidated around these issues. Theologian Rosemary Radford Ruether has argued that the rise of religious revivalism, corresponding to widening poverty, has also led to neopatriarchy movements in which women's roles and rights are limited.

Sophia Pandya

See also Economic Issues and Religion; Global Religion; Globalization; Religion and State

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Website

International Monetary Fund: <http://www.imf.org>

INTERNATIONAL NGOS

International nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) have emerged as major players on the international scene in the post–Cold War global era. By 2010, estimates put the number of NGOs that work internationally at more than 50,000. They come in all shapes and sizes, but two major categories (which overlap) are advocacy and operational. Advocacy-focused groups address many social justice issues—for example, global integrity, rights of indigenous peoples, and gender rights. The more operationally focused groups work on a vast array of activities, ranging from HIV/AIDS programs to education, global health, and protecting the environment. NGOs with a religious character are often termed faith-based organizations (FBOs) or faith-inspired organizations (FIOs), the latter defined to capture a wider group of organizations. FIOs are also advocates and service providers. This entry highlights definitional issues; the path of their evolution; key roles played by international NGOs, with a particular focus on FIOs; and some debates that surround them.

Contending definitions highlight this topic's complexity. A vast literature exists about civil society and the multitude of institutions involved. The term *NGO* highlights what NGOs are not: Above all, they are not governments. The word *organization* suggests that they have some form of legal foundation, and *international* highlights their transnational

roles. Other commonly used terms include *CSOs* (civil society organizations), highlighting, by stressing civil society, their civic, social purposes and citizen roles in their creation and management; *PVOs* (private voluntary organizations), a term often used by the U.S. government, which highlights the significance of voluntary engagement and of volunteers; and *not-for-profit organizations*, which underscores a broad financial character distinct from private business. Each of these definitions has drawbacks, but they all underscore the great variety in the types of organizations and their capacity for innovation and adaptation to differing circumstances and social needs.

There are definitional debates surrounding FIOs, some similar to those involving secular civic organizations and others more specifically tied to the link to religion. The fundamental question of how FIOs differ from other NGOs (Is there some kind of “faith DNA”?) is much debated. Many FIOs function much like other NGOs, while others present their religious dimensions in a more overt, leading role, including evangelizing as an intrinsic goal. Relationships between FIOs and religious organizations vary, from organizations formally linked to a specific religious body (Lutheran World Service), international interfaith organizations that bring together different faith traditions, and less formally affiliated organizations (e.g., Habitat for Humanity International) to organizations that look more like federations or movements. By some measures and definitions, religion is itself a NGO; the terms FBO and FIO highlight that some more organized, generally legally constituted entity is involved, albeit in very different ways; faith or religious beliefs are intrinsic to the inspiration and character of these organizations.

Private organizations whose primary purposes are social, not business, have existed for centuries, but the explosion in numbers and activities of international NGOs dates from the post–World War II period. An important marker is explicit recognition of civil society organizations in the U.N. Charter. Important antecedents were the International Red Cross and Red Crescent movements and networks that mobilized and integrated antislavery and women's rights campaigns. Globalization has contributed to NGO growth, with information technologies propelling new international links, but NGOs also are factors in globalization trends. The quantitative dimensions of

what is a revolutionary increase in the numbers of organizations are difficult to pin down, in part because of disputed definitions but also because the diversity of organizations makes counting problematic. As an indicator, some 3,500 CSOs/NGOs are accredited formally to the United Nations. This stands in contrast to the related but different numbers of national CSOs/NGOs: the United States counts 2 million in this category and India, 1.2 million.

Relationships among governments and international organizations, private companies, churches and religious bodies, and international NGOs take us to the heart of what NGOs are, and are not, about. The U.N. website definition is telling: “The United Nations is both a participant in and a witness to an increasingly global civil society.” But beyond a general appreciation that organizations without formal government links bind societies and carry out many social and cultural functions, there is no clarity. Most international NGOs do not rely exclusively on volunteers; many in practice receive substantial funding from governments and private companies. While profit motivation is rarely an explicit NGO purpose, many (notably microfinance and “patient capital” organizations) see business principles and private sector disciplines as drivers of both creativity and efficiency. Partnerships linking many different types of organizations are promoted actively, bridging traditional or notional divides among sectors. An array of often tongue-in-cheek nicknames for different NGO types highlights the complexity of relationships: GONGOs are government-organized NGOs; QUANGOs are quasi-government NGOs; BINGOs are big NGOs; and DANGOs are donor-organized NGOs. The list can and does go on indefinitely. In short, relationships take every imaginable form.

NGOs are part of the accepted international scene, increasingly present in forums where global issues are discussed. That said, their roles and perceptions about them vary quite widely. Civil society is seen rather differently in Europe than in North America. Asia, Latin America, and Africa are seeing rapid changes in NGO roles and considerable controversy around how far governments can and should be regulating them. International NGOs can be a blessing, bringing resources, creativity, and, often, a flexibility to respond more quickly and creatively than governments. But their legitimacy and the core questions—whom they

represent and to whom they are accountable—are often present, explicitly or in underlying, often unspoken attitudes.

International NGOs have important strengths and assets. The most significant may be in ensuring that poor and marginalized people—the stakeholders—are indeed heard and represented in policy decisions because NGOs can be more agile than governments and more altruistic than most businesses. They play roles in promoting public sector accountability, transparency, and participatory approaches that aim to empower local people. International NGOs can help break down the barriers of national borders. Sometimes (not always) international NGOs offer less costly operations. They play critical roles where governments are weak or failing, stepping into the breaches of missing services. FIOs play particularly a critical role because they often have deep roots in communities, are highly trusted by people, and have the capacity to mobilize voluntary efforts for a wide range of people.

Less positive views on international NGOs include an image of “self-appointed altruists” whose voice far exceeds both the merits of arguments and their right to represent, for example, the wishes and interests of the poor communities. The balance of power and resources between “Northern NGOs,” that is, NGOs largely fueled by citizens in richer nations, are contrasted with those of “Southern NGOs,” which often see themselves as shoved aside when resources and decisions are at issue. Some international NGOs are seen as motivated as much by a quest for contracts as by the welfare of the people they claim to represent.

The leading issue for international NGOs is accountability. It is the topic of active work, as all concerned—the NGOs themselves and those who support them—recognize the need for clear mechanisms to judge results and especially for financial accountability. Some international NGOs have world-class management and accounting standards, but that is by no means universal. Another issue is the fragmentation that is to an extent in the nature of civil society organizations. At issue is how far their contributions “add up” to lasting and equitable change.

Major international NGOs are household words: CARE, born after World War II to distribute “care packages” to war-weary Europe, is a prime example, as are Médecins Sans Frontières

(“Doctors Without Borders”), Human Rights Watch, World Vision, Catholic Relief Services, the Salvation Army, Islamic Relief, and Save the Children. After the 2004 Indonesian tsunami and the 2010 Haiti earthquake, NGOs were at the forefront of the humanitarian effort. Many are stalwart participants in every facet of international development and advocacy, arguing for increased aid and debt relief and providing on-the-ground support for orphans, housing construction, and women’s empowerment. But these well-known entities represent only the tip of the iceberg of the array of organizations working across borders, engaging citizens in global issues and linking compassion and caring with today’s rich understanding of the obligations of global citizenship.

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See also Catholic Charities; Church World Service; Civil Society; Global Religion; Globalization; Human Rights; Social Justice

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Website

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Inspired Organizations and Development: <http://berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/projects/global-mapping-of-faith-inspired-organizations-and-development>

INTERNET

The phenomenon known as globalization is made possible by advances in technology, communication, and information services. Perhaps the most important of these developments is the Internet, which began as a small network of computers in the late 1960s and rapidly expanded into a global communications network, which links not only computers but an ever-expanding number of electronic instruments. The Internet was first used primarily for military purposes, but its use soon expanded throughout the professional world and then into the privacy of homes, cell phones, and increasingly minute and mobile devices. As the Internet has colonized the daily lives of individuals, so have the concerns of individuals colonized the Internet. Although the dispersed, amorphous, and virtual character of the Internet makes it difficult to quantify, all indicators show that religion has a tremendous presence online. What this means is another question, as the Internet offers both opportunities and challenges to individuals and their religious traditions.

By most accounts, there are millions of Internet pages devoted to religious content, and evidence suggests that use of the Internet for religious purposes concentrates around the communication of information about events happening offline. At this level, the Internet acts as a fairly traditional medium, which reproduces the “real” in a symbolic medium, with the difference that communication is nearly instantaneous and relatively decentralized. Websites devoted to communicating information include the following types of sites: community hubs hosted by particular congregations (e.g., the website of the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives at <http://www.obcon.org>); establishment hubs organized by the governing body of a tradition (see the Vatican’s site at <http://www.vatican.va>); multi-purpose portals offering a sampling of educational materials, chat rooms, commerce, media, and other tools (e.g., <http://crosswalk.com>); evangelical sites (True Jesus Church at www.tjc.org and

<http://www.outreachjudaism.org>); international religious-based NGOs addressing world hunger (<http://www.bread.org>); commemorative sites (<http://www.virtual-memorials.com>); and myriad others. The sites listed here are only a minute sampling of a vast range of material online, and as the examples suggest, the Internet is host to a multiplicity of religious traditions and religious-inspired causes as well as their critics.

In addition to communication venues, the Internet provides unique opportunities for technology-assisted interaction, whether individually or in groups. One of the more interesting adaptations of the Internet's potential for interactivity is online ritual. The first online ritual was a memorial service for the NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) *Challenger* in 1986, and currently, users can participate in individual and group rituals at will. Users can enter virtual temples online, download meditative sound files, view images of a god or icon, and make credit card offerings to communities of their choice. Users can organize and attend funerals online, perform weddings (albeit with dubious legal consequences), offer prayers, stream real-time religious services, burn virtual incense, visit memorial sites, and even perform virtual sacrifices at spoof sites. Scholars are divided as to how these and other adaptations affect religious experience, however. Early studies of religion online were alternatively utopian and dystopian about the ways in which the Internet would transform religious experience, but a second generation of scholarship argues that religious ritual merely recreates offline life. This "doubling" effect generates questions about the reality of virtuality, but such questions are misleading. The real and the virtual are difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish, and they often have feedback effects on each other. More tractable questions about the nature of religion online concern how the Internet affects authority structures, identity formation, and the structure of sacred time and space.

The formation of authority structures and group identities often go hand in hand, and the Internet can transform both. On the one hand, it can be a medium for the consolidation of authority and group identity, especially where communication among the faithful would otherwise be impossible. For example, the Internet can help

sustain diaspora communities, and it can create solidarity among sects or cults that are otherwise subject to hostility and criticism. The online presence of the Heaven's Gate group of 1997, which actively recruited adherents online, is one example. Another is the cluster of Branch Davidian websites that originated after the destruction of the Mt. Carmel compound in 1993. For survivors of the Waco tragedy, the Internet offers a virtual space for the community to reconstruct itself after having lost its leader and its physically "real" sacred space. This development is an example of how the Internet can transform religious networks, since the original Waco community did not have an online presence or seek converts online. In general, research shows that the Internet is a more effective vehicle for criticism and defamation of religion than for religious identity construction or conversion.

The Internet's destructive potential is perhaps most challenging for new religious movements because it increases communication between followers and the outside world, erodes boundaries, and can diminish the plausibility structures of new religions. More established religions are also subject to attack and criticism online; the negative Internet press surrounding Scientology is one example. Because of its anonymity, accessibility, and pervasiveness, the Internet has proven to be a convenient tool for antireligious and anticult groups. And even where it is not a question of overt hostilities, the Internet enables strangers to meet online and communicate anonymously about sensitive or taboo topics. Some of the simplest applications of online technology include live chat rooms, where users can discuss religious topics without the supervision of religious authorities. Hence, scholars have remarked that the Internet offers truly "democratic" possibilities, although social hierarchies are often reconstructed online as well. What is more certain is that the Internet has a flattening effect because it enables instant and mass communication between practitioners and central religious authorities.

The flattening effect of the Internet can also be compared to its delocalizing effects. Because the Internet enables communication at a distance, it can foster a certain grassroots rapprochement across people of different faiths. Some scholars have even seen the Internet as a powerful tool for

combating xenophobia since it can connect people from different places and faith traditions in a non-threatening way. Optimism about the Internet must be combined with realism about the accessibility of the Internet, however. Use of the Internet correlates highly with wealth, and its global expansion is marked by what is known as the “digital divide.” While wealthy parts of the world have near-ubiquitous web access, there are large parts of the world that do not have the infrastructure to support computer networks. In this way, the Internet actually reconstitutes the racial, ethnic, gendered, and class hierarchies, which it might otherwise destabilize. It should also be emphasized that religious traditions display different attitudes toward online life. Judaism, Christianity, Buddhism, and Hinduism tend to be friendly toward the Internet; Islam is both web adaptive and web averse; and groups such as Scientology have been actively hostile to the Internet. Finally, the overwhelming tendency is for offline religions to go online as the creation of new religions or new religious experiences online is rare or nonexistent. Although the Internet can support offline communities, it has not yet been able to act as a complete substitute for offline life. Scholars suggest that this is because online communities lack longevity, they are inherently transient and decentralized, and a user can repudiate their membership (or begin a new one) with a single mouse click.

Going forward, it seems that the expansion of the Internet will generate two responses from religious groups and individuals. On the one hand, religious faithful will find increasingly complex ways to integrate religion, technology, and daily life. As Internet usage tends toward seamless integration in other spheres of life, it is likely that religious groups will find ways to use the Internet to increase solidarity, encourage religious practice, and contribute to the religious disciplining of everyday life. On the other hand, perhaps the more striking responses will come from groups who experience the Internet as part of an unwanted process of modernization or “Westernization.” For example, in 2001, the foreign minister of the Taliban stated that the Taliban was not against the Internet itself, but it objected to the obscene and immoral content available there. The Internet does make potentially offensive material such as pornography readily available for consumption

around the globe, and this makes it a challenging medium for religions that encourage modesty, restraint, and bodily discipline. It is already well-known that modernization can generate a backlash of localism, traditionalism, and antimodern sentiment, and the Internet may exacerbate this phenomenon. For this reason, places and events in “real” time and space will continue to be hotly contested, even as the Internet acts as an alternative “reality” for religious life.

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See also Global Religion; Globalization; Google; Modernization

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IRAN

For most of history, the geographical area now called Iran was known as Persia. Early Persia was a grand empire, which was invaded by outside forces. Iran has been the center of global interests due to its political and geostrategic location and its rich oil and natural gas reserves. In the past century, Iran has experienced major revolutions, which include the Constitutional Revolution of 1906 and the Islamic Revolution of 1979. It is currently undergoing a Green Movement, which refers to a series of events after the 2009 presidential election in which protesters have demanded the removal of the president of Iran from office. What we are witnessing now in Iran was made possible by decades of activism by Iranian women and men.

Historical Iran

Iran is home to one of the world’s ancient civilizations. Throughout history, Iran has witnessed notable achievements in literature, philosophy,

science, and art. In 632 CE, Arabs attacked Iran and paved the way for the Islamic conquest of Persia. In time, Iranians converted to Islam, but the country's scholars worked hard to protect and revive the Persian language and culture. Historians such as Richard Frye believe that it was Iranian culture that helped give birth to the great Islamic civilization during its golden years. Like most great civilizations, the trials and tribulations of history began to take a toll on the Persian Empire. In 1219, the Mongols attacked Iran, but after years of ruling Iran, they failed to have an impact on the Iranian culture. In fact, it was the conquerors who began to take to the Iranian way of life.

At the start of the 16th century, the Safavid Dynasty triumphed in reunifying the country as an independent state. Another historic decision by the Safavids at that time was to make Shi'a Islam the official religion of the country. From that point on, Iranians openly practiced the teachings of Shi'a Islam. However, Iranian intellectuals, particularly sociologist Ali Shariati, have harshly criticized the Safavids for their political use of religion. Shariati believes that this move dealt a devastating blow to Shi'i in terms of its originality and consistency with real Islam, which was practiced by the first imam of the Shi'i, Ali. The Safavids used force to compel the masses into practicing the new form of Shi'a, and Shi'ite credos were exploited to justify political ambitions.

By 1906, the rule of the corrupt and weakened Mozaffar-al-Din Shah led to protests, which ultimately resulted in the country's Constitutional Revolution and the establishment of the first parliament. When Mohammad Reza Pahlavi came to power in 1925, Iran was ready for a transition to democracy. Nevertheless, the new Shah proved to be little improvement over his predecessors, and his rule became increasingly autocratic. Reza Shah crushed all forms of political opposition with the help of his infamous intelligence agency, SAVAK (*Sazamane Etelaat Va Amniate Kechvar*, "Iranian Security and Intelligence Service"). It was during the reign of his son Mohammad Reza Pahlavi that Iran's first democratically elected Prime Minister, Mohammad Mossadegh, was deposed in a coup with the support of the British Secret Intelligence Service and the CIA. Ayutollah Ruhallah Khomeini seized the moment and invested in people's discontent with the Shah, publicly denouncing the

monarchy. His criticism was not tolerated, and 2 days after a fiery speech on the Ashura of 1963, Khomeini was arrested and ultimately exiled. Following his exile, strikes and demonstrations literally paralyzed the country. The Shah fled Iran in January 1979, and Khomeini returned from exile to Tehran. On April 1, 1979, Iran became an Islamic Republic, and for the second time in history, Shi'a became the official religion of Iran with its teachings taking center stage. Today, Khomeini's teachings and precedents have evolved into a system of government that combines elements of Islamic theocracy with bits of democracy.

Iran's Unleashed Youth Power

Postrevolution Iran witnessed a baby boom that changed the country's demographics. With close to 60% of Iran's population under the age of 30 in 2009, the nation's youths have turned into a force to be reckoned with. Despite young people's interest in Western culture, 90% of Iranians still identify with their Muslim roots (Salehi-Isfahani, 2010). As such, the potentially positive impact that Islam may have on the current opposition movement, also known as the Green Movement, should neither be ignored nor taken too lightly.

Although Iran holds 10% of the world's proven oil reserves and 15% of the world's gas, which put it in second place on the global scale, it still faces a high rate of unemployment (U.S. Energy Information Administration, 2010). According to Esfandiari (2004), approximately 4 million Iranians are now living abroad. Every year, more than 150,000 young educated Iranians leave their homeland for countries such as the United States and Canada in the hopes of finding a better life.

Women in Iran

However, the exodus of these Iranians should not be grounds for overlooking improvements in health and education in the past 30 years, especially concerning women. At the time of the Islamic Revolution in 1979, rural Iranian women were mostly illiterate and were married by the age of 18, and the average birth rate was high. Iran in 2010 is quite a different place for women. Primary health care programs have considerably improved, with the government building about 15,000 rural

health clinics between 1985 and 2005. The average age at marriage for a rural woman is 23, and a couple is expected to have no more than two children (Salehi-Isfahani, 2010). Women make up more than half of university students. Female MPs have been a part of the country's political system for most of the past 30 years. The people of Iran have come to accept women's public role and their right to participate in any realm of society. Women have emerged ever more strongly as a force to be reckoned with in the country's politics.

The Commemoration of Ashura

The Shi'a community has revered one day as its source of inspiration, awakening, and practice, and that day is *Ashura*. The literal meaning of *Ashura* is "10th" in Arabic, and it is the day on which the grandson of Prophet Muhammad, Hussain, along with his family and supporters were murdered in the battle of Karbala in 680 CE. The ordeal started when Caliph Yazid, who was in power at the time, ordered Hussain to prove his allegiance to him. But Hussain refused because Yazid openly went against the teachings of Prophet Muhammad.

According to historical reports, it was at that time that people in the Iraqi city of Kufa, who were fed up with their ruler, wrote to Hussain in the thousands asking the Prophet's grandson to come to their help. Hussain, along with 72 male supporters and their families, moved in the direction of Kufa. But the more politically influential Yazid won over the Kufan leadership and forced Hussain and his followers to camp outside the city in the desert of Karbala. The army of Yazid encircled the camp, cutting off its access to the waters of the Euphrates River. The siege lasted 10 days. On the 10th day of Muharram (October 10, 680 CE), commemorated by the Shi'i as the mournful Ashura Day, Yazid's army massacred Hussain and his followers. The women and children were sold into captivity. Yazid then assumed power as the caliph in Damascus.

The events that unfolded on the day of Ashura became the building block of the teachings of Shi'i. Since then, Shi'a Muslims remember Ashura in ways that are consistent with their culture and heritage. The new ways of mourning the martyrdom of Hussain were influenced by a Spanish tradition

of mourning for Jesus. The mourning ritual is traced to ancient Mesopotamian rituals, which helped give birth to similar traditions in Manichaeism, Judaism, and Christianity. Ritual lamentation, wailing, and self-flagellation have been practiced in all of these religions as a means of purifying the body and the whole community (Beeman, 1979).

Shi'i cry out "*Ya Hussain*" ("Oh Hussain") when remembering the events of Ashura. The suffering endured by Hussain and his family are widely seen as a symbol of resistance and fight against injustice and oppression, and gatherings in the name of Hussain are increasingly taking on a political form. People who are becoming more aware of the purported underlying meanings of Ashura use it as a pretext to express their dissent. Ashura has time and again been the launching ground for a number of reform-seeking movements. For example, this day proved to be rather significant for the 1979 Iranian Revolution and three decades later for the 2009 election aftermaths. Protests broke out on a wide scale in Iran during Ashura before the Islamic Revolution of 1979, and this, according to many historians, was the driving force needed by the people to turn their anger at the Shah into a nonstopable form of resistance. Some of the biggest anti-Shah protests took place on religious holidays, including Ashura, when people felt protected.

The more recent example of how Ashura was used as a platform to express dissent is the postelection events in Iran. Just days before Christmas of 2010, Iranians took to the streets in the tens of thousands to protest against what they believed to be electoral fraud. There was a crackdown on opposition protesters during the 6 months that followed the controversial June 2009 presidential polls. The protests that took place on the day of Ashura raised the stakes for both the government and the opposition in Iran. Most of the opposition protesters who came to the streets felt that they were safe from the government's wrath because of the holy nature of Ashura. The opposition chanted "*Ya Hussain Mir Hussain*" to indicate that, like Hussain, they too had been alienated and oppressed. The name of Hussain, the symbol of a person whose rights had been violated, was now used together with Mir Hussain Mousavi, one of the opposition leaders in Iran who had challenged the election results. But a crackdown on demonstrators left at least eight people dead, and the opposition's fight for what they believed was

their inalienable right reached a turning point. Hussain's famous quote, "Every day is Ashura, every land is Karbala," resonated with many opposition supporters who justified their resistance as their way of standing up against injustice. The new generation of Iranian youth is no longer divided along the ideological lines of that revolution. They are demanding rights mandated by the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Samaneh Oladi Ghadikolaei

See also Aryans; Indo-European Religion; Islam; Islamic State; Islamism (Political Islam); Politics and Religion; Religion and State; Shi'a Islam

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is a 20th-century invention, the ancient Mesopotamian region that it occupies has been host to—and often the origin of—many religious traditions over the past several millennia. According to estimates in 2003, approximately 97% of the Iraqi population of 22–28 million was Muslim. Shi'a Muslims—predominantly Arab but also including Turkoman, Faili Kurds, and other groups—constituted a 60%–65% majority. Sunnīs made up 32%–37% of the population (approximately 18%–20% were Sunnī Kurds, 12%–15% Sunnī Arabs, and the rest were Sunnī Turkomen). The remaining 3% of the overall population consisted of Christians (Assyrians, Chaldeans, Roman Catholics, and Armenians), Yazidis, Mandaeans, and a small contingent of Jews (the religious and ethnic makeup of Iraq at the time of the overthrow of Saddam Hussein's regime is described in the U.S. Department of State document *Iraq, International Religious Freedom Report*, 2003).

The country's Shi'a Arabs live primarily in the south of Iraq; however, they also constitute a majority in Baghdad and other communities throughout the country. Sunnī Arabs are a majority in the center of Iraq and Sunnī Kurds in the north. Many Arabs consider the Assyrians and Chaldeans as ethnic groups distinct from Arabs since they are descendants of some of the early Christian communities. These Christians are concentrated in Baghdad and in the north. The Yazidis are a syncretistic religious group, many of whom consider themselves ethnically Kurdish. Some Yazidis consider themselves ethnically and religiously distinct from Muslim Kurds. Yazidis predominantly reside in the north of Iraq. The small sect of Mandaeans is mostly in southern Iraq, with small communities in Kirkuk, Baghdad, and elsewhere. These are the same Mandaeans who have been present in the region since pre-Christian or early Christian times.

The Iraq region has never been monolithic in its religious or social makeup. The territory that is present-day Iraq has been a seat for pagan religious communities, Gnostic communities (including Manicheans, Marcionites, and proto-Mandaeans), Magians (Zoroastrians), Jews, Christians, and Muslims. Often the different communities came into contact and were, in varying capacities, subsumed, assimilated, altered, autotomized, or augmented according to the tides and currents of

IRAQ

Iraq is a religiously diverse country, and although the modern Middle Eastern nation-state of Iraq

global history. The remainder of this entry will explore Iraq's long religious history.

Sumerians, Akkadians, and Babylonians

The nation of Iraq is included within the ancient geographical region known as Mesopotamia. People settled in Mesopotamia more than 100,000 years ago when Paleolithic humans gathered in the fertile Mesopotamian plain. Three civilizations rich in religious import originated from those early Mesopotamian peoples: the Sumerians (approximately 4000 BCE), the Akkadians (approximately 2300 BCE), and the Babylonians (2000 BCE). The legacy of religious myths and epics left by these ancient civilizations provides an idea of early Mesopotamian religious belief.

Three noteworthy ancient religious narratives grew out of Mesopotamia: the Epic of Gilgamesh, the story of Atrahasis, and the *Enuma Elish*. The most complete version of the Epic of Gilgamesh comes from Nineveh in the seventh century BCE, though the epic's development can be traced over a millennium. This epic is a reflection on human mortality and includes references to gods, explanations of creation, and a flood story (similar in places to the Jewish and Christian stories of Noah and the ark). The best preserved story of Atrahasis comes from the Babylonian version of 1700 BCE. Some noteworthy elements to this story are the relating of humankind's creation; a great flood, again; and a hierarchical, anthropomorphic conception of the gods. The *Enuma Elish* was probably composed during the reign of Nebuchadnezzar I of Babylon (1125–1104 BCE) As Collins (2004, pp. 25–38) notes, the *Enuma Elish* is also concerned with a hierarchy of gods, though Marduk emerges to occupy a monarchical kingship, which must be seen as a strong step in the direction of monotheism. All of these religious stories offer complex and rich contributions to the religious history of Iraq and, further, are considered to be heavy influences on the more organized monotheistic religions extant in later Near East traditions.

Paganism and Gnosticism

There was a pagan tradition present in Iraq that survived (and was colored by) Alexander the Great's

conquest of Babylon in 331 BCE and the Parthian conquest of the Tigris-Euphrates river valley ending in 126 BCE; paganism could even be found late into the Sasanian's rule, which ended in 651 CE. Nearing the terminus of the Sasanian period, the pagan tradition in Iraq was characterized by sacrifice, magic, and astrology. Paganism was greatly diluted by the time of the (651 CE) Islamic conquest (many pagans had converted to Christianity). Moreover, many Christian edicts were specifically directed in opposition to pagan practice. Thus, paganism helped shape Christian doctrine.

Elements of paganism survived in Gnosticism. Gnostics conceived of existence as a divide between good and evil, spiritual light and material darkness. According to Morony (1984, p. 401), broader Gnosticism was a primarily dualistic religious tradition that considered the material world, including the human body, to be sinful and corrupt; anything that perpetuated material existence, such as human procreation, was perverted. The Marcionites and Daisanites brought gnostic dualism to Iraq, and the Manicheans, of Iraqi origin, helped spread it.

Magianism

Magians were a ruling minority in Sasanian Iraq (224–651 CE) but were not totally representative of the elite Persian demographic; indeed, not all Magians were Persian. Though there was little doctrinal unity among the Magians, cult and custom were the most important expressions. Magianism was dualistic by nature. Magians tried to live in a state of ritual purity. They ablated themselves by washing faces and hands with bull urine, then water before worship and after the "acts of nature." Household worship involved ceremonies at the hearth fire five times each day when the fire was fed, just as the fire in temples.

According to Morony (1984), the Magian cult did not include a congregational worship, though there was popular participation in public seasonal feasts, dances, fire festivals, and in the revering of trees. At the end of the Sasanian period, the Magians could be described as an incipient religious community in Iraq. They were united among themselves and differentiated from the members of other religions by an organized priesthood, a distinctive cult and liturgy, a form of religious education, law, and religiously sanctioned social

customs. The most significant losses of Magianism were through conversion to Christianity and Islam.

Judaism and Christianity

The Jewish population in Iraq originated from both resettlement and conversion. Ultimately, the descendants of the Judean exiles who were taken to Babylon in the sixth century BCE displaced the native pagans there. The Jewish population reached its peak in the fifth century BCE and then began to decline. Jewish congregational worship and the realization of Talmudic requirements led to the engendering of a definite community that was isolated from the various contemporaneous religions. The Jewish community's synagogues, schools, and court system, with its exilarch and its rabbinate, were preserved well into the Islamic period.

There were two prominent Christian traditions present in the Sasanian period: the Nestorians and the Monophysites. The Nestorians were a vast majority, while the Monophysites constituted a robust minority. The Monophysites served as a foil for the Nestorians as various doctrines were being worked through. Though these two churches were disrupted by the initial conquest of Iraq by the Muslims, they were allowed by the conquerors to survive. The ecclesiastical structure, schools, churches, and monasteries of both communities afforded them unique and systematic religious identities, which aided their internal perpetuation as well as their proselytizing efforts throughout Iraq's history.

In contemporary Iraq, there live almost 1 million Christians. According to Ghareeb (2004), in 2003, the coalition invasion and occupation led by the United States, directed against Saddam Hussein and his leadership, sparked an outburst of persecution against Iraqi Christians by radical Islamic groups. The Islamist groups sometimes associated the invading armies of the coalition with Christianity. These Christian groups had lived in relative peace for hundreds of years prior to the conflict.

Islam

A major religious change happened in Iraq in the seventh century, when Arab Muslim forces under Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas won what one scholar has called "a historic victory" against Persian Sassanids

at al-Qadissiya (Ghareeb, 2004). The Sassanids (Sasanians) suffered a final defeat at Nahawand near the Zagros Mountains in 642 CE. Thenceforth, a Muslim ruling class replaced the previous minority power of Magians in Iraq, and Muslims carried into Iraq convictions in regard to their own religious doctrine and law. They already possessed concepts of congregational worship and of an architectural place for that worship, which proved to be indispensable in unifying elements within the Iraqi Muslim community. This sense of religious community displaced the old bonds of kinship and replaced it with a new bond of faith.

From 636 CE until 1258 CE, Muslim rulers were in control of Iraq. There was much internal turmoil during this time, however. In 656, Alī ibn Abī Ṭalīb was installed as caliph. His installation was immediately challenged. Mu'awiya ibn Abi Sufyan emerged as Ali's worthy adversary. Those who came to support Ali, the blood relative (cousin and son-in-law) of Mohammed, were known as Shi'i. Those who followed Mu'awiya, the eventual unifier of the Muslims, became known as the Sunnī. The Shi'a and Sunnī categories endured throughout all of Iraq's ensuing history; they endured through the Mongol invasion, the oppression of the Safavids, and centuries of Ottoman rule, and the Sunnī/Shi'a distinction persists even in contemporary times where it has become part of the political dynamics of Iraq's post-Saddam era.

Stephen P. Register

See also Ancient Near Eastern Religions; Christianity; Iran; Islam; Jewish Diaspora; Gilgamesh Epic; Kurdistan; Manichaeism; Middle East; Monotheism; Muhammad; Myth; Scripture; Shi'a Islam; Sunnī Islam; War on Terrorism; Zoroastrianism (and Parsis)

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IRELAND, REPUBLIC OF

The prominent role of religion in the social life and structures of the Republic of Ireland has been a salient feature of the state ever since its creation. Ireland historically has had ambivalent relations with England and the United Kingdom, and developments in the 19th and early 20th centuries led to the identification of Irish nationalism with Catholicism. As a result of the partition of the island in 1921, the new state comprised an overwhelming Catholic majority. At that time, 26 counties were granted dominion status as the Irish Free State, while the 6 Protestant-majority ones in Northern Ireland elected to remain within the United Kingdom. Catholicism thus came to be closely associated with the dominant sense of Irish identity and with the state itself, despite the presence of small Protestant minorities. The Catholic influence could be felt most powerfully in the 1937 constitution, which established the state as a largely denominational one, as it granted a “special position” to the Catholic Church and included articles, notably on the family and on the role of women, which were informed by traditional Catholic values.

Although successive amendments have watered down the specifically Catholic dimension of the constitution, with the removal of the reference to the special position of the church in 1972 and the legalization of divorce after the 1995 referendum, the Preamble still explicitly identifies “the people of Éire” as Christian and the State “acknowledges that the homage of public worship is due to Almighty God” in Article 44. The prominent institutional role still played by the Catholic Church (and to a much lesser extent by the Church of Ireland, a province of the Anglican Communion)

today in the spheres of health, education, and social services also distinguishes the Republic of Ireland within the European Union. The Church and its congregations own and control the vast majority of schools as well as many of the country’s hospitals and social institutions, whether public or private.

Beyond even this very strong institutional presence, the Catholic Church has been described as having a “moral monopoly” in Ireland, at least up to the 1960s. Since then, however, various social developments, spurred on by the opening up of Ireland to international influences, have led to a measure of secularization within Irish society. Many Catholic Irish people have distanced themselves from the moral teachings of the Church, with the development of so-called à la carte Catholicism and forms of individual spiritualities, and there has been a significant rise in the number of people who describe themselves as having no religion (now a larger minority at 6% of the population than the members of the Church of Ireland, according to the 2006 Census).

Since the mid-1990s, the influx of immigrants has led to a diversification of the religious makeup of the population—Muslims are now the third largest religious group, behind Catholics and members of the Church of Ireland, and represent 0.8% of the population; there has also been an influx of Orthodox Christians from eastern Europe. This phenomenon, combined with the relative secularization, is putting into question the overall influence of the Catholic Church in Irish society and loosening the cultural ties between Irish identity and Catholicism, while it still appears too early to describe the Republic as a post-Catholic or even a post-Christian state.

Karin Fischer

See also Abortion; England; Ethnic Nationalism; Northern Ireland; Protestant Christianity; Religion and State; Roman Catholicism; Secularization; United Kingdom

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ISKCON

See Hare Krishna

ISLAM

Islam is the name for the faith and the community of Muslims around the world who are adherents of the teachings of the Qur'an as revealed to Prophet Muhammad. It is the second largest religion in the world after Christianity. The majority of Muslims are Sunnī, and the second largest portion of adherents belongs to the Shi'a branch of the tradition. While history dates Islam as originating in Arabia in 610 CE at the time of the revelation of the Qur'an to Prophet Muhammad, Muslims believe their religion to be the completed and universal version of a primordial and monotheistic faith revealed many times before—from the first person to be created, Adam, who is also regarded as a Prophet, to Muhammad, considered by Muslims to be the Last of the Prophets. Muslims believe that previously revealed scriptures, including the Hebrew Scriptures and the Christian New Testament, became distorted in text or interpretation. There are 25 prophets mentioned in the Qur'an, the holy book of Islam, including Noah, Abraham, Moses, Joseph, and Jesus, although Muslims believe that a messenger was sent for every nation at various times.

Globally, there are an estimated 1.5 billion Muslims, making up about one fourth of the entire world population. Even though some people may associate the Middle East and North Africa with Islam, only 20% of the world's Muslims live there. The two distinct identities of *Muslim* and *Arab* are sometimes conflated because the majority of the population in the Middle East and North Africa is becoming increasingly Muslim, most of whom speak Arabic and regional dialects. The most populous Muslim country in the world is Indonesia, with more than 203 million Muslims. The countries with the largest Muslim populations after Indonesia are Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh. There are smaller but growing communities of Muslims in Central Asia, Europe, and the Americas.

The word *Islam* is based on the Arabic root *s-l-m*. These consonants form the verbal noun

Islam connoting both peace and submission. One of the Islamic names of Heaven is *Dar al-Salaam*, meaning "House of Peace." The word *Muslim*, an active participle using the same root consonants, means "one who surrenders or submits" and "one who enters a state of peace." Islam describes the relationship between humans and one all-knowing God as well as the relationship between God and Creation.

Sources of Knowledge in Islam

The Qur'an

Muslims believe that the Qur'an—like the scriptures before it—is the revealed Word of God transmitted orally to Muhammad via the Angel Gabriel over a period of 23 years, from 610 to 632 CE. One of its miracles is that it will never change and contains the exact words of God. While the primary theme of the Qur'an is the oneness of God and His omnipotence and mercy, it also discusses history, economics, ethics, and morality; issues of family life, such as marriage, inheritance, and divorce; and the environment. Muslims believe that there have been prophets sent to every nation and time, and this includes belief in the previous scriptures before the Qur'an, which is the last scripture to be revealed. Muslims also believe that Muhammad was also mentioned in the previous scriptures, which foretold his existence as the last messenger of God.

The Hadith

The Hadith record the sayings and actions of the last prophet of Islam, Muhammad (570–632 CE). These reports also recorded what Muhammad did not say or do. A hadith is made up of a chain of transmitters and the main text of the report, of which the first part can be traced to the companions of Muhammad who were the initial transcribers. Just as the Qur'an was written on pieces of parchment, stones, and leaves, so too were the texts of the Hadith before being compiled into books in the 9th and 10th centuries in authenticated Hadith collections. The Hadith follows the entire prophethood of Muhammad, whose life is viewed by Muslims as embodying the Qur'an and is thus seen to support the Qur'an, offering real-life experiences of how to be a Muslim.

Basis of Shari'a

The Qur'an and the Hadith also comprise Shari'a (lit. "path" or "way") or Islamic law, prescribing Muslim behavior in every aspect of life and social relations, from private matters between the individual and God to relationships with others from the family or the widest community. The Shari'a contains categories and subjects of Islamic law called the branches of *fiqh* (lit. "understanding"), including, but not limited to, inheritance, commerce, property law, worship, family relations, civil (tort) law, criminal law, administration, taxation, governance, international relations, and the laws of war and ethics.

Why Arabic?

As Arabic-speaking nations compose only 20% of the Muslim world, why is Arabic such an important language to Islam? Not every Muslim knows how to speak Arabic or understands the language, although many learn how to read the Qur'an in Arabic with diacritical marks. Muslims believe that the Qur'an is directly God's Word, unchanged by man, unlike the other previously revealed scriptures—even though Muslims believe in these, too. Arabic is the language in which the Qur'an was revealed by God to Muhammad via the Angel Gabriel. It for this reason that words in the Qur'an represent the most eloquent form of Arabic, known as Qur'anic Arabic. Qur'anic Arabic is not the Arabic that is spoken on the street or even by a diplomatic delegation, but an elevated, layered Arabic, befitting the words of God.

If God speaks all languages, then why was the Qur'an revealed in Arabic? The Qur'an answers with the following: "We have sent it down as an Arabic Qur'an, in order that ye may learn wisdom" (Qur'an 12:2). This is supported with another verse, mentioning, "By the Qur'an, full of Wisdom . . ." (Qur'an 36:2). According to these *ayats* ("verses of the Qur'an"), Arabic is the language chosen by God for the last of the scriptures. Arabic was also the language Muhammad spoke, and it continues to be a language rich in meaning, nuance, and clarity and consisting of layers of meaning for all forms of discussion.

The Sunnī/Shi'a Divide

Though the majority of Muslims are Sunnī, Shi'a Muslims constitute 20% of the overall Muslim

population globally. *Shi'a* is the umbrella term given to several sectarian movements that have appeared in Islamic history. The Shi'i are concentrated in Iran, southern Iraq, and southern Lebanon. There are significant Shi'ite communities in Saudi Arabia and Syria, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and India as well. The full term *Shi'at-Ali*, or "party of Ali," refers to Prophet Muhammad's paternal cousin and the third Caliph of Islam.

The differences between these two main sub-groups within Islam initially stemmed not from spiritual differences but political ones. Out of these political differences, varying practices and theological positions that have come to carry a spiritual significance have been born over the centuries. There are great disparities between the accepted practices and theology of Sunnīs and Shi'i, such as self-flagellation, temporary marriage, and visiting of tombs, all of which Shi'i allow and Sunnīs do not consider part of Islam. Also, many of the figures that Sunnīs accept as valid, such as the first three Rightly Guided Caliphs (*al-Khulafā 'u r-Rāshidūn*), are not accepted by Shi'i, who only accept the fourth and the last—Ali, the nephew of Muhammad. In contrast, Shi'i accept imams after Muhammad to have spiritual powers from God, but Sunnīs do not adhere to these beliefs.

The Five Pillars of Islam

Traditionally, Islam has five pillars of faith, also known as the Five Pillars of Islam. The Five Pillars of Islam are incumbent on every Muslim and comprise inward belief manifested as outward action as Islam not only teaches what to believe in but also how to behave. These aspects of Islam are referred to as *pillars* because if one of these is weak, the rest crumble, as they are all equally dependent on each other for support.

The Pillars of Islam

1. Belief (*Iman*/Faith)—comprising the seven articles of faith
2. Prayer (*Salaat*)
3. Sharing wealth/charity (*Zakaat*)
4. Fasting during the month of Ramadan (*Sawm*)
5. Pilgrimage (*Hajj*)

Belief (Iman)

Belief means to believe in the Seven Articles of Faith, which will be discussed. Belief is also encompassed by the Declaration of Faith (or *Shahadat*, lit. “Witness”) and is stated as follows: There is no God but God and Muhammad is His (final) prophet and messenger.

Prayer (Salaat)

There is a difference between prayer and supplication. The Arabic terminology makes this distinction. Prayer (*salaat*) is the ritualized prayer Muslims perform five times a day. Supplications (*du'aa*) are entreaties to God made from the heart, which can be made anytime, anywhere, in any state, and in any direction, whereas prayer (*salaat*) requires that a Muslim be clean, having performed ablution (*wudu'*), and for women, this also means not menstruating. The place of prayer must also be clean, and the Muslim must face the Qibla, which is in the direction of the Kaabah in Saudi Arabia.

Appointed Prayer Times

1. Before sunrise (*Fajr*)
2. After high noon (*Dhuhr*)
3. Early evening (*'Asr*)
4. After the sun sets a little (*Maghreb*)
5. At night (*Isha'*)

There is a prescribed sequence of actions and words, including set readings out of the Qur'an, to complete one sequence (*rakaat*) or unit of prayer. The number of *rakaat* varies according to the prayer and thus the time of day. Salaat can be as short as 5 minutes to however long one wants to perform it, depending on the verses of the Qur'an one chooses to recite. While praying, Muslims are encouraged to gaze on a fixed point on their prayer mats, creating a place of outer focus to sharpen inner focus. The merging of certain physical actions, breath, and spiritual reflections when praying makes it a very meditative experience.

The *qibla*, or “direction of prayer,” is the direction toward the Kaabah in Mecca (Makkah), Saudi Arabia. Muslims all over the world are facing together in the same direction, adding to the spirit

of community. As day turns into night around the world at different times, there are Muslims constantly praying in this direction at all times.

Sharing Wealth/Charity (Zakaat)

The primary type of almsgiving is associated with the word *zakaat* and occurs at the end of Ramadan, or the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar. The charity tax (*zakaat*), or 2.5% of one's wealth, is mandatory on all who are able to afford it, which is then to be redistributed by the Islamic state fairly. Muslims living in countries where the Islamic state does not perform this function will often donate the money to a charity they support or give it to someone they know who is in need. This promotes complete socioeconomic equality and serves as a reminder to be grateful.

Fasting During the Month of Ramadan (Sawm)

Before Muhammad became a prophet, Ramadan, the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, was the month during which he would contemplate and meditate on life and existence in what is now known as *Jabal an-Noor*, the Cave of Divine Light. It was here that Muslims believe that the Qur'an was first revealed to Muhammad via the Angel Gabriel during this month. From sunrise to sunset during this month, Muslims abstain from food, drink, sex, lying, stealing, becoming angry, and other activities deemed to be spiritually corrosive. Between sunset and sunrise, however, Muslims are allowed to eat and have sex. Ramadan is the month to sincerely focus on one's inner self and consciously contribute to one's community, as personal conduct is an essential aspect of being Muslim.

Pilgrimage (Haji)

From the 3rd to the 9th of the month of the Dhu al-Hijja, which is the 12th month of the Islamic lunar calendar, pilgrims descend on Mecca in Saudi Arabia to perform certain rituals, such as circumambulating the Kaabah. Pilgrims perform certain rituals in the tradition of some of the prophets, from Adam to Muhammad, including Abraham's second wife, Hagar. Muslims believe that the Kaabah, also referred to as the House of God, was first built by

Adam but was washed away by the flood during Noah's time and then rebuilt by Abraham. The Kaabah was then used as a shrine for paganism during Muhammad's time until Muhammad reclaimed the Kaabah after the bloodless takeover of Mecca.

The Seven Articles of Faith

Within the first pillar of Islam, belief (*Iman*), there are seven articles of faith. Despite various interpretations being given for each of the articles, they form the framework of Islamic belief.

Articles of Faith

1. The Oneness of God (*Tauheed*)
2. Angels
3. Scriptures, including the ones sent before the Qur'an
4. All of the prophets, not limited to the 25 mentioned in the Qur'an
5. The Day of Judgment
6. Fate
7. Life after death/Heaven and Hell

The Oneness of God (Tauheed)

Islam is a monotheistic religion centered on the oneness of God. This concept of oneness is called *Tauheed* in Arabic. In Islam, there is one God, referred to as Allah in Arabic, who is completely unique and the source of everything. God (*Allah*) in Islam transcends gender, race, and language. The Qur'an teaches Muslims that there is nothing comparable to God. Muslims also know God through how he describes himself in the Qur'an. There are certain verses (*ayats*), one complete chapter (*sura*), and 99 characteristics listed throughout the Qur'an by which God has declared his attributes.

In Islam, every creature—animate and inanimate—has a special relationship, completely unique between itself and God. Nothing is created without purpose, and the origin of everything is God. Muslims believe that God created humans to act as his vicegerents on Earth and also as a test to demonstrate who would go to Heaven or Hell.

As Muslims believe that the Qur'an is the final scripture to be revealed by God through the Angel Gabriel and has and will remain unchanged for all

time, it is important to examine the Qur'anic description of God in the following important passage:

God (Allah) is the light of the heavens and the earth. The parable of his light is as if there were a niche and within it a lamp: the lamp enclosed in glass: the glass as it were a brilliant star: lit from a blessed tree, an olive, neither of the East nor of the West, whose oil is well-nigh luminous, though fire scarce touched it: light upon light! God (Allah) doth guide whom he will to his light: God (Allah) doth set forth parables for men: and God (Allah) doth know all things. (Qur'an 24:35)

Angels

Angels, the number of which Muslims believe to be unknown, are made of Divine Light (*Noor*) and were created without gender and without free will. Their job is to fulfill whatever tasks God sets for them and to worship him. According to the Qur'an, the number of wings an angel has varies. Even though humans do not become angels at any point nor receive wings immediately after death, each person (Muslim and non-Muslim) has with him or her two angels, one on each shoulder, taking note of each deed, bad and good, which has been committed. These angels are described as "kind and honorable" in the Qur'an also acting as one's protectors and one's conscience (Qur'an 82:10–12).

With the same hereditary makeup as their Judeo-Christian lineage, there are four main angels in Islam:

1. *Jibreel (Judeo-Christian Gabriel)*, who has sent scriptures to various messengers, including Muhammad, on God's command: Gabriel is also referred to as the Holy Spirit in several verses (*ayats*) of the Qur'an.
2. *Israfeel (Judeo-Christian Raphael)*, who will blow the trumpet twice at the end of time: The first blow will cause everyone and everything except God and whatever he wishes to keep alive to die and the second blow will bring everyone back to life to meet God for the Day of Judgment.
3. *Mika'eel (Judeo-Christian Michael)*, who is in charge of the weather as per God's commands
4. *'Isra'eel (Judeo-Christian Azrael)*, who is the Angel of Death

Scriptures

Muslims believe in all of the scriptures, known and unknown, that have been revealed before the Qur'an. Muslims also believe that humans changed these previous scriptures over time, which is why there were others that were revealed. The last of these is the Qur'an. Muslims believe that all religions taught the same message of the Oneness of God (*Tauheed*) and submission to him; thus, all religions share the same origin and are, in fact, the same religion—whether they were explicitly called *Islam* or not. Therefore, Muslims also believe that Islam is the religion of all prophets. Not every prophet was a messenger with a scripture, but they all served to reify the central message of Islam, which is the Oneness of God (*Tauheed*).

There are many verses (ayats) in the Qur'an that reference different messengers and different scriptures, validating their sanctity and legitimacy. Several of these scriptures are mentioned in the Qur'an as follows:

1. Scrolls (*Subuf*)—Abraham (Qur'an 87:19)
2. Torah (*Taurat*)—Moses (Qur'an 87:19)
3. Psalms (*Zabur*)—David (Qur'an 21:105)
4. Gospel (*Injeel*)—Jesus (Qur'an 5:46)
5. Qur'an—Muhammad

Prophets

In the Qur'an, Chapter (*surat*) 21 is entirely dedicated to the prophets and is titled "The Prophets" (*Al-Anbiya*). There have been numerous prophets and messengers for every time and nation; even though there are 25 named throughout the Qur'an, the exact number is unknown. Adam is both the first prophet and first man, and Muhammad is the last of the messengers, which is why he is often referred to as the Seal of the Prophets. Each prophet has taught the same message of the Oneness of God (*Tauheed*), the importance of God consciousness, the transient nature of this earthly life, and the eternity of Heaven and Hell.

Even though it is Muhammad who is the most likely prophet to be equated with Islam, the Qur'an teaches that no distinction is to be made between them. Again, while not every prophet had a scripture, each prophet is to be regarded in equal esteem.

The Day of Judgment

Islam is predicated on the belief of God as one (*Tauheed*) and the justice of God. One of the 99 characteristics (*Asmaa ul-Husnaa*) of God is the Just (*al-'Adl*). Islamic belief also centers on the idea of death and embracing life through the knowledge that one is going to die. One must always be prepared to die, in the sense that one must always be at peace with others, have one's grievances put at rest, one's debts settled, and be on good terms with everyone so as to be remembered well and prayed for. The seeming ambiguities of life, then, are completely resolved after death. Death in Islamic belief is one phase of life that brings one closer to God. Life is to be cherished as it is a gift from God, and death is not to be feared as it, too, is from God.

Fate (*Qadar*)

Even though Muslims believe in free will and each person's accountability for his or her actions alone, the concept of destiny encourages positive thinking while also preventing the corrosive "What if?" question. Rather than linger over a past event with a series of "I should haves" or "What ifs?" Muslims are encouraged to learn lessons from their experiences and apply these lessons to the present, constructively moving forward in the knowledge that God is the best of planners, wanting the best for his creation. Instead of worrying or focusing on what has passed one by or what might come, Muslims are taught that whatever has befallen a person could never have missed that person and that which missed someone could never have befallen him or her. Muslims are also taught that what people really want may not always be the most beneficial, whereas what people may always like actually is.

Each individual is morally accountable for his or her actions and intentions, so fate and kismet could be distinguished by the following analogy: Someone watches a movie for the second time, knowing what has happened and will happen (God's perspective) instead of for the first time where every action is unknown (humanity's perspective). Along these lines, God states in the Qur'an, "We shall question, every one, of what they used to do" (Qur'an 15:92–93), meaning people are accountable for their actions and do not have fate (*qadar*) to blame.

Life After Death/Heaven and Hell

Throughout the Qur'an, death and life after death are mentioned repeatedly, not as macabre subjects but as focal points to give meaning to life. Because in Islamic belief all humans will have to give an account to God for their actions, death and the finality of life on Earth gives people's lives meaning and purpose and makes them accountable for it. Without death, life would have no meaning as there would be no underlying purpose for existence. Life on Earth is also to be enjoyed fully in the present because every moment matters given the transitory nature of life on Earth. Because of this temporality, life after death is considered by Muslims to be the life that is real and everlasting.

Muslims believe that not only will one's soul be in Heaven or Hell but so will one's corporal body, as Heaven and Hell are sensory experiences. The experiences in Heaven and Hell parallel those on Earth, except that in the former they are magnified significantly.

Festivals and Ceremonies

At the end of the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar, which is the month of Ramadan, Muslims celebrate *Eid ul-Fitr*, or the "Festival of the End of the Fast." In Islam, one day is set aside to celebrate, but this practice differs among families, cultures, and countries, highlighting how culture becomes diffused in religion. A special prayer is said on this day, and money and gifts are given to little children and exchanged between families, which is a common cultural practice.

The other holiday is *Eid al-Adha*, or the "Festival of the Sacrifice," occurring after hajj, when the pilgrims return from Mecca in Saudi Arabia. This is a 3-day holiday, often termed the "greater festival," and is also spent among family and friends, commemorating Abraham's trial of God's command to sacrifice his son Ishmael.

Halal and Haram

Halal (lawful, permissible) and *haram* (unlawful, forbidden) are Arabic terms applied to food and drink and also matters of daily life. For example, halal and haram apply not only to how animals that are to be consumed are raised and killed but also to personal choices one makes and what one

does. Halal and haram are dictated by God in the Qur'an and in the Hadith of Muhammad—both texts that make up Islamic law (Shari'a)—and are the basis of Islamic knowledge.

Islam and Violence

The word *jihad* is often mistranslated as "Holy War." The Arabic equivalent of "Holy War," however, is *harb-u-muqadasah*. This term is not found in any verse of the Qur'an. There is nothing in the Islamic sources that permits a Muslim to fight against non-Muslims solely on the basis that they are not Muslim.

The word *jihad* comes from the root word *jahada*, which means "to struggle" or "to strive." Other words derived from this root include *effort*, *labor*, and *fatigue*. Essentially at the individual level, jihad primarily refers to the inner struggle of being a person of virtue and submission to God in all aspects of life. It is this jihad that is considered the most difficult type of struggle because it involves refining one's character and habits.

Islam never tolerates unprovoked aggression from its own side; Muslims are commanded in the Qur'an not to begin hostilities, embark on any act of aggression, violate the rights of others, or harm the innocent. Even hurting or destroying animals or trees is forbidden. War is waged only to defend the religious community against oppression and persecution, because the Qur'an says that "persecution is worse than slaughter" and "let there be no hostility except to those who practice oppression" (Qur'an 2:190–193). Therefore, war is only justified out of self-protection when the community is being attacked.

The Qur'an describes those people who are permitted to fight:

(They are) those who have been expelled from their homes in defiance of right, (for no cause) except that they say, "Our Lord is God." Did not Allah check one set of people by means of another, there would surely have been pulled down monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques, in which the name of Allah is commemorated in abundant measure. God will certainly aid those who aid his (cause); for verily God is full of Strength, Exalted in Might (able to enforce His Will). (Qur'an 22:40)

Note that the verse specifically commands the protection of all houses of worship. This verse (ayat) also supports the Islamic point of view that all prophets and revealed scriptures are to be respected, as different houses of worship are part of God's design to "check one set of people by means of another."

Islam and Women

Islam is a religion that supports women, and many have argued that Prophet Muhammad was a feminist. The doctrine he laid out as the revealed word of God considerably improved the status of women in seventh-century Arabia. While in local pagan society it was the custom to bury alive unwanted female newborns and women had been treated as possessions of their husbands, Islam prohibited these practices. Islamic law made the education of girls a sacred duty and gave women the right to own and inherit property. Muhammad even decreed that sexual satisfaction was a woman's entitlement. He was a liberal at home as well as in the pulpit. Prophet Muhammad darned his own garments, and due to the Hadith—or his sayings, actions, and tacit approval—it became religious duty for every Muslim, male or female, to honor women and treat sons and daughters justly and for males to provide support, not obstacles, for women and their achievements.

Social and Political Rights of Women

In the history of Islam, the fact that men and women, equally, could take part in social, political, and military affairs promoted human rights and also encouraged individuals to stand up for their own rights. From voting and choosing regional leaders to participating in military battles, rights and equality among men and women were shared. Both sexes were accorded equal access to education, respect, and honor. In Prophet Muhammad's Farewell Sermon, he stated that men and women have equal rights and obligations toward each other. Also, according to the Hadith, Prophet Muhammad also declared that Paradise is to be found at the feet of one's mother, so by serving her one can gain entry to Heaven.

Property Rights of Women in Islam

Under the laws of Islam, women have the right to sell and buy properties, own a business, take legal actions, vote, and participate in political affairs.

According to Islam, a woman inherits half the share of her brother because a daughter is not obligated to support her parents or her children, whereas a man has a great financial responsibility as outlined by Islamic law (Shari'a). It is the responsibility of the father of the woman's child or children to take care of them, and it is the son's responsibility to take care of his parents. A man who has reached the age of puberty has the obligation, by the rules of Islam, to support his mother, wife, children, sisters, and the children of his sisters if necessary. If a man's mother or sister does not have the wealth or the desire to support her children, it would become the duty of the son or brother to support her. Under Islamic law (Shari'a), women also have control not only over their property but also dowry claims. Once she is married, she may demand her dowry from her husband at any time, and in the case of divorce, she would receive her share of the property.

Marriage and the Right to Divorce in Islam

According to the laws of Islam, a man and a woman have the right to choose their partner, and they should not be forced into marriage. Divorce is permitted in Islam under specific terms and conditions. According to the laws of Islam, a man or woman may end a marriage by divorce if there is a definite cause for such an action.

Polygamy

Polygamy is a tradition practiced in many cultures, yet Islam restricted it by setting regulations. These regulations are very severe, and very few can practice it (see Qur'an 4:1–4). The particular historical context of polygamy in Islam followed one of the harshest wars, where many men were killed, leaving a multitude of women widowed, fatherless, and without support. Also, a Muslim man cannot marry a second wife without the permission of the first wife. With all these restricted regulations, according to the Islamic law, polygamy is possible but rare in practice.

Sara Kamali

See also 'Abbāsid Caliphate; Ahmaddiya; al Qaeda; Al-Azhar; al-Banna, Hasan; Arabic; Ghazali; Hijab; Ibn Khaldūn; Islam in China; Islam in Latin America;

Islamic Modernism; Islamic Reform; Islamic State; Islamism (Political Islam); Ismailis; Jihad; Monotheism; Muhammad; Muslim Brotherhood; Prayer Beads; Shi'a Islam; Sunnī Islam

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ISLAM IN CHINA

Though diverse, the Muslim community in China is quite large. According to reasonably accurate estimates based on the 2000 national census of China, the Muslims of China total 20.3 million, or 2% of the population. Since the census registered people by nationality and ethnicity, not religious affiliation, the exact number of Muslims in China is still unknown. Ties to global Islam were truncated by half a century of self-imposed isolation under Mao, but this abruptly changed with Mao's death in 1976 and Deng Xiaoping's "open door" policy in the 1980s. Non-Uyghur Muslims travel fairly freely on the hajj to Mecca (Makkah) and engage in cross-border trade with coreligionists in Central Asia, the Middle East, and increasingly, Southeast Asia. There are few Han converts to Islam in China, yet the Muslim population has continued to increase, and there are more mosques in the 21st century than before the beginning of the Communist regime in 1949.

Many of the challenges that these Muslim communities confront remain the same as they have for the past 1,300 years of continuous interaction with Chinese society, but many are new as a result of China's transformed and increasingly globalized society and especially the watershed events of the September 11 terrorist attacks with the subsequent War on Terror. Islam in China has primarily been propagated over the past 1,300 years among the people now known as *Hui*. *Hui jiao* ("Hui teaching") was the local Chinese term once used to refer to the religion of Islam in general and probably derives from an early Chinese rendering of the term for the modern Uyghur people (*Hui he*); yet since the early 1950s, Muslims in China have been divided into ethnic national groups, and all believe in *yi si lan jiao* ("the teaching of Islam"). Although the 2010 census should reveal some population increases overall, the official figures report the following mostly Muslim groups: Hui (9,816,805), Uyghur (8,399,393), Kazakh (1,250,458), Dongxiang (513,805), Kyrgyz (160,823), Salar (104,503), Tajik (41,028), Uzbek (14,502), Bonan (16,505), and Tatar (4,890). The Hui speak mainly Sino-Tibetan languages; the Uyghur, Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Uzbek, Salar and Tatar are Turkic speakers; those who speak a combination of Turkic and Mongolian languages include the Dongxiang and Bonan, concentrated in Gansu's mountainous Hexi corridor; the Tajik speak a variety of Indo-Persian dialects.

With the exception of the Tajik minority, who follow Ismaili Shi'ism, Muslims in China are Sunnīs, but they are divided by regional, linguistic, and ethnic differences. The Hui are generally the closest to the Han Chinese in terms of geography and culture, adapting many of their Islamic practices to Han ways of life. This accommodation to majority culture often invited criticism from Muslim reformers influenced by Islamic ideals originating in the Middle East. Islamic factional struggles have begun to reemerge among China's Hui Muslims, however, dividing them internally, especially as increased travel to the Middle East and the pervasiveness of global Islam prompts criticism of local Muslim practices at home and exposes China's Muslims to new, often politically radical, Islamic ideals.

The Muslim communities of northwestern China, notably the Uyghur, were incorporated into Chinese society more recently as a result of Chinese expansion

westward since the early 19th century. The Uyghur are perhaps the least integrated into Chinese society. Diverse Uyghur political groups have organized to further nationalist, Pan-Turkic, or Pan-Islamic causes. The Chinese government has reported more than 160 incidents of Uyghur-related violence since 1980, related primarily to political activities mostly in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. In July 2009, the largest and bloodiest civil riots in modern Chinese history took place in Urumqi, pitting Uyghur Muslims against Han Chinese citizens. Supported by a global diaspora, Uyghur sovereignty organizations are now based in many international cities, including Istanbul, Ankara, Almaty, Munich, Amsterdam, Melbourne, Toronto, London, and Washington, D.C. The fact that the former Soviet Central Asian Republics became independent in 1991 as well as the increase in access to the Internet and other global media has done much to encourage the hopes of local Uyghur for an independent “East Turkestan,” though the new, mainly Muslim Central Asian governments signed protocols with China in the spring of 1996 that they would not harbor or support separatist groups.

Despite their resistance to Chinese rule, the Uyghur continue to be divided internally by religious conflicts (between the Sufi and non-Sufi factions), territorial loyalties, linguistic discrepancies, commoner-elite alienation, and competing political loyalties. Few Muslims from other ethnic groups, including the Hui, support an independent Xinjiang, and 1 million Kazakh in Xinjiang would have very little say in an independent “Uyghuristan.” It is clear, however, that Uyghur separatism and global Muslim interest in China’s treatment of its many Islamic minorities will have important consequences for the economic development of China’s mostly Muslim west and increasingly important ties to the Middle East.

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See also China; Islam; Multiple Faiths; Religion and State

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ISLAM IN LATIN AMERICA

Although Islam is a minority religion in Latin America, its relevance lies in the integration and organization of the Muslim communities and their participation in the development of several Latin American regions and cities. The first Muslims came to America during the colonial period, when many Muslim slaves arrived at the Caribbean coast. However, they were forced to convert, and any trace of Islam that might have remained in the region was erased. That is why the arrival of Islam to this region is attributed by many authors to the several migratory waves of Arabs that occurred since the 19th century, each with different characteristics. The main Arab migration to the American continent happened at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. These immigrants, most of Syrian and Lebanese origin, settled in countries such as Argentina, Brazil, Venezuela, Mexico, and Colombia. Migration was intensive during this period and started decreasing in the 1930s. The second wave took place between 1949 and 1950 and the third during the 1970s. Afterward, a large flood of immigrants came to Brazil and Venezuela only. The main goal of these immigrants was to reach “America,” that is, the United States, fleeing from the Turkish domination in the Middle East (in the first period) and from the economic crises and the wars (in subsequent periods). Nevertheless, some arrived in Latin America as a first port but then settled in these territories.

Migration From the Near East to Latin America (1880–1930)

Beginning in the 19th century, Latin America received a great inflow of migrants, mainly of European

origin, but their favorite destinations were Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay. About 1880, a large migratory wave of Arabs arrived, mostly Maronite, Orthodox, or Catholic Christians from the Great Syria of the Ottoman Empire, first, and later from Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine during the British and French rule. Nevertheless, not all the immigrants from the Middle East were Christians. Muslims came along with them and succeeded in integrating socially in spite of the long periods during which there was no true religious freedom; thus, they had to give up their religion and language in order to integrate, and they adopted the local language and religion instead. This normally happened with second-generation immigrants because the Arab language was regarded as of low social status. Also, educational institutions were under the control of the Catholic Church, and there was no other support such as mosques or Spanish translations of the Qur'an for parents to be able to teach their children the basics of their faith. Muslim communities did not have teachers; therefore, children and young people had to go to Catholic schools and integrate. Therefore, during the first migratory wave, the Muslims who arrived in Latin America gradually disappeared as a religious minority because they could not freely practice their religion. Furthermore, since Muslims were a minority among the group of (mostly Christian) Lebanese, Syrian, and Palestinian immigrants, their scattering also contributed to their disappearance. Although they were not subject to religious persecution, as during the colonial period, Latin America was a Catholic region by default, and the difficulties associated with the development and practice of other religions were substantial.

This situation reflects what happens in a modern, incipient nation-state. Fundamental liberties, though they were partly guaranteed by the legal system, could not be protected in practice because some sectors of major cultural relevance, such as education, remained in the hands of the Catholic Church, and to some extent, being a Latin American was synonymous with being a Catholic. This period was one of acculturation, in which Muslim immigrants did not find any legal or political spaces that allowed them to maintain their own religious identity. So their second generation was inclined to adopt the prevailing religion.

The emergence and later consolidation of the Muslim minority started indeed during a historical

period in which there were significant worldwide changes, which led to the development of tolerance toward minorities in Latin America. Modernization and further laicization of several Latin American states in addition to the changes within the Catholic Church arising from the Second Vatican Council promoted a framework in which the Muslim immigrants who arrived after 1936 found legal and social spaces to preserve their religion and culture and were able to consolidate as a minority with full rights.

Construction of a Muslim Minority

The inflow of Muslim immigrants decreased from 1930 onward, but there was a new migratory wave when the State of Israel was created, which led to the large Palestine diaspora in the 1950s. Most of these migrants came through the seaports and settled in the region, where they became engaged in trade by selling fabric and other merchandise from town to town and from door to door. They sold their fabrics on credit and little by little, they built a fixed customer base and made friends, thus learning Spanish and gradually adapting to the life of several Latin American countries.

Given that this migratory wave of the 1950s included Muslim immigrants mainly, the communities integrated by them were able to preserve their cultural values more easily, in particular their religious values, which led to the consolidation of a true Islamic community. In turn, these migrants attracted other relatives and friends who, once they arrived, obtained support from their predecessors. They gradually settled on a definite basis and built strong and organized communities in several Latin American cities such as Maicao, Cartagena, Santa Marta, Barranquilla, San Andres, Caracas, Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Buenos Aires, Veracruz, and Mexico City. Community creation and stabilization allowed the preservation of not only their religion but also the original language, that is, Arabic and other cultural elements associated with their eating habits, music, and celebrations, among others.

The other major inflow of Muslim immigrants occurred in the 1970s. Most of them were Lebanese forced to leave by the civil war in their country and Palestinians who fled the Six-Day War of 1967 and the Yom-Kippur/Ramadan War in 1973. However, there are allegations that the reasons for migration

were mainly financial rather than due to the war, since the region from which most of the Lebanese migrants came in the 1970s was not affected by the civil war. From then onward, Islamic centers and associations, Muslim schools, husainis, and mosques began to spread and contributed to consolidate both Sunnī and Shi'a Muslim minorities across Latin America. There are no accurate statistics about the number of Muslims in the region, but the estimate is around 6 million, most of whom are in Brazil (1,500,000), Argentina (700,000), Venezuela (700,000), and Mexico (250,000). These data include an increasingly larger population of Latin Americans who have converted to Islam.

Although any generalization may be misleading, for purposes of analysis, one may speak of three Muslim categories in Latin America. The first category includes those immigrants who were already Muslims when they came to the region and brought along their own cultural load. They easily integrated into the economy and found their social place, but they still maintained a distinct minority character, insofar as they kept not only their religion but also their language and their culture, reproducing customs and values from their original country. This also means that the practice of a more conservative Islam is maintained: for example, women must use the veil and mixed marriages are forbidden. The second category of Muslims is children of immigrants, born in Latin America and integrated in a deeper sense with the receiving culture but maintaining their religious identity. These Muslims tend to keep their religion private, interact with people of other religions more often, and feel that they are Latin Americans, even if their being Muslim makes them a distinct minority. The third category comprises Latin Americans converted to Islam. This community is more open as it is trying to bring Islam closer to the Latin American context and seek an interreligious dialogue.

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See also Argentina; Brazil; Islam; Latin America; Mexico; Shi'a Islam; Sunnī Islam; Venezuela

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ISLAMIC MODERNISM

Islamic modernism is a term used to describe a major social, intellectual, and political movement arising in the 19th and 20th centuries, formulated in response to Western colonial projects and hegemonies throughout the globe and reflective of attempts to address modern questions of democracy, liberal human rights, and nationalism through a reformation of Islamic ideas and concepts. The Islamic modernist movement was unlike the Islamic revivalist movements—which called for a return to an authentic divine mandate and a society based on the examples of Muhammad, his companions, and followers—and also the movement of the nationalistic secularists—many of whom felt that the historical moment had arrived for minimizing the role of Islam in the construction of society. This entry discusses the origins of Islamic modernism and several key reformers of the movement: Rifa'a al-Tahtawi, Khayr al-Din, Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, Muhammad Abduh, Rida, Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan, and Muhammad Iqbal.

Origins

As an intellectual pursuit, Islamic modernism arose from reformist movements scattered throughout the Middle and Near East. Entire classes of intelligentsia, such as French-educated intellectuals in Egypt and British-educated intellectuals in British India, gradually gained political positions under their colonial administrators and began calling for

broad reforms of the social and political order. These pressures for reformation were answered by rulers such as Ottoman Sultan Abdulhamid II (r. 1876–1909), who authorized the Ottoman constitution of 1876, and Muzaffar al-Din Shah (r. 1896–1907) in Iran, who signed a new constitution in 1906. The role of Islamic thought in shaping democratic political authorities was addressed by Rifa'a al-Tahtawi (1801–1873) in Egypt and Khayr al-Din (ca. 1820/1830–1870) in Tunisia. Both men attempted to preserve an Islamic identity within the new democratic and political systems authorized by the Ottoman sultan while simultaneously legitimating these new systems to Muslims of various ethnicities and social beliefs. Tensions soon emerged as officials of these new political, legal, and economic systems demanded bureaucracies trained by educational institutions, which replaced traditional Islamic educational authorities with Western-educated faculty; also, the curriculum changed to emphasize the sciences.

Reformers

Tahtawi and Khayr al-Din

Reformers like Tahtawi and Khayr al-Din framed their political and social projects as necessary to answering emergent Western colonial authority and economic dominance. For Tahtawi and Khayr al-Din, Western political authority, which threatened the Islamic *umma*—a religious concept denoting the universal, global, community of Muslims—presented an opportunity for reconciling Islamic law, the Shari'a, with the exercise of human reason. Tahtawi offered the concept of human welfare as a fundamental concern of both a successful political state and the Islamic tradition and therefore felt that it offered a useful means of reconciling an individual's identity as a Muslim with that of a citizen possessing rights within the legal frameworks of the state. For Khayr al-Din, the *umma*, not the state, was the central element of political authority, and the upholding of the Shari'a was essential to preserving an Islamic society. Unlike Tahtawi, Khayr al-Din demanded a reform of legal institutions to maintain a just society predicated on Islamic law.

By the midpoint of the 19th century, Muslim intellectuals proposed various responses to address the emergent and overwhelming European political

and economic interference. The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 and the British bombardment of Alexandria in 1882 demonstrated the necessity of an urgent response to increasing European technological and military superiority. Though this superiority was predicated on controversial economic measures, intellectuals of Islamic modernism turned their critiques toward perceived internal causes to explain the failure of their societies to answer European challenges. Turning to the history of Islamic thought, the intellectuals divided contemporary Islamic societies into those confined to the blind and irrational imitation of past precedent—*taqlid*—and those liberated by the exercise of *ijtihad*—a term derived from the same Arabic root as *jihad*, signifying the usage of independent human reason in legal affairs. *Ijtihad* was used both as a challenge to traditional political authorities and as a basis for new reforming educational institutions. Traditional authorities were displaced by a generation of intellectuals who gained the ability to converse with traditional sources of thought—the Qur'an, the Hadith, and political tradition—without the need of those authorities who had for so long delineated their interpretation and usage.

Afghani

Following the work of Tahtawi and Khayr al-Din, Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (1838–1897) and his interlocutors, Muhammad Abduh (1849–1905) and Rashid Rida (1865–1935), advanced numerous programs of modernist reform. Afghani, who was not born in Afghanistan but rather in Asadabad, Iran, was educated at Iranian and Iraqi schools in an Islamic philosophic tradition highly influenced by Platonic, Aristotelian, and neo-Platonic thought. In an introductory work written during his travels from India to Egypt, Afghani revealed the influences of Ibn Sina (Avicenna), a Muslim philosopher who postulated two forms of knowledge: (1) that reserved for intellectual elites and (2) that reserved for the greater population. A skilled orator, writer, and journalist, Afghani would frequently implore audiences to political action while simultaneously critiquing Muslim and European political authorities. Though Afghani often used Pan-Islamic and constitutionalist tendencies against, what he considered, the growing atheistic and social Darwinist philosophies of the

West, he was often dismissed by local authorities because he called for a new Islamic civilization founded on unity and rational thought against the blind acceptance of tradition (*taqlid*).

Afghani was highly critical of those Islamic traditions that he contended had strangled the development and progress of human rationality and the natural sciences. In a famous series of debates in Paris with Ernst Renan—who had maintained that Islam and modern civilization were incompatible—Afghani maintained that while no particular civilization can permit itself to be ruled by reason alone, prior Muslim successes in the sciences indicated that reason and religion had once flourished within Islamic civilization. Afghani concluded that if the global community of Muslims (the *umma*) was to advance as a superior force against the Western powers, it required a new reformation of Islamic tradition that would return reason and philosophy to their rightful places within Islamic thought.

To realize this newly reformed *umma*, Afghani agitated for social and political activism. Following the 1857 Indian rebellion, Afghani formed a strong resentment against British colonialism. From India, Afghani travelled to Turkey and was appointed to the Ottoman Council of Education while lecturing at the *Dar al-Funun*, where he was criticized for favoring rationalism by the Ottoman *shaykh al-Islam*, Hasan Fehmi. During an 8-year stay in Cairo from 1871 to 1879 at the invitation of Riyad Pasha and the Egyptian government, Afghani gained a broad circle of followers. Lecturing on literature, the natural sciences, politics, and Muslim philosophy, Afghani demanded constitutionalist political reforms and cultural independence from European and Ottoman norms that drew on traditional Islamic thought. Though his growing influence led to his expulsion from Egypt by the Khedive Tawfiq, an action that reflected the Khedive's British sympathies, it is unclear to what extent Afghani influenced the 'Urabi revolts in 1882 against British and French political authority. Afghani's travels continued to Europe, where he formed a society, *al-'Urwa al-Wuthqa* ("The Strongest Link"), together with his pupil, Muhammad Abduh.

Abduh

Abduh, who was first introduced to Afghani during the latter's residence in Cairo, was born in

the village of Mahallat Nasr on the Nile Delta in 1849. During his formative years, Abduh received a traditional Qur'anic education, which culminated in his studies at the Ahmadi mosque in Tanta, at that time an institution of higher learning in Egypt second to Al-Azhar in Cairo. Abduh subsequently enrolled in Al-Azhar in 1866, after leaving his wife and family in the hope of pursuing a more rigorous method of education. Quickly disenchanted by his studies at Al-Azhar, Abduh quit the traditional instruction of the university and joined a group of students studying under the tutelage of Afghani. Following a short stay in Beirut, Abduh later followed Afghani to Paris after their exile from Egypt in 1882. Under Afghani, Abduh developed intellectual and social theses that continued Afghani's political reformist message.

Departing from France, Abduh moved to Beirut, where he lectured at a Muslim school. These lectures later led to the publication of his theological work, *Risalat al-Tawhid* ("The Theology of Unity"), which advanced his view of the necessity of the Islamic revelation to human progress. Within this work and *al-Islam wa al-Nasraniyyah ma' al-'Ilm wa al-Madaniyyah* ("Islam and Christianity in Relation to Science and Civilization"), his journal *al-Manar* ("The Beacon"), and his *tafsir* ("Qur'anic exegesis"), Abduh established his belief in the superiority of Islam to Christianity by maintaining that it truly fulfilled human wants. For Abduh, who maintained a number of close Christian friends throughout his life, modern Christian civilization represented an inauthentic pursuit of wealth and power concealed by an otherworldly ethic of love that demanded an abandonment of this material world. Islam, on the contrary, as God's revelation to Muhammad and the community of Muslims, was an answer to immanent human social and political difficulties because it commanded the removal of false religious authorities, demanded proof of the rational efficacy of all revelations, and surpassed all other earthly religions by connecting social justice with religious recompense both in the material and in the spiritual worlds. Contemporary Muslims, Abduh suggested, had failed to understand the truths of Islamic superiority and had therefore been unable to answer the contemporary challenges of modernity.

To reform Islamic society and faith, Abduh sought to displace the traditional authority of the

ulema (religious scholars) and restore religious authority and interpretation to the rational intellect of the individual. Abduh called for a return to the Qur'an as the sole source of textual authority for Muslim societies, and he realigned educational priorities to reflect this necessity. On his appointment as Mufti of Egypt in 1899 and his later appointment to the faculty of Al-Azhar, Abduh implemented curricular reforms intended to promote education in the Islamic sciences (*tafsir*, Hadith studies, and studies in the foundations of Islamic law and theology) in order to discourage social and cultural borrowing from the Western, Christian tradition. Abduh sought to make elementary education and literacy, at a minimum, compulsory for all Egyptians.

In addition to education, Abduh also sought to reform gender relations. Though he recognized the early importance of polygamy to the Islamic community—for reasons of political and social unity—Abduh reinterpreted Qur'anic passages addressing polygamy, such as those found within the fourth sura of the Qur'an where provision is made for up to four wives, provided all women are treated with impartiality and equality. For Abduh, this passage indicated the impossibility of polygamy in the modern era due to the practical unfeasibility of such an arrangement. Although Abduh maintained, citing Qur'anic evidence, that men were to retain authority over women, he felt that institutions such as monogamy were intended to strengthen human relationships by ensuring social stability.

The position of Abduh on gender roles proved largely influential both during and after his life. Qasim al-Amin (1863–1908), an Egyptian jurist and former student of Abduh, disagreed with his mentor about the unsuitability of women for political leadership. In two works, *Tahrir al-Mar'a* (“The Emancipation of Women”) and *al-Mar'a al-Jadidah* (“The New Woman”), al-Amin initiated a movement for women's liberation meant to rectify the social order. Agreeing with Abduh that women deserved increased social, political, and educational rights, al-Amin furthered Abduh's call for a reformation of the practice of female veiling. Later female leaders, such as the Egyptian activist Huda al-Sha'arawi (1879–1947), who was famous for her publicized lifting of her veil, were in part motivated by al-Amin's critiques. al-Amin's work became controversial, with several critics arguing

that his perception of women was an extension of European colonial politics.

Rida

Though many of Abduh's students advanced secularist and nationalist political tendencies, another student of his, Rashid Rida, maintained his Islamic modernist project. Rida, who cowrote for *al-Manar* and later completed Abduh's exegesis after his death, was born to a Lebanese family in a village near Tripoli. Educated in Qur'anic schools, Rida later travelled to Cairo where he joined Abduh's study group. He accepted the necessity of nation-states but articulated that the Islamic *umma* was, in reality, a transnational identity that necessitated fostering a broad sense of global solidarity. Unlike Abduh, Rida balanced his rational translation and exegesis of the Qur'an and Hadith with a measure of interpretative literalism. Rida accepted slavery and a militant jihad as necessary both for the proliferation and defense of Islam in modernity by maintaining that both institutions could be rationalized from the Islamic tradition.

Throughout his career, Rida developed an affinity for the Saudi state and its Wahhabi theology established from the thought of Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab (1703–1792), Ahmad Ibn Hanbal (780–855), and Ibn Taymiyya (1263–1328). Rida synthesized the call of Abduh for a return to the Qur'anic text predicated on the precedent of Muhammad and his community—an intellectual movement known as *al-salafiyyah*—with the strict, conservative Hanbali and Wahhabi interpretations favored by the Saudi state. Rida added to this synthesis a new reading of the concept of *maslahah* (“public utility”) that elevated a concept that was once subordinated to analogical reasoning (*qiyas*) within Islamic law. This synthesis and addition is particularly apparent in his discussion of the just Muslim state.

The concept of *maslahah* outlined the importance of forming laws and governing society on the basis of the preservation and protection of the public interest. Though Abduh used the concept for minor juridical rulings, Rida used it as a guide for shaping a new Islamic system of state. Rida identified two manifestations of the Caliphate in Islamic history: the ideal caliphate of the *rashidun* (the four caliphs after Muhammad) and the actual caliphate predominant throughout most of Muslim

history. The actual caliphate, established by either necessity or force, led to a neglect of the consultation (*shura*) of the governed. The threat of injustice and tyrannical rule often led to public discourses about the legitimacy of overthrowing particular political authorities. Historically, religious scholars determined this pivotal moment of abrogation. In a departure from Ibn Taymiyya's open call to overthrow unjust rulers, Rida argued that the responsibility of the *shura* be given to those who "have the power to bind and loose" (Hourani, 1983) or those intellectuals who are trained with the ability to apply *ijtihad* ("independent legal rationality") toward contemporary issues.

This council of reformed religious scholars was not to rule Islamic society alone. To return to a just Islamic society, Rida sought for a sovereign to make a central decision on legal matters. As the head of state, this sovereign, the Caliph, was intended to be the elected leader of the entirety of the global Muslim community—both Sunnī and Shi'a—and was to rule in the interest of the public welfare. The conditions for the selection of this new caliph and new community of religious scholars were drawn neither from Islamic states under colonial European authority nor from traditional centers of Islamic scholarship such as Al-Azhar. Rida demanded the formation of a new class of Muslim progressives, well educated in the foundations of Islamic thought, who would establish a new Muslim political order. This idea later influenced movements such as the Muslim Brotherhood founded by Hasan al-Banna (1906–1949) in 1928 and the contemporary global *salafi* movement.

Khan and Iqbal

Islamic modernist discourses were a global phenomenon. Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan (1817–1898) and Muhammad Iqbal (1875–1938), who disputed much of Khan's work, articulated their respective responses within the context of British India. Khan, who had authored a number of pamphlets in defense of Sunnī Islam, was profoundly affected by the mutiny of 1857—the same mutiny witnessed by Afghani—and began agitating for a reconciled Muslim community to reassert itself as a political force alongside British authority. Much of this reconciliation was to arise from a cultural realignment that would integrate Muslim communities into

British society. Khan founded both the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh in 1878 on the model of Oxford and Cambridge and the Muhammadan Education Conference in 1886, with the intent of fostering a reformist dialogue establishing Muslims as loyal citizens of the state. The religious scholars of British India were vociferous in their rejection of Khan, whom they viewed as a loyalist to British governance. The influence of Khan on the history of British India, and later Pakistan, is reflected in the notable graduates of his university, which include the first two prime ministers of Pakistan: Liaqat Ali Khan and Khawaja Nazimuddin.

Muhammad Iqbal, born in the Punjab, was a Western-educated intellectual whose work demonstrates his attempts to unite the Western philosophies of Hegel and Nietzsche, among others, with Islamic thought. Iqbal articulated a position quite similar to that of Afghani and his followers. Islam, suggested Iqbal, is a peaceful religion that requires intellectuals to formulate Islamic concepts to assist independent Muslim communities with self-governance. Agreeing with Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's abolition of the Ottoman caliphate, Iqbal contended that the republican form of government was both in agreement with and necessary to the establishment of a Muslim society in the modern world.

The cessation of the global intellectual movement known as Islamic modernism continues to be a subject of debate. Many scholars suggest that sympathies for the movement dissipated by the middle of the 20th century and were replaced by emergent regional nationalisms and reforms. The broad questions of the movement remain relevant. Systems of thought addressing the role of Islam in modern society are found throughout Islamic intellectual history of the 20th century. The projects of sociopolitical reform debated in Iran by Ayatullah Ruhullah Khomeini and Ali Shariati, the revolutionary calls for active jihad discussed by Sayyid Qutb and Ayman al-Zawahiri, the liberal projects of religious and democratic reform of Abdolkarim Soroush and Abdullahi Ahmed al-Na'im, and the studies of Muslim identity in Europe of Tariq Ramadan all address the central question of Islamic modernist projects—the necessity and nature of Islam in a modern globalized society.

Nathan S. French

See also Egypt; Islam; Islamic Reform; Islamic State; Islamism (Political Islam); Liberal Islam; Ottoman Empire

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ISLAMIC REFORM

Islamic reform refers to a broad and diverse movement, beginning in the 18th and continuing into the 19th and 20th centuries, that was interested in renewing devotion and adherence to the major principles of Islam (*itijihad*). Renewal (*tajdid*) and reform (*islah*) took many forms as individual Muslims and Islamic organizations within several countries interpreted doctrine and practice differently. Though the manifestations of reform varied, two principle concerns exist in all: religious authority and the role of faith in society.

The impulse for Islamic reform began in the 18th century as European colonialism emerged and intensified in the Middle East, northern Africa, and Southeast Asia. As European powers expanded their economic and military powers, Muslim movements initially focused on reforms within their own religious organizations. The motivation behind these inward reforms lay in the assumption that a decline in faith and piety fostered European imperialism. These internal religious reforms later transitioned to external social and political reforms throughout the Middle East by the 19th century. Influenced by European scholarship and history, 19th-century reformers called for Muslims to return to the Qur’an and the principles of the first Islamic community, as defined by Muhammad’s leadership in Medina. Within this broad interest of returning to the “true” Islam of the seventh century, there are conservative and liberal strains.

Saudi Arabia

The most conservative manifestation of Islamic reform was and is the Wahhabi movement. Wahhabism emerged in the 18th century through the reform ideas of Muhammad Ibn Abd-al-Wahhab (1703–1792). Though the Wahhabi movement emerged prior to a strong European presence in the Middle East, it is a part of Islamic reform because it emerged and continues to serve as a response to European influences in the region. Abd-al-Wahhab wanted to simplify Islam’s traditions and complicated legal codes, to eliminate mystical practice, and to limit religious interpretation within Islam. Like other reformist leaders, Abd-al-Wahhab wanted Islam to reflect the ideas and practices found in the first and second generation of Muslim converts. To do so, Abd-al-Wahhab focused on a return to Islam’s call of strict monotheism or divine unity known as *tahwid*. Accordingly, Wahhabists prefer the name Ahl al-Tahwid, “the asserters of the divine unity.” In their application of *tahwid*, Wahhabists strictly interpret *shirk*—that is, associating an object with or assigning an object a status equal to God’s. Abd-al-Wahhab’s interpretations of scripture remained relatively isolated until a member of the Saudi family was converted in the 1740s. After the 1740s, the Saud family provided

military and political support to Abd-al-Wahhab's conservative religious appeals. Consequently, when the Saudis conquered the Arabian peninsula in the 19th century, the Saudi state implemented Wahhab's vision for an ideal Islamic community, fulfilling his interpretation of Islamic reform.

Egypt

Unlike the Saudi Wahhabi model that reformed Islam internally, Egyptian Islamic reforms were inspired by interaction with European thought. Beginning with Rifa'a al-Tahtawi, Egyptian Islamic reformers challenged the role of the ulema as the elite, educated social, political, and religious authority. Tahtawi argued that society had two purposes: doing the will of God and promoting the welfare of all. To reach these two purposes, Tahtawi revolutionized Egypt's education system. Tahtawi understood Islamic law and tradition to be similar to, rather than in conflict with, Western political thought. Tahtawi is a pivotal figure because he set the precedence for considering, above all else, the responsibilities of national leaders and citizens, the purpose of government, and the role nations play in relation to the *umma*. Furthermore, Tahtawi advanced a certain type of Islamic reform that linked a Muslim identity with Egyptian nationalism. In Tahtawi's mind, Egypt held a special place in Islamic history because it could represent the transition from the ancient world to the modern.

After Tahtawi, another branch of Islamic reform emerged that is most often referred to as the Salafiyya movement. This group of reformers sought to incorporate Western notions of modernity with Islamic reform. The principal figures of this movement include Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (1838–1897), Muhammad Abduh (1849–1905), and Rashid Rida (1865–1935). Afghani argued that predominantly Muslim countries were weak because Muslim society was not at its best. To return Muslim countries, and Islam by extension, to their proper place in the world, Afghani asserted the need to unify Muslims across national boundaries. Afghani wanted to build a cohesive *umma* that reflected the strength not only of Muslim countries but also of a Muslim civilization. Influenced by Afghani, Muhammad Abduh wanted to see Islam enter a reformation period in which Muslims experienced an inner revival. The greatest

danger for Abduh was the secularization of Muslim society as a result of interaction with the West. Consequently, Abduh sought to reconcile modernity and Islam by restating the purpose of Islam and by applying Shari'a law to modern life. Abduh's student Rashid Rida followed Abduh's line of thought up to World War I, when he became increasingly anti-Western. As a whole, the Salafiyya thinkers sought to reform Islam by modernizing Shari'a law to resemble Western legal codes. As a middle ground between those who preferred Western secularized law and those who supported a return to premodern praxis of Shari'a law, Salafiyya efforts spread beyond Egypt, most notably to Morocco.

South Asia

As in the Arabian Peninsula and Egypt, Islamic reform thrived in South Asia. Sayyid Abu'l-a'la' Mawdudi (1903–1979), for example, formed a vision for Islamic revolution and an Islamic state that manifested itself in the organization Jamaat-e-Islami, or the "Islamic Party." Mawdudi promoted political activism through Islam, reappropriating the piety and faith of Islam to social action. He placed his interpretation of Islam's purpose in conversation with capitalism and socialism, arguing that neither economic system fully applied to Muslims. Instead, Mawdudi argued that the ideal economic, social, and political system could be found within the principles of Islam. For Mawdudi, an Islamic state was superior to any other form of government. To reach an Islamic state, however, Mawdudi insisted that first society must be reformed, beginning with education. Mawdudi feared that if an Islamic state emerged before society reformed, then the state would be autocratic rather than democratic. The true Islamic state would be a democracy in which the people demanded implementation and application of Shari'a law rather than the state requiring and enforcing obedience. Though he received criticism for it, Mawdudi insisted that the Islamic state did not need to incorporate women and minorities because Shari'a law was clear on these issues. Furthermore, limiting the rights of minorities and women, Mawdudi asserted, protected the Islamic state by preventing any efforts to undermine its ideological purity. Mawdudi's thought came to

fruition in South Asia, but his influence shaped revivalist movements and thinkers in Algeria, Morocco, Iran, Malaysia, Sudan, India, and Pakistan. The clearest expression of Mawdudi's thought can be found in the Jamaat-e-Islami. Established in 1941, the Jamaat advocates Islamic revivalism around the world with particular focus on South Asia. Understanding itself as the *umma*, the Jamaat asserts Islamic culture and values in India and pursues the establishment of Mawdudi's vision for an Islamic state in Pakistan.

Iraq, Iran, and Shi'a Reforms

Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr (1935–1980) provided the intellectual core of politicized Shi'a Islam and the Islamic state. Sadr came into his own intellectually at a time of turmoil within Iraqi society, as Iraqis attempted to move beyond their connection to Great Britain. Shi'ite leaders were divided between remaining outside or participating in national politics. Al-Sadr effectively ended this divide when he published *Our Philosophy* and *Our Economics* in 1959 and 1961, respectively. Sadr not only criticized both capitalism and communism but also established Islamic philosophies of society and economics. Above all else, Sadr used a religious framework to assert that human welfare was central to Islam. Following the popular reception of these works, Sadr and others founded the Da'wa political party to establish an Islamic state. Sadr maintained that the legitimacy of government, particularly an Islamic state, came from the people and not from established religious leaders.

As al-Sadr gained support in Iraq, Ayatullah Ruhallah Khomeini (1902–1989) garnered support for his vision of Islamic reform in Iran. Of the Islamic reformers, Khomeini was the first to develop and implement his vision for an ideal Islamic state. In 1978, Khomeini became the leader of the Islamic revolution in Iran and, perhaps, a leader of an Islamic reformation. With a background in law and jurisprudence, Khomeini also studied the mystical ideas of *erfan* and *hekmat*. Khomeini saw Islam as in a state of decay, asserting the need for government to implement Shari'a law in order to be legitimate. After several street demonstrations, deaths, and protests, the Shah fled Iran, leaving Khomeini to fill the void in leadership. As the leader of the Islamic state, Khomeini

executed public officials from the previous regime and appointed religious officials in their place. With this design for the state, Khomeini preferred political institutions resembling a more Sunnī model for religious authority. Furthermore, Khomeini, as cleric and head of state, positioned himself as the ultimate authority on political and religious issues. After his death in 1989, followers disagreed over who had the greater authority—religious leaders or politicians. In an effort to push Iran toward a perfect Islamic state, Khomeini may have left more questions than solutions to modern quandaries about the relationship between religion and politics.

Women

Women's place in the *umma* and the Islamic state continues to be debated among Islamic reformers. The underlying issue for gender reform in Islam pertains to *khilafah*, or women's full agency before Allah. In common usage, *khilafah* often refers to women's rights. The application of this concept includes reforms in religious practice, in the application of Shari'a law, and in public policy. Controversy and discord arise because reformers do not agree on the status and agency of women within Islamic reform. Mawdudi, for example, insisted that the Islamic state does not need to incorporate women because Shari'a law remains clear on the place of women. Other thinkers affirm women's status within Islam but remain ambiguous about women's status in an Islamic state. Still others assert women's equality within religious, social, and political affairs. Debates about women's status often revolve around clothing, particularly women's need to wear or not to wear a hijab, or "head scarf." In Turkey, for example, women are prohibited from wearing a hijab in public spaces, including schools, libraries, and government buildings. In Iran, however, women are required to wear a hijab in public. Since there is no consensus on the role and status of women among Islamic thinkers and states, the issue and potential reforms remains open to interpretation.

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See also Abduh, Muhammad; al-Banna, Hasan; Hijab; Islam; Islamic Modernism; Islamic State; Islamism (Political Islam); Jihad; Khomeini, Ruhallah Ayatullah;

Liberal Islam; Mawdudi, Abu'l-a'la'; Postcolonialism; Qutb, Sayyid; Wahhabis

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ISLAMIC STATE

Historically, the form of government established in Muslim regions by the successors of Prophet Muhammad was the caliphate. The 'Abbāsid Caliphate was overthrown by the Mongols in the mid-13th century. Long before then, however, monarchy or the Sultanate had become the actual form of government in Muslim countries, albeit mostly under the suzerainty of the caliph. After the overthrow of the caliphate, monarchy became the general form of government in the Muslim world. The legitimacy of monarchy was primarily based on justice rather than the Shari'a (Islamic law), though the ruler obviously had to observe the latter. Neither the caliphate nor the sultanate was specifically designated as *Islamic*, even though they were historic forms taken by Muslim states.

The idea of the Islamic state emerged with the Islamic political ideologies of the third quarter of the 20th century and as the core concept of political Islam. It was adopted in the Persian form of *hukumat-e islāmi* as the slogan of the Islamic revolutionary movement in Iran in 1978 to 1979. The preamble to the 1979 Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran defined it as an ideological (*maktabi*) state based on the theory of the *vilāyat-e faqih* ("mandate of the religious jurist") as formulated by the leader of the Islamic revolutionary movement, Imam Khomeini. Elsewhere in the Muslim world, the Islamic state was defined by its main projected function of the application of the Shari'a and became the common demand of a variety of Islamist movements in the closing decades of the 20th century.

The origins of the idea can be traced to the mobilization of the Muslims of the Indian subcontinent in anticipation of independence. The foremost Islamic ideologue among the Muslims of India who migrated to Pakistan after its creation in 1947, Abu'l-a'la' Mawdudi (d. 1979), conceived the Islamic state as an ideological state and a theocracy (*hukumati ilāhiyah*) based on the sovereignty of God, declaring at one point "that the acceptance and admission of the *de jure* sovereignty of God is *Islam* and its denial is *kufr* (infidelity)" (Mawdudi, 1960, pp. 213). Under Mawdudi's influence, the declaration of the sovereignty of God was made in an Objectives Resolution in 1949 and incorporated into the 1956 Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the first state to be so designated in history.

Writing in Nasser's prison in Egypt in the years prior to his execution in 1966, the ideologue of the Muslim Brothers, Sayyid Qutb, adopted Mawdudi's idea, coining the Arabic neologism *hākimiyya* ("sovereignty") of God. Qutb introduced the new conception of God's government on the basis of the Shari'a into the Arab Middle East and North Africa as the antithesis of the secular state. According to him, the community of believers (*umma*) was now crushed under the weight of false laws and man-made traditions and customs that were contrary to Islamic teachings. This was the result of the mixing of the fundamental source of Islam with various alien sources. Rejection of foreign accretions in search of authenticity led Qutb to the fundamentals of Islam as the exclusive basis for political order and normative regulation of politics, with some surprising results. He argued that the profession of faith according to the canonical formula, bearing witness to the unity of God and the prophethood of Muhammad, and the belief in the Five Pillars were not the defining mark of a Muslim believer. The believer in addition had to reject all man-made laws and governments, which were the foundations of the new paganism spread by the secular states.

Just as had been the case with Mawdudi, Qutb's influence reached far beyond the circle of Islamic radicals who accepted his Qur'anic justification of revolutionary violence, and various Islamist movements throughout the world accepted the notion of the Islamic state defined by its main function of the application of God's law, the Shari'a. The constitutional

structure and practical meaning of the application of God's law have remained unexplored by the Islamist movements that have not attained political power. Contradictions and paradoxes abound where these movements have gained political power and captured the state permanently or temporarily, as in Iran, Pakistan, and Sudan. Nevertheless, the global impact of the idea of the Islamic state beyond the Islamist movements is broadly noticeable in the declaration, by one Muslim state after another, of the Shari'a, or the principles thereof, as "the" or "a" main source of the law of the land.

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See also Islam; Islamic Modernism; Islamic Reform; Islamism (Political Islam); Liberal Islam; Mawdudi, Abu'l-a'la'; Qutb, Sayyid

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ISLAMISM (POLITICAL ISLAM)

The term *political Islam* gained currency in the 1980s, followed by *Islamism* in the 1990s, to designate the use of Muslim concepts and organizations to legitimate new political movements. Political Islam notably appears as the title of a short book by an Egyptian critic of the movement, Muḥammad Sa'id al-'Ashmāwi, *al-Islām al-siyāsi* in 1987. Islamism was first used in French (*Islamisme*), as in the title of the translation of Judge 'Ashmāwi's book 2 years later. This French-initiated term gradually gained currency in English as *Islamism*. Both terms are used to describe contemporary Islamic movements in which the political dimension predominates over the devotional and ritual concerns. In other words, political Islam denotes a politicized reading of Islam with a pronounced ideological character, which accounts for its novelty within the Islamic tradition.

The emergence of Islamic political ideologies dates back to the mobilization of the Muslims of India prior to its partition and creation of the state

of Pakistan in 1947. It was pioneered in the work of Abu'l-a'la' Mawdudi (d. 1979). Mawdudi conceived the modern world as the arena of conflict between Islam and *un-Islam*, the latter term being equated with pre-Islamic polytheism or ignorance (*jābiliyya*) and comprising modern creeds and political philosophies whose predominance necessitated the revival of Islam. He considered Islamic modernists to be a fifth column determined to corrupt Islam from within and was alarmed that Muslims would be seduced away from Islam by nationalism, a false philosophy and a Western phenomenon. Mawdudi was equally hostile to communism and fascism but admired the ability of these movements to instill enthusiasm and commitment in their members and did find in them an instrument that could be adopted by the Islamic revivalist movement. This instrument was ideology, and Mawdudi set out to create a coherent and consistently Islamic ideology.

Mawdudi's Islamic ideology, as propounded in the works that he refers to as the "Manifesto" of the Islamic movement, was pervaded by "Allah's absolute sovereignty," inferred from Qur'anic verses such as "Verily His is the creation and His is the command" (7:45), and diametrically opposed to the spirit of "un-Godly civilizations"—namely, humans' unbridled autonomy. The most novel feature of this ideology was the contention that Islamic revival is impossible without the creation of an Islamic state based on the sovereignty of God. Mawdudi searched for Islamic answers to about a dozen constitutional questions considered essential as the organizational principles of the Islamic state, which he described as a "theo-democracy."

Mawdudi's Islamic ideology became a major social force in the Muslim world only a quarter of a century after its initial formulation. The transformation of his influential ideas into an Islamic revolutionary ideology was especially conditioned by the monolithic secular state of Nasser's Egypt (president from 1954 to 1970). The Utopia of the Islamic state was central to the Islamic ideology, which was taking a revolutionary direction under state repression. The new conception of God's government on the basis of the Shari'a was elaborated by the ideologue of the Muslim Brother, Sayyid Qutb, who was executed by Nasser in 1966, and espoused by the Islamic radicals who followed

him. The new conception of God was wedded to a new Qur'anic justification of revolutionary violence, which had no counterpart in medieval Islam or in the Islamic fundamentalism of the Salafi reformists in the early 20th century. In sharp contrast to the staunch conservatism of Muslim medieval thought, which abhorred anarchy and enjoined obedience to the traditional ruler, Sayyid Qutb's justification of revolutionary violence was born in reaction to Nasser's monolithic, modern secular state. To reestablish God's sovereignty, the example of the Prophet who migrated from Mecca (Makkah) to Medina to organize jihad was to be followed. Qutb thus preached withdrawal/migration on the prophetic model followed by revolutionary warfare to reconquer the lapsed, pagan society of ignorance.

Qutb's spirit of revolutionary asceticism spread among the Islamic militants who formed a few so-called *Takfir* ("excommunication") organizations in the mid-1970s. This earliest manifestation of Islamic revolutionary radicalism was coupled with the excommunication of the society of ignorance with an agenda that replicated the prophetic sequence of call (*da'wah*), emigration (*hijra*), and jihad. The new Islamic revolutionary radicalism found its most forceful expression in a tract by the engineer M. A. S. Faraj, *The Neglected Duty*, which stated the creed of President Sadat's assassins. In this remarkable justification of tyrannicide, which was apparently influential among young clerics and lay activists alike, Faraj offered a Qutbist view of the contemporary Muslim world as one of ignorance where the believers were constantly forced to submit to earthly idols. Faraj argued that the Muslim rulers had suppressed the Islamic law since the abolition of the caliphate by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in 1924, replacing it with the laws of the infidels, as the Mongols had done. These secularizing rulers, who were Muslims only in name, had forced the believers to live under the laws of the infidels. They were indeed apostates and had to be killed, as the punishment for apostasy in Islamic law is death. The absent, neglected duty of contemporary Muslims was to wage jihad against these internal enemies of Islam. Departing from the definition given to the category by Muslim jurists, Faraj thus adopted jihad to justify revolutionary violence.

Muslim clerics, who saw their status and traditional institutional power seriously eroded by

the modernizing states, also moved into the market for political ideologies created by the expansion of the public sphere in the 1960s and 1970s. A new breed of Muslim clerics began to compete with predominantly lay Islamic ideologues. Muslim clerics as public intellectuals made their first significant appearance in the more clericalist Shi'ite Islam with the writings of Sayyid Mahmud Taliqani and Murtada Mutahhari, who led the Islamic publicistic movement in Iran. This paved the way for the assumption of the leadership of the revolution against the Shah of Iran by Ayatullah Ruhallah Khomeini and his clerical students for whom he had expounded his ideas on Islamic government (*hukumat-e islāmi*) on the basis of the *vilāyat-e faqih* (mandate of the religious jurist) in a series of lectures while in exile in Najaf in 1970. It should be noted, however, that the spectacular success of the Islamic revolutionary movement in overthrowing the Shah in Iran owed little to this belated development of Islamic ideology. Khomeini's immense institutional asset, which has no counterpart in Sunnī Islam, was the existence of a Shi'ite religious hierarchy independent of the state. Without a similar institutional asset, the Shi'ite clerics of Lebanon followed the example of their Iranian colleagues and founded the Hezbollah ("Party of God") in 1982.

The history of Muslim Brotherhood in Sudan presents a very different pattern. Dr. Hasan al-Turabi, the leader, first, of the Sudanese Muslim Brotherhood and, since 1986, of the National Islamic Front, was a pragmatic politician, adept at operating under alternating military and democratic regimes. In 1989, he traded junior partnership in the democratic government of Sadiq al-Mahdi for unencumbered dominance under the Islamicized military regime of General 'Umar al-Bashir. The new partnership originally resembled the relationship between Zia ul-Haq and Mawdudi's Jamaat-e-Islami in Pakistan until Turabi began the unsavory experiment of turning his organization into the mobilizational arm of Bashir's Islamicized military regime. He also moved in the direction of Islamic internationalism, considering Colonel Qaddafi's military-mobilizational "republic" (*jamāhiriyya*) an alternative to Western democracy, and invited Osama bin Laden (d. 2011) to move to the Sudan, which the latter did in 1991.

The mark of the era of the nation-state on political Islam is perhaps nowhere more visible than in the internalist orientation of the movement for Islamic revolution in the 1970s and 1980s and in the Islamic radicals' definition of the object of jihad as revolutionary struggle. As defined by Faraj and the Qutbist revolutionaries, the individually incumbent "neglected duty" was jihad against "the near enemy"—namely, the modern idol of the secular state and its head. Global concerns—foremost among them the liberation of Jerusalem—were secondary to the overthrow of that monolithic idol (*tāqut*) within each Muslim nation-state. It was with this internalist orientation that Ayman al-Zawahiri, still in his teens, was personally inspired by Sayyid Qutb to form a jihad cell in 1967 for his high school friends. The organization he thus set up for the new "Islamic vanguard" grew to become Egypt's most deadly—the Tanzim al-Jihad. Throughout this period, Zawahiri affirmed that the road to Jerusalem goes through Cairo. With the declaration of jihad against the Soviet Union and the Soviet-backed regime in Afghanistan in the 1980s, however, and the recruitment of Muslims from South Asia, the Middle East, and the West to fight it, the international use of violence was widely legitimized. The globalization of political violence and Islamic transnational terrorism gathered momentum with the disintegration of Yugoslavia, which drew the jihad militants from Afghanistan and elsewhere to Bosnia from 1992 to 1996 and the anti-Russian rebellion in Chechnya after the breakup of the Soviet Union, which continued into the new century. In the latter half of the 1990s, Osama bin Laden returned to Afghanistan and formed the World Islamic Front for jihad against Jews and Crusaders, in which he was joined by Zawahiri, and applied Sayyid Qutb's idea of the "vanguard" of the Islamic movement to a global counterelite who would be methodical and follow a set of rules or "the principle" (*al-qa'ida*) in waging jihad—now a global jihad against "the far enemy," the United States.

Islamism or political Islam gathered momentum in the last quarter of the 20th century, reaching its peak in the 1990s and culminating with the attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001. It is less salient in many parts of the Muslim world in the new century, and some pronounced the end of the movement after the killing

of Osama bin Laden in 2011. This apparent decline has prompted some observers to speak of "post-Islamism" in reference to reformist movements and trends aiming at reconciliation of Islam and democracy that have emerged out of the political Islam of the 1980s and 1990s.

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See also al Qaeda; Islam; Islamic Modernism; Islamic Reform; Islamic State; Jihad; September 11, 2001; Violence; War on Terrorism

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ISMAILIS

Ismailis constitute a minority branch of Shi'a Islam that has become a transnational and global religious group. Ismailis can be found in numerous countries around the world, but the majority of the population is located in the Middle East, India, and North Africa. As a religious group, they have been historically misunderstood and maligned; most commonly, they are associated with mysterious assassins and concealed mystic knowledge. Over the course of the last couple of centuries, under the guidance of their Agha Khan

imams, a concerted effort has been made to disentangle the largely fictitious from the actual history of the Ismailis and to provide a space in modernity for them. Much of the misunderstanding concerning Ismailis stems from limited sources documenting their history combined with the fact that most of the existing information consists of propaganda pieces written against them. Recent literary discoveries have allowed scholarship to make significant strides in this respect.

Ismailis, as a faction of Shi'a Islam, subscribe to many of the traditional Shi'a doctrines. They differ over the historical succession of imams, though they maintain the Shi'a tradition of *nass* ("designation") for selecting their imams. For much of their history they adopted the practice of *taqiyya* ("dissimulation to avoid persecution"), which allowed their dissimulation into the cultures around them. This resulted in a blending of Sufi traditions, Hindu ideologies, and Sunnī thought with Ismaili practices. Ismailis also practice the Shi'a doctrine of *ta'lim* ("teaching of the imam"). Historically, Ismailis undertook *al-da'wah* ("the mission"), which developed into a highly structured system for proselytizing. There is a distinct "mystic" tradition, dealing with hidden (*batin*) and revealed knowledge (*zahir*); however, in more recent years, the more mystical Ismaili elements along with missionary efforts have diminished relative to the modernization efforts of the Agha Khan imams.

The Formative Years (ca. 7th to 9th Centuries CE)

The Ismailis disagreed with the majority of Shi'i in a dispute over the proper succession of the imams, during the eighth century. The imam Ja'far al-Sadiq designated his son Isma'il Muhammad bin Ja'far (from whom Ismailis derive their name) as his successor. However, Isma'il died before his father, which resulted in complications in the succession. After Ja'far's death, the majority of Shi'i, later known as Twelver Shi'i (*ithna'asharis*) due to their belief in 12 divine leaders, eventually agreed to support Musa al-Kazim as imam. Concurrently, two other Shi'a factions supported Isma'il and his son Muhammad, forming the protonucleus of what would become Ismaili Shi'ism. These two groups were the Mubarakiiyya, who believed in Isma'il's death, and the Isma'ili al-Khalisa, who

denied the death and insisted that he would return as Mahdi (an eschatological designation for one who will reinstate "true" religion). The former group supported Muhammad, who they designated as the seventh imam accordingly. Shortly after this, Muhammad entered into hiding to avoid 'Abbāsid persecution. Thus began a phase of Ismaili history referred to as *dawr al-satr* ("period of concealment").

The Fātimids and Qarmatis (ca. 9th to 12th Centuries CE)

Though historical documentation is limited, after roughly a century, a unified Ismaili movement arose in the middle of the ninth century, largely through the efforts of hidden Ismaili leaders. During this time, particular emphasis was placed on *al-daw'ah*, the missionary effort of the Ismailis, which spread throughout the Middle East and into North Africa. The Fātimid caliphate in northern Africa was the first successful Ismaili state. There were some disputes over the designation of the imams during this hidden phase that led to the formation of a dissident Ismaili faction called Qarmatis. The Qarmatis did not recognize the Fātimid rulers as their imams. Despite this dissidence, the Fātimid Dynasty is typically considered the "golden age" of Ismaili history. For instance, it was during this period that the famous Al-Azhar institution was founded. Even as the state declined, the Ismaili missionary efforts continued to yield significant conversions. Throughout the course of the Fātimid era, most of the Qarmatis outside Bahrain converted to Fātimid Ismailism.

Nizari, Tayibbi, and Hafizi Ismailis (ca. 12th to 13th Centuries CE)

Another schism occurred among Ismailis during the Fātimid era. After the death of the Fātimid caliph-imam al-Mustansir, dispute arose over his rightful successor, which resulted in two rival factions: Nizari and Musta'li, derived from the respective names of Mustansir's sons. Shortly after this division, the Musta'lis further divided into Tayyibi and Hafizi factions. From the Tayyibi branch, a further schism led to the formation of Daudi and Suleymani factions. The former, the Daudi branch, established a significant presence in India, which

developed into the Bohra Tayibbi community there. The Hafizi Tayibbis faded out at the end of the Fātimid period. The Nizaris became the dominant branch of Ismailis. The bulk of their influence was centered in Persia. In northern Persia, they revolted against the Saljuk rulers and established a Nizari state at the fortress of Alamut. The Alamut imams focused heavily on military affairs, but still, a significant amount of literature was also composed during the time. *Da'wah* efforts continued and spread into India during this period. The Alamut kingdom lasted for roughly 150 years before it fell to the Mongol invasion in 1256.

The Nizaris (ca. 13th to 18th Centuries CE)

Following the fall of Alamut, the Nizari Ismailis entered a period of subjugation and were separated from their imams. This led to the development of individualized, isolated Ismaili communities, which, coupled with the practice of *taqiyya*, allowed for the infusion of various other traditions into these disenfranchised communities. During this period, Ismaili beliefs blended with dominant regional influences such as Sufism, Twelver Shi'ism, Sunnism, and Hinduism. After approximately two centuries of hiding, the institution of the imam reappeared and established itself at Anjudan, located in central Persia. *Da'wah* activities were revitalized in an effort to bring new converts and to reestablish connection with the scattered Ismaili communities. The establishment of the Safavid Dynasty in Persia and their proclamation of Twelver Shi'ism as the state religion initially seemed favorable for Ismailis. However, this was short-lived, as the Safavid ulema (religious leaders) quickly targeted what they deemed "unorthodox" groups. Though there were periods of intermission and even favorable relations between Ismailis and the Safavid state, eventually the tensions in Persia combined with the burgeoning Khoja Nizari community in India necessitated the migration of the Imam from Persia to India.

The Agha Khan Imams (ca. 18th to 20th Centuries CE)

The first of the imams to be regarded with the title Agha Khan, Hasan Ali Shah, became imam at a young age after the murder of his father by a mob. His mother appealed for justice from the Qajar

Shah, who dealt with the murderers and granted the young imam governorship of Qum, along with the honorific title Agha Khan. However, the government's favor did not last the course of his lifetime; under the next Qajar Shah, tensions grew between Ismailis and Qajar forces, eventually fomenting into conflict. The Ismailis suffered a military defeat and Agha Khan I was forced to flee to Afghanistan. In Afghanistan, the Imam fostered close ties with the British, and due to British failure in the region, he left as well and settled in Bombay. In India, he shored up relations with the Indian Nizari Khoja Ismaili communities and, after a few troubled years, was mostly successful in his efforts. His son Aqa Ali Shah Agha Khan II succeeded him in 1881 and made a concerted effort to encourage education among his followers. However, he died shortly after his succession in 1885 and was in turn succeeded by his son, Sultan Muhammad Shah Agha Khan III. Agha Khan III was the first Ismaili imam to travel to Europe and maintained cordial relations with the British government. He took a particular interest in his followers in eastern Africa and also worked to clearly distinguish Twelver Shi'ism from Ismaili Shi'ism. At the same time, he also embarked on numerous programs for the benefit of Muslims in general. He promoted the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College in Aligarh, was a founder of the All-India Muslim League, and served briefly as the president of the League of Nations in 1937 in Geneva, where he remained until he died in 1957.

The imamate passed to Agha Khan III's grandson, Karim al-Husayni Agha Khan IV, who remains the current imam. Agha Khan IV has endorsed numerous projects to help develop the Ismaili community into a global one. With the formation of organizations such as the Agha Khan Foundation and the Institute for Ismaili Studies, the modern Ismaili movement has taken particular effort to improve understanding of not only Ismaili Shi'a Islam but Islam as a whole. Beyond merely promoting understanding, these Ismaili organizations also strongly endorse humanitarian, social, and educational aid and enterprises. Agha Khan IV, in the tradition of his fathers, is actively involved in fostering and maintaining a globally oriented Ismaili community.

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See also Al-Azhar; Islam; Mahdi; Middle East; Shi'a Islam; Sufism

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ISRAEL

The state of Israel was born on May 14, 1948, when the British Mandate on Palestine was terminated and political authority was transferred to a new Israeli government. Britain had been granted authority over the Palestinian region in the Middle East by the League of Nations in the aftermath of World War I and commenced its term as the governing power in September 1923. In the quarter-century of the mandatory regime, the Jewish population in Palestine grew due to consistent waves of immigration since the late 19th century to 650,000. During that period, which is called the *Yishuv* (Hebrew for “settlement”) in the Israeli historical chronology, the infrastructure for the future independent state had been built. It had a functioning government (*Va'ad Leumi*) and a vibrant parliament (*Asefat Haniivharim*), along with health, taxation, and banking systems; a national labor union; a paramilitary defense organization; and a foreign relations committee. This effective infrastructure was able to transform itself into an independent state virtually overnight once the British forces had left the country. It guaranteed a smooth transition to political sovereignty though it could not prevent the challenges and hardships accrued due to Israel's unique historical and geopolitical circumstances of inception.

The new state had to face tremendous tasks from the moment of its inception. First, there was the immediate concern of survival; Arab forces invaded the country the morning after the declaration of independence, resulting in the 1948 war. Second, there was the challenge of nation building in the midst of a hostile and uncooperative environment.

The economy had to be reconstructed and revitalized in the face of a harsh climate, paucity of resources, and perennial insecurity. Third, the young state of Israel endeavored to realize the major goal of Zionism: the gathering in of Jews from all corners of the world. This moral obligation was a daunting and unprecedented undertaking for a fragile social and economic system, which had to absorb in a relatively short period three times the amount of its original population. Fourth, the influx of Jews of different cultures and languages, dissimilar political traditions and norms, and diverse preferences necessitated a complex and delicate process of assimilation and identity formation—the melting pot. This was not easy for a new state. Tensions and conflicts abound when the development of group cohesion pits contending ideologies, associations, and loyalties against each other to gain influence by forming a collective identity. Fifth, since Zionism's bases of recruitment consist of both secular and religious Jews from various diasporas, incompatibilities and disagreements between these two worlds were imported to Israel, which emphasized and extended the fault lines between them to the Israeli political agenda.

Secularism and Orthodoxy in Israeli Judaism

It can be said with a fair amount of certainty that among all the internal rifts in Israel—the national (Jews and Arabs), the economic (rich and poor), the ethnic-communal (Ashkenazi Jews and Sephardic Jews), gender, geopolitical (center-periphery), and religious—the secular one is the most irresolvable and, thus, will outlast all others. This seemingly unbridgeable abyss between the two worldviews stems from the fact that the religious Israeli camp (with all their internal differentiations and denominations) and the secular Israelis, who compose the majority of Israeli society, find it difficult to envision a common future for them in a future Israel. The religious seek a Jewish state that promotes and perpetuates spiritual precepts. They would rather have a state that prioritizes Jewish education and tradition—a regime that would benefit Jews to the detriment of other nation-ethnic group of citizens. The secular Jews insist on a modern state, established on the principles of the Declaration of Independence, which emphasizes equality for all citizens of Israel,

including non-Jews. These differences are almost impossible to bridge. It is not only that they do not complement each other, but in many cases, they are utterly opposed to one another.

Israel's population consists of 74.7% Jews, 20.8% Muslims, and 4.5% others out of 7.6 million people. Among the Jewish majority, roughly 20% are secular, 55% traditionalist, and 25% religious. The religious quarter among the Jews is divided between religious Zionists (17%) and Orthodox Jews (Haredi) 8%. Traditionalist Jews do not follow all religious precepts and they do not consistently practice their faith. They do, however, feel a deep spiritual and cultural affinity to their religious heritage. Their living style is closer to that of the secular than the religious, but they feel comfortable with Judaism on the emotional level. People who define themselves as traditionalists habitually identify themselves as Jews rather than as Israelis. Seculars would identify themselves, in most cases, as Israelis first and as Jews, if at all, later. In the religious camp, Jewish identity precedes all other affiliation, though there is a major difference between the national religious and the various denominations of Jewish Orthodoxy: While the former emphasize their Zionist commitment, the latter deny and reject Zionism as a modern, nonpious, and antitheological ideology. Radical Orthodox Jews totally ignore Zionism or rebuke it as heresy, since it preempts the advent of the House of David Messiah and, as such, obstructs the divine plan and God's intervention to salvage his people.

As a result of these diametrically disparate attitudes toward Jewish nationalism and the Zionist effort, two opposing orientations toward the Israeli state and the idea of citizenship have developed inside the religious bloc. The religious Zionists take pride in their "Israeliness" and their attempt to shoulder the security and economic burden with the rest of the nation. They speak modern Hebrew, participate in the job market, and enlist in the obligatory military service as any other Israeli. They seek vehemently to modify the state and its character to resemble more the Jewish Kingdom of old with regard to administration, politics, and the judicial code. Religious Zionists sanctify the Israeli state and see in its success and prosperity a sign of God's loyalty to His people and a portent of the approaching redemption. To precipitate and expedite this process, religious

Zionists became very active in politics, primarily with settling the West Bank—the territories occupied in 1967, which they perceive as their forefathers' legacy and the cradle of their faith.

Orthodox Jews, in contrast, do not revere the state of Israel. Some of them respect it as a haven, but others despise the state and everything it represents as dangerous and as sacrilege. The vast majority of Orthodox Jews do not participate in the social and economic life in Israel. Orthodox Jews study the Torah and do not work outside the religious community. They do not serve in the military, and they have their own, completely separate educational system. These conditions were not arbitrarily introduced to the Israeli reality but arose as a result of an agreement signed between David Ben Gurion, the first prime minister of Israel, and the leaders of Agudat Israel, the leading political party of Orthodox Jews in Israel. Ben Gurion had made such concessions to the political representatives of the Orthodoxy in the year prior to the declaration of independence and the inception of the state because he wanted all Jews in Israel regardless of their practices or creeds to be as one on the eve of the establishment of the state to demonstrate unity, both internally and externally, and through this, the viability and inevitability of the new Israeli state. He also believed that with time, anachronistic Orthodoxy would diminish and the sacrifice he had made to solidify the new state would not be relevant anymore. Most Orthodox Jews are politically inactive and rather indifferent to the issue of settling the territories taken in the 1967 war. Their political leadership, which is guided and controlled by the spiritual rabbis, is mainly concerned with state-religion issues, and activists are mobilized primarily when such matters occupy the public agenda. Salient state-religion contentions in Israel dealt with topics such as preserving the Sabbath, keeping *Kashrut* (Jewish dietary laws) in public places, upholding the exclusive authority of religious courts in personal and interpersonal matters (conversion, marriage, divorce, and burial), and maintaining the autonomy of religious education. Another contention that developed in recent years was the legitimacy of the Israeli Supreme Court. The religious Orthodox, resenting what they deemed the court's secular and progressive bias, rejected the authority of the court to adjudicate by claiming that for them God

is the only judge who can give a ruling and pass judgment.

Since independence, Orthodoxy has been the only Jewish movement or denomination formally and legally recognized in the state of Israel. The Chief Rabbinate and the regional religious councils were all assigned to Orthodox Jews. Only in recent years has the Supreme Court ruled to allow non-Orthodox Jews to be elected for religious council positions, a decision that has become a major bone of contention between the court and the Orthodox establishment. The lingering prominence of the Orthodox branch in Israel is remarkable considering the fact that it is demonstrably disproportionate to the relative sizes of Jewish denominations worldwide. In North America, for example, which has the largest concentration of Jews in the world, only 7% of Jews are Orthodox, while 42% regard themselves as Reform Jews. In Israel, Conservative and Reform Jews, the two other main movements in Judaism today, are marginalized and outmatched by the Orthodoxy in the public arena. This imbalance has historical and political roots that originated in the decision of European Haredi leaders to order their disciples to immigrate en masse to the Land of Israel along with the Zionist immigration waves in case Zionism turned out to be the harbinger of the Messiah, whereas Progressive, Conservative, and later Reform Jews, mainly from North America, did not share the urgency of leaving their countries. Consequently, disparity was created in which Orthodox Jews formed a lopsided majority only in the state of Israel. As an expanding constituency, the Haredi population became an invaluable political commodity to the secular ruling elite of the new state, who wished to acquire their consent and legitimacy. In 1947, an accord was reached between David Ben Gurion, Israel's patriarchic founder and leader, and the Rabbis of Agudat Israel (Union of Israel), prior to the establishment of independent Israel called the status quo agreement, which settled the state-religion relationships in the future state.

Muslims and Christians

The Arab population in Israel consists of Muslims and Christians: 83% of Israeli Arabs are Muslims (mostly Sunnīs), 8.5% are Christians, and the rest are Druze and Bedouins, who unlike the former,

are permitted to serve in the Israeli army because they are perceived as more loyal and less of a security risk to the state. As individuals, Israeli Arabs are full citizens and enjoy all rights the state provides to its Jewish citizenry. They are allowed to vote for the Knesset (the Israeli parliament), they have an Israeli passport, and they can work and reside wherever they wish, although in reality, Arabs and Jews dwell in separate communities except for a few mixed towns, such as Haifa, Jaffa, Ramleh, and Lod, which keep Jewish and Arab neighborhoods apart. Collectively, Israeli Arabs practice religious and cultural autonomy, in which they maintain their tradition, language, holidays, and customs. There is an autonomous Arab educational system, which is a branch of the formal Israeli governmental system. Muslims and Christians inhabit distinct settlements and villages as well, in which each religious community maintains its own faith and operates its religious institutions and places of worship.

In a state defined a priori as Jewish, Muslims and Christians are minorities who maintain their religious and cultural identity, but national aspirations, for those who have any, are held at bay. The flag, anthem, national holidays, and other characteristic symbols of the state of Israel are derived from the Jewish tradition and heritage, but significant efforts have been made to accommodate the non-Jewish population and render it an indivisible part of the country. The Declaration of Independence read by David Ben Gurion on May 14, 1948, was the formative document the young sovereign state of Israel attempted to live by. Among other things, it proclaimed that it will “foster the development of the country for the benefit of all its inhabitants; it will be based on freedom, justice and peace as envisaged by the prophets of Israel; it will ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race or sex; it will guarantee freedom of religion, conscience, language, education and culture; it will safeguard the holy places of all religions; and it will be faithful to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.” In reality, only some of these promises were kept, and the others still leave a lot to be desired. The delicate geopolitical environment, economic and political instability, and strategic insecurity inhibit a full implementation of the declaration, but at least a keen and genuine yearning for

normalization and participation of all citizens in the building of a new society was clearly expressed.

The Legacy of the Diaspora

Because of its unique history, in the sense that it had not been a Jewish state for two millennia, and the dispersion of Jews in various countries, Israel, which was created for the Jews, finds itself in the exceptional position of having most of its prospective citizens living outside its borders. There are roughly 13.5 million Jews in the world, but only 42% of them live in Israel. (Ironically, another nation in a similar position is the Palestinian nation, Israel's bitter rival in the Middle East conflict.) This creates a moral as well as practical dilemma for the Israeli government: Do they treat Jews elsewhere in the world as Israeli citizens or not? Legally, Israel cannot extend its jurisdiction beyond its territory into other countries, but should Israel help individual Jewish communities or citizens in need? Should Jews who reside outside Israel and who have families there support its policies and contribute money to various social causes or be allowed to participate in Israeli elections? Another corollary of this condition relates to Jews who wish to make an *Aliya* (Hebrew, lit. "to ascend") or to immigrate to Israel. According to the Law of Return, they immediately gain Israeli citizenship and a packet of entitlements to help them relocate and facilitate their absorption in the new country. The law was accepted in the Knesset in July 1950, and it was one of the first laws to be enacted in the Israeli parliament. It is an exclusive law that privileged Jews and not others who desire to become citizens. The Israeli court defended the law against claims that it was discriminatory by saying that it does not pertain to Israeli citizens but to noncitizens who wish to become Israeli, and as such, there was no obligation to maintain equity among noncitizens.

Israel is essentially a secular country, and it was initially inspired by socialist ideas. Almost all the Zionist leaders and the pioneers who inhabited the land since its beginning in the late 19th century were modern and secular idealists remote from Judaism and the Torah. However, the Jewish tradition and heritage are inexorably woven into the fabric of life. The secular education system annually commemorates religious and spiritual holidays

by ceremonies, celebrations, and re-enactments. The Bible is taught as literature in every elementary school starting from second grade. Biblical fasts and atonement days are recognized as national holy dates, and religious leaders are courted by all political parties. Even a constitution for the state of Israel was never written partially because of the refusal of religious parties to abide by an overarching secular law when they had God's constitution—the Bible—at their disposal. Yet the differences between the two orientations are profound and growing. Eventually, the collision will become unavoidable. The resilient status quo agreement covers the deep schism between religious and seculars for the time being, but serious discussions on the future direction of the entire community together were never held. The all-consuming Palestinian-Israeli conflict was often the pretext for not addressing any fundamental issues pertaining to identity, unity, community building, and a shared vision of the future.

There are numerous internal rifts in the Israeli population, which are typical of an immigrant society. Cutting across all of them is the tension between old-timers and newcomers, in which those who came to Palestine earlier wanted to maintain their senior position and the prerogatives they were able to accumulate vis-à-vis the newcomers, who seemingly jeopardize their status and benefits. However, there are strong and persisting tenets that constitute the common denominator for all the Jews assembled (born or migrate) in the country of Israel: the unshaken conviction that Jews deserve their own state, that rivaling factions within Judaism must patch up their rivalries and unite as one, and that Judaism should remain a viable component of the state's spiritual and cultural makeup, short of the political and judicial dimensions, where secular democratic presence remains dominant.

The future requires a decisive shift in policy, a paradigmatic change of orientation in order for the state of Israel to prevail. The eminence of one culture or one religion over others in a single political entity is hard to endure in light of rapid individualization processes and self-determination, on the one hand, and on the other, the growing impact of globalization. Israelis have already realized that the melting pot model is obsolete and dysfunctional. Its hierarchical nature has been gradually replaced by the more considerate and fairer multicultural

model. But in order for this ambitious model to work, Israel must cultivate some principles that were left untended over the years: Dignity, tolerance, and caring toward the other are imperative for a plural and heterogeneous society such as Israel in order to survive.

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See also Ashkanaz; Halakha and Shari'a; Hamas; Hezbollah; Jewish Diaspora; Jordan; Judaism; Lebanon; Middle East; Palestine; Syrian Arab Republic

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ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN PEACE NEGOTIATIONS

See Israel; Palestine

ITALY

The southern European country of Italy continues to be overwhelmingly Catholic, and the Roman Church—which has its global headquarters located at the Vatican in Rome—plays a major cultural, social, and political role in Italian life. Yet global trends affecting society and culture, such as increased immigration, cultural pluralism, and a growing individualism have altered this century-old relationship in many ways.

Increased Religious Diversification

According to the latest statistics, Catholicism has preserved its monopolistic hold over the population, with 90% of Italians having been baptized in the Roman Church. Yet a major element of diversification has come from the recent wave of immigration. Of the 2.6 million immigrants, 50.3% are Christians (18.5% Orthodox; 25.6% Catholics, 4.5% Protestants, and 1.7% other Christians), 32.4% (824,342) of the recent immigrants are Muslims, and 17.4% belong to other religions, mostly Buddhists and Hindus, or have no religion (about 11%). The most striking novelty is the presence of Islam, which is now the second religion in Italy and is rapidly developing an important institutional network. There are now more than 200 mosques in the peninsula and four Muslim associations catering to the religious, educational, cultural, and social needs of the community. And in 2005, the Council for Italian Islam was formed in agreement with the state authorities.

A factor of diversification within Christianity has come from the increasing number of Protestants and new religious movements. After the merger with the 6,000 Methodists in 1981, the Waldensian Church now has 30,000 members, which together with other small groups (Baptists, Brethren) puts the number of “historic Protestants” at about 60,000. Their numbers are dwarfed by those of the “new Protestants,” which have developed thanks to the intense missionary work of evangelical and Pentecostal denominations. More than 0.5 million Italians belong to these groups, with the Assemblies of God being the largest with 400,000 members. As for the Jehovah's Witnesses, they are the largest “new” religious group, with nearly 500,000 members.

While the Jewish religion remains a small presence with about 30,000 members, the growth of Buddhism among Italian-born believers (95,000 members) and the development of various New Age and Human Potential groups (100,000 members) have also contributed to the growing religious pluralism of Italian society.

Despite the strong hold of Catholicism over the Italian population, for the first time in its history, the Roman Church is confronted with the presence in the country of more than 2.5 million “other Christians” and more than 1 million non-Christians according to the survey carried out by the Catholic Charity Caritas/Migrantes in 2004.

“Do-It-Yourself” Catholicism

The diversification of the religious landscape is also the result of changes within the dominant faith. Indeed, following similar trends at work in most advanced Western countries, from the 1960s onward, Italians have tended to exercise a more individualized and autonomous judgment as far as their religious beliefs and practice are concerned. Indeed, observers such as Arnaldo Nesti have stressed the Italian paradox of a strong cultural attachment to Catholicism combined with an almost generalized refusal to conform to official Church teaching and discipline.

Only 30% of Catholics consider themselves regular practitioners, and 50% think that theirs is not the only true religion. Disagreeing with the Church hierarchy, 45% of Catholics think that clergy celibacy should be abolished, 51% support women's ordination, and 80% do not agree with the fact that people who have been divorced and remarried cannot receive the Holy Communion; 65.6% of Catholics are in favor of divorce, and 68.7% support some form of civil union for same-sex couples. While abortion as choice is supported by only 26.4% of Catholics, 84% support abortion if the mother's life is at risk and 74.6% if the fetus is severely deformed; 58.7% of Catholics are in favor of assisted procreation according to the survey carried out by Marco Ricceri. These findings are confirmed by John Francis Pollard's conclusions that the legalization of contraception in 1970, divorce in 1974, and abortion in 1981 testified to the declining adherence of Italians to the Church's traditional moral values regarding personal behavior.

Strong but Changing Social and Political Presence

The institutional presence of the Roman Church in Italian society remains strong, although it has undergone some important changes, the most significant being the renegotiation, in 1984, of the concordat regulating the relationships between the Church and the state since the Lateran Pact of 1929, which was incorporated in the 1948 republican constitution. While in the revised Concordat Roman Catholicism is no longer the sole religion of the Italian state, its principles are acknowledged as forming part of the cultural heritage of the Italian people. In many ways, the Roman Church preserves its privileged status

since it is the only one to be present—at the state's expense—in public institutions such as schools, hospitals, the military, the police, and prisons. A system of “church tax” has been introduced through which Italians may choose to have 0.8% of their taxes assigned to a particular charity. A majority tend to choose a Catholic charity, but the system was extended to other religious groups in the 1990s. The hour of religion has been maintained in public schools, but parents now choose to opt in instead of opting out. Likewise, the crucifix is affixed in classrooms and all public buildings. Despite a 2009 European ruling stating that the presence of the crucifix violates the freedom of conscience clause of the European Convention, a majority of Italians and political leaders support it as a cultural symbol.

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See also Christian Democratic Parties; Comunione e Liberazione; Evangelical Movements; Roman Catholicism; Rome; Vatican City State and the Holy See

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IVORY COAST

The Republic of Côte d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast), located on the Atlantic coast of Africa between Liberia and Ghana, received its independence in 1960, after

almost 70 years of French colonial occupation. In 2010, it had an estimated population of about 20 million, but its recent official figures, including those of religious denominations of the Ivorian population, date back to the census of 1998. Censuses are sensitive in Côte d'Ivoire as two decades of political strife and popular antagonism revolve around issues of citizenship sometimes articulated in terms of religious opposition between Christians and Muslims.

With almost 40% of the population identifying itself as Muslim, Islam is the largest religious group in Côte d'Ivoire, followed by Christians (30%), non-religious people (17%), and “animists” (12%)—that is, practitioners of traditional or neotraditional rites and belief systems. Although no hard figures are available, it is widely believed that since the 1990s, the new religious movements are booming. Whether these churches—variously called evangelical, Pentecostal, or charismatic—are gaining terrain on the other Christian religions or recruiting among nonreligious or animist people is not known due to lack of reliable survey data.

Historically, Islam is the oldest religion of the book to have found its way to the region now called Côte d'Ivoire. First introduced in the 14th century, by the 18th century, Islam was firmly established in the northern part of the country and in the urban centers along the southern coastline. By the end of the 19th century, the first Catholic presence can be noted, followed by Methodist missionaries in the 1920s. Christianity flourished throughout the 20th century, mainly in the southern part of the country, but it also had an important following in the central and eastern parts of the north. A massive north-south labor migration due to a thriving plantation economy brought about the dissemination of Islam in both the urban and rural areas of southern Côte d'Ivoire.

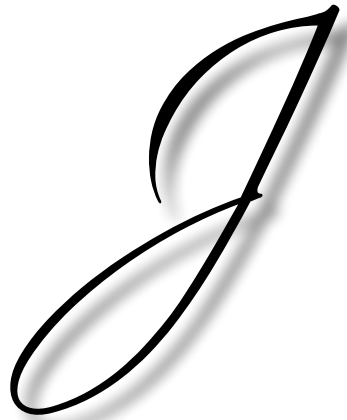
A religious phenomenon that traverses the diverse religious denominations and that has been giving rise to various syncretic movements is that of prophets and healers. The Liberian prophet William Harris Wadé, who held sway in coastal Côte d'Ivoire in the early 20th century, is emblematic of the success of prophetism during the colonial period. After independence, new types of prophet-healers have emerged with changing but sometimes considerable impact both on the general public and on economic and political elites.

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See also Africa; France; Ghana; Liberia; Prophecy

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JAINISM

A tradition that has less than 6 million adherents worldwide, Jainism is overwhelmingly found in one geographic location (India). These facts, and because it is ethnically homogeneous, nonproselytizing, and world renouncing, would seem to disqualify itself on many counts from a “global religion” status. Jainism, however, over the latter half of the 20th century, has successfully adapted its message of world renunciation to fit the dictates of a global religion.

Background

The tradition of Jainism gets its name from great spiritual masters called *Jinas*, meaning “conquerors.” They have taught that life, in all its myriad expressions (human, animal, insect, plant, water, earth, air, and fire), possesses an eternal quality that is noble and worthy of respect. Each eternal quality embodied in persons, animals, and things is called a *jiva*, a perfect entity endowed with a capacity for omniscience and bliss. But in its worldliness, it remains in a state of suffering. Jainism shows the way to self-realization, an idyllic state envisioned as a total and final release for the *jiva* weary from the world.

The path to liberation is that of unconditional nonviolence. Any encroachment on the life of another is a form of violence for Jains. Cruelty and killing of any sort is violence, but so too is desire, lust, and greed. Any kind of activity in the world amounts to an imposition on another life, and

harming others draws in destructive karma, harming the self. Nonviolence for the renouncers of the early sect was tantamount to worldly withdrawal, since existence itself was condemned for its violence. The ideal life is one lived in a state of vigilance, no word spoken or gesture made without consideration of the impact it might have on the multitude of co-dwellers of this world—the living beings, many of which are invisible, that occupy the world with us. One eats only to sustain the human form only so long as it serves the purpose of liberation; if it becomes an encumbrance, then abandoning it is the proper action. Jain nonviolence, as it was originally expressed, was motivated by a sense of radical alienation from the world and a desire to transcend it. It was also motivated by a sense of camaraderie with other life forms, which too are in the condition of alienation.

But Jainism so defined could never have existed as more than a tiny sect. Instead, from the start, the fledgling sect accommodated itself to the realities of the world and to those who were attracted by the tradition but unwilling or unable to commit to it wholly. Historical record reveals the early existence of a “fourfold community” (*caturvidyasangha*) made up of monks, nuns, laymen, and laywomen, among which the laity far outnumbered the renouncers. The overwhelming dominance of lay or “householder” Jains has always been the norm, though their practice is modeled after, and therefore derivative of, the path of renunciation.

This needs to be qualified, since lay Jainism is much more than an imitation of renouncer Jainism; while it valorizes the path of renunciation above

all else, it is in no way sheepish about its worldly accommodations. For instance, in the early centuries of Jainism's recorded history, Jains forged alliances with governing dynasties, securing the royal patronage that enabled the tradition to prosper. And from an early period, Jains became established as highly successful trading communities, a characteristic that they still retain today. Jainism's doctrine of nonviolence, though rooted in a world-renouncing impetus, has done nothing to hinder its this-worldly successes. Instead, lay Jains have always been able to interpret the rigorously ascetic message of the *Jinas* in such a way as to make it a dynamic, culturally sophisticated, artistically rich, and meaningful tradition.

Having said this, it is nevertheless important to keep in mind that Jainism has always been soteriologically oriented—that is, strongly motivated by the promise of other-worldly salvation—and that this orientation cuts across the mendicant-householder divide. As such, the ideological framework governing both renouncer and householder religiosity alike has, until recently, been expressed in terms of *withdrawal*. Jain identity, both lay and renouncer, is firmly rooted in values and practices opposed to the worldly life.

Something new has developed in recent decades that has allowed this salvific dimension to be stretched to encompass, for some, an emphasis on this-worldly sanctification rather than moksha. Global Jainism, a phenomenon of the late 20th century, goes well beyond this-worldly accommodation of an other-worldly ideological framework in its advocacy of a strongly affirmative, world-participatory ethos. Engagement with the world for its betterment and in the hope of fostering a nonviolent existence has become, for many, the grounds on which one erects the religious life.

Global Jainism

Global Jainism focuses on three core concepts: nonviolence (*ahimsa*), nonpossession (*aparigraha*), and nondogmatism (*anekantavada*). These three principles are presented as unique to Jainism and as correctives to the problems of the contemporary world, plagued as it is by war, environmental decay, anxiety, and greed.

The concepts of *ahimsa*, *aparigraha*, and *anekantavada*, as they were originally developed

within the ancient tradition of Jainism, were anchored within the ideological framework of world renunciation and transcendence. As such, they were inseparably linked to a soteriology that saw escape from the world as its ultimate goal. Global Jainism has been successful at broadening these concepts beyond a renouncer orientation and outside of a soteriological framework. They are now offered as a means to make life meaningful and authentic, here and now. Severed from their renouncer-ascetic moorings, they are interpreted as germane for all humanity.

Ahimsa

Ahimsa is commonly translated as “nonviolence” or “nonharm.” All known human groups valorize some form and practice of nonviolence, even if history does not bear this out. Traditional Jain understandings of nonviolence are distinctive in that they are inseparably linked to a notion of nonattachment. Since, for Jains, the true home of the eternal soul (*jiva*) is unequivocally other-worldly or “trans-cosmic,” all relations that bind the soul to the cosmos are unavoidably damaging. Attachments of any kind are detrimental to the soul on its journey toward liberation and are therefore conceived as a form of violence (*himsa*). From this, the entire edifice of Jain ideology and practice follows. Jainism is commonly referred to as a *moksha marg*—a path of renunciation that seeks to disengage the self from worldly entanglements. It rejects as misguided the early Vedic and later Hindu emphasis on worldly obligations (e.g., to ancestors, one's guru, God), arguing instead that the only obligation one has is to self-realization.

The Jain path of renunciation, described by James Laidlaw as one of “quarantine,” seeks to extricate the true self (*jiva*) from the quagmire of existence. This is done through the meticulous disengagement from specific worldly attachments (to family, possessions, ego, the body, etc.) and through fostering respect for all other life forms that are similarly caught up in the “predicament” that is life. This is the essence of *ahimsa*.

Ahimsa is understood as the paramount vow through which to sever all attachment and disengage from the world. It is the first of the five “Great Vows” (*Maha Vratas*) that renunciators adopt on renunciation. It is said that *ahimsa*

encompasses all subsequent vows, serving as their foundation. Although the vow of ahimsa is more leniently applied to householders, it remains the central defining vow of lay religiosity as well. Householders accept that their application of the vow of nonviolence will inevitably be partial: Living as householders “in” the world necessitates unavoidable violence. Nevertheless, their aim is to limit violence to the greatest extent possible with the aim of purifying the soul of karma.

In modern global Jainism, the meaning of ahimsa has been broadened to include not just different degrees of commitment to renunciation (from lay to renouncer) but a different orientation to the world. Within global Jainism, ahimsa is commonly understood in terms of our obligations *to the world* in which we live and expressed in terms of refraining from activities that are harmful to other beings.

While a concept of nonviolence is clearly broad enough to include both renunciatory and participatory orientations to the world, their distinctiveness should not be overlooked. Ahimsa of global Jainism continues to place an emphasis on the notion of restraint but does so with an altogether distinct ideological underpinning. Rather than advancing a soteriology of moksha, ahimsa here uses a language of obligation to, and care for, nature and animals and promotes environmental action and animal rights.

The contemporary movement within Jainism to define ahimsa as participatory is innovative. It is also a necessary development if the concept is to have universal appeal, as the traditional renunciatory understanding of ahimsa would likely always have limited appeal.

Aparigraha

Jainism is a tradition anchored around vows that limit involvement in the world. After ahimsa, the vow of *aparigraha* is the most significant (the remaining include truthfulness, nonstealing, and chastity). *Aparigraha* has dual significance, referring to both nonpossession and nonattachment. The two meanings are not sharply demarcated among the renouncer community, for whom the vow is all-inclusive and unconditional. A truly non-violent (detached) life necessitates complete non-attachment and nonpossession: One can neither

own anything nor remain attached to any thing or person. For householders, however, the two meanings of the vow are distinguished, and their difference is important. Total nonpossession is impossible and undesirable for householders: Living a worldly life, having a family, and engaging in the workaday world require possessions of many things. Householders may seek to limit possessions, but they principally aim to not become *attached* to those that they have. Jain teachings stress the estrangement of the self in the cosmos and the ultimate vanity of all attachments to the world. So one may have a family, a home, a job, and so on, but one may strive nevertheless to maintain a degree of detachment in relation to these “possessions.”

We see that, as with the case of ahimsa, the differences between renouncer and householder interpretations of the vow of *aparigraha* are primarily concerned with degrees of applicability. Both interpretations are informed by a renunciatory ethos.

In global Jainism, *aparigraha* loses this renunciatory orientation. As a key concept in the global teachings of Jainism, it has been extended to permit an ethos of worldly concern. Nonpossession and nonattachment are presented as obvious and necessary solutions to the problem of human greed, anxiety, consumerism, and wastefulness. Through a discourse of responsibility to nature, and to future generations (more than to the soul), global Jainism stresses self-discipline and asserts the need to limit the number of possessions we have and, through detachment, discipline our compulsive desire to consume. Through the concept of *aparigraha*, global Jainism easily becomes allied with contemporary environmental thought, though retaining the Jain focus on individual discipline (as opposed to, e.g., collective political action).

Anekantavada

Anekantavada (lit. “not one-sidedness”) is an important philosophical concept in traditional Jainism but one that has never had wide circulation outside the province of scholars and renunciators. Nevertheless, it has become an important concept for contemporary global Jainism, presented as a remedy against dogmatic thinking. Jains commonly treat *anekantavada* as an expression of nonviolence in the realm of epistemology: Since all

human understanding is partial, shaped by our way of being in the world, none of us can claim a monopoly on truth. The most we ever can know, it is argued, is incomplete truth. The acceptance of the partiality of knowledge is an expression of nonviolence, and a commitment to nonviolence mandates nondogmatic ways of knowing.

If probed, however, *anekantavada* cannot be and never was a relativist philosophy. While human claims to possess absolute truth are denied, the idea of truth is not. Instead, the omniscient *Jinas* are believed to have possessed absolute truth and, on their attainment of it, to have proclaimed it widely. Those who did not listen or follow the path of the *Jina* were in no way seen as equal to those who did. Jainism's "relativism," if it exists, is focused on the limits of human knowing and not on a problematizing of metaphysics. Indeed, in the medieval philosophical debates between Jain *acharyas* and leaders of other traditions, Jains labeled other sects as *ekantavada* (one-sided traditions) that possessed only partial truth, thereby using the concept of *anekantavada* rhetorically to establish the rightness of their own philosophy.

Nevertheless, the contemporary Jain community, reflecting the postmodern concern with, and celebration of, plurality, has effectively emphasized those aspects of the doctrine that convey a meaning of tolerance and a valorization of nondogmatic thinking. Jains advance the concept of *anekantavada* as a tool for interreligious understanding, arguing that accepting the limitations of knowledge should help foster tolerance toward others, as much as it should thwart dogmatic thinking and judgmentalness.

Ideology and Practice

Global Jainism is not just, or even primarily, about the reinterpretation of concepts or the shift from soteriology to sanctification. Instead, this ideological shift forms part and parcel of sociopolitical and geographical shifts taking place within the Jain community and within the world in general. Global Jainism is the outcome of all these factors.

Although Jains have always had their own texts, distinctive practices, and religious leaders, their religious identity was until the 20th century largely fluid or polytropic, overlapping to a large

degree with their Hindu neighbors. Few efforts were made to tease apart Jain from non-Jain religious practices. Certainly "Jain" did not carry the oppositional signification of "not Hindu" that it does for many today. Instead, it appears as though one's identification with Jainism was one among many identity markers that were not in conflict with a more general, fluid identity of the broader culture.

The move from a nondiscursive and inclusive religio-sociocultural identity to that of a delimited, ideological, and exclusive one is a phenomenon of modern religious movements, as each seeks to define itself as a unique and self-sufficient entity, distinct from each other as well as from other human institutions such as politics, society, or culture. The two form part of the pattern of universalism and exclusivism that characterize global religions as a whole.

In recent years, efforts to have Jainism recognized as a distinctive tradition have become pronounced and high profile, reaching the level of Supreme Court arbitration. In 2006, the Indian National Minorities Commission recommended to the national government that Jains be declared a minority religious community and that they be accorded the benefits accruing to that status. These developments (of what we might describe as a "containing" nature) have coincided with efforts of an expansive sort, as evidenced by Jain outreach efforts among non-Jains. For instance, the Anuvrat movement, first launched in 1949 by the late Jain renouncer Acharya Ganadipatti Tulsi, was a social activist movement based on Jain principles of nonviolence and self-discipline. It sought to spread nonviolence and sobriety throughout Indian society by having people adopt small vows (*anuvrat*). In a like manner, the *Ahimsa Yatra* (or pilgrimage of nonviolence), launched by the Jain renouncer Acharya Mahaprejna in 2001, similarly seeks to spread nonviolence throughout India's religious communities. Both movements emerged out of a particular sect of Jainism called the Terapanthis. This group has been very engaged in activities of a reformist and activist nature.

In the mid-1980s, they made innovative and controversial changes to the institution of mendicancy when they created a new category of "semi"renouncer. Unlike full renouncers, the semirenouncers (*samans/samanis*) can travel by

car, train, or bus and can have food prepared expressly for them. These changes paved the way for the creation of a group of renouncer-ambassadors (most of whom are women) who can spread Jain teachings far and wide. In addition to extensive travel within India, the *samanis* have traveled to Jain communities around the world (mainly in the United Kingdom, the United States, and Canada) to reinvigorate diaspora Jain communities and to spread the message of nonviolence to non-Jains as well.

Jains do not seek converts, and there is effectively no recognized process within the tradition through which one can undergo conversion. Nevertheless, efforts to spread the message of nonviolence through the idiom of Jainism are of a quasi-proselytizing nature. So, for instance, global Jainism strongly advocates the adoption of the “Jain way of life,” by which is meant, in large part, a vegetarian diet.

The simultaneous efforts of outreach and containment are in keeping with the demands of global religions for universality and particularity, which characterize all world religions. We see that the ecumenical message of Jainism is emerging at the same time as a sophisticated and articulate Jain voice that seeks to define Jainism with clear-cut borders from all other traditions. The universality of the Jain message is being proclaimed in the midst of robust identity politics that make use of an exclusionary ideological discourse with the aim of producing a rational, delimited portrait of itself.

It would be a mistake to present all Jains as now speaking the discourse of global religion. Indeed, perhaps most continue to understand and live their Jainism as a habitus, that is, as a nonreflexive way of life and as inseparable from their sectarian and caste allegiances. Teasing apart the Jain from the non-Jain dimensions of their lives would be impossible, since Jainism informs an aspect of all social alliances, marriage partners, dietary practices, holiday observances, work, devotional practices, and so on—in other words, all things meaningful. In addition, many who self-identify as Jain continue to do so in a nonexclusive way: They may also choose to define themselves as “Hindu” by nationality and may participate in “Hindu” worship without seeing these activities as antithetical to their identity as Jains.

But the lived expression of any religion is always messier and broader than the self-contained portraits we hold up as representatives. Nevertheless, the fact that a self-contained account of Jainism is available is what makes Jainism eligible for consideration as a global religion. Religious portraits are self-conscious, rationalized, and ideologically informed sets of beliefs and practices. And while the portrait of global Jainism naturally overlaps with the nonreflexive habitus of Jainism, the two are not synonymous. Indeed, as we saw above, certain aspects of global Jainism constitute a break with its more traditional renouncer-ascetic focus. Global Jainism is not so much a tradition as an interpretative dimension within contemporary Jainism that has emerged alongside Jainism’s geographical spread outside India and is coextensive with its outreach activities and its socio-political efforts to gain recognition as distinct tradition.

Conclusion

At the turn of the 21st century, Jainism has taken root in many lands beyond that of its birth: Sizable Jain communities can be found in England, Belgium, the United States, and Canada, and small communities of Jains can be found in most of the world’s metropolises.

The geographical spread of Jains is coinciding with growing and concerted efforts to define the tradition as a distinctive expression of ancient Indian religiosity and as a unique voice among the world’s religions. As Jain religious identity is becoming more marked, delimited, and exclusive, the wisdom of its claims is being offered as important, universalizable, and inclusive. Equipped with the concepts of *ahimsa*, *anekantavada*, and *aparigraha*, Jainism appears well placed to claim its originality and its ability to communicate a universal message for all humanity. In other words, it appears ready to take its seat at the table of global religions and enter into the dialogue among the religions of the world, communicating in an idiom familiar to all.

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See also Hinduism; India; Nonviolence; Theravada Buddhism

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JAMAAT-E-ISLAMI

The Jamaat-e-Islami (JI; lit. “Islamic congregation” or “Islamic party”) is Pakistan’s oldest religious-political party and is also among the most influential Islamic revivalist movements in the world. Sayyid Abu’l-a’la’ Mawdudi (often designated Maulana Mawdudi) founded JI on August 26, 1941, in British India as an alternative to the Muslim League and its vision of an Islamic state. After the

partition of India in 1947, the JI moved its headquarters to Lahore and thus became part of the newly created Islamic Republic of Pakistan from the very beginning. Here, the Mawdudi-led JI promoted Islam as a holistic ideology, which the founder believed ought to be the basis of a true Islamic state and society. JI was critical toward the secular policies of the nascent state and berated its political leaders for failing to create an authentic Islamic state, which according to the founder was ideologically and administratively superior to the secular “Western model.”

The JI members who remained in India formed an independent organization, the Jamaat-e-Islami Hind. JI also developed an autonomous existence in the Indian-held Kashmir, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka. Other movements with a similar name exist in other countries also (e.g., the Egyptian al-Gama’a al Islamiyah or the Indonesian Jemaah Islamiyah), but they have no direct relation to the Pakistani JI or its ideology. However, there is a family resemblance between JI and other movements such as the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood (Ikhwan-al-Muslimeen), the Palestinian Hamas, and the Turkish Rifah party.

Besides the global ideological ties, the particular JI model of a political party—which is simultaneously an activist and an intellectual movement—has inspired various revivalist movements around the world, especially in South Asia and the Arab world. The party’s holistic approach to religion/politics/civil society is reflected in its broad organizational umbrella, which embraces different areas/functions besides parliamentary politics: charity (*khidmat*), missionary activities (*da’wah*), education (*tarbiyyat*), and youth activities offered through its youth wings/student organizations. Furthermore, various labor organizations are affiliated with JI, for example, medical associations and farmer boards. The party also has its own governing body (Rabita-ul-Madaris al-Islamia) for a large number of religious seminaries (*madaris*) inspired by the JI school of thought.

The succeeding leaders of the party, Mian Tufayl Muhammad (1972–1987) and Qazi Hussain Ahmad (1987–), have also been influential, but their global reach has been limited. Some of Mawdudi’s ideas can be rediscovered in the articulations of the Egyptian Sayyid Qutb, who is widely considered to be the other founding father of the

global Islamic revival movements. The two main components of the global Islamic revivalism that accelerated in South Asia, North Africa, and the Middle East throughout the 1970s are (a) a critique of Western hegemony, especially in defining global politics and culture and (b) a quest for authenticity in the organization of an Islamic state and society. This implies that proponents of global Islamic revival movements such as the JI are typically also critical toward the powerful elite among Muslims, be they politicians/rulers or influential clergy who are accused of blindly imitating tradition and thus unable to distinguish between un-Islamic cultural influences on their actions and “pure Islam.”

In Pakistan, the JI has promoted its viewpoints by participating through parliamentary processes (until 1977 as the opposition party only). It has influenced Pakistani politics by, for example, lobbying for giving Islam a constitutional status, pushing through a bill that declared the Ahmadiyya minority community a non-Muslim sect, supporting the massive “Islamization” program under the regime of general Zia ul-Haq in the 1970s and the enforcement of a controversial Shari’a bill, and most recently by leading the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA, United Council of Action), which was one of the major religio-political alliances in contemporary Pakistan, winning a sweeping victory at the provincial elections in 2002 and taking over the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (former North West Frontier Province) and Baluchistan.

The Pakistani JI has been criticized for its alleged links to regionally operating militant groups, such as the Hizb-e-Islami during the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan and the Hizbul Mujahideen (HM). The last mentioned is typically referred to as the military wing of JI, though the JI leadership denies any organizational links. These ties are regarded as an “open secret” and have been suspected partly due to the fact that HM offices have been located in JI buildings and JI during the 1980s played an active role in facilitating recruitment of mujahideen for the Cold War battle against the Red Army in Afghanistan.

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See also Islam; Islamic Reform; Islamic State; Islamism (Political Islam); Mawdudi, Abu'l-a'la'; Muslim Brotherhood; Pakistan

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JAMAICA

The island nation of Jamaica is the third largest island in the Caribbean, located directly south of Cuba and west of the island of Hispaniola. A former British colony, its population of more than 2.5 million consists mostly of descendants of slaves from Africa, but there are also 19th- and 20th-century migrants from India, China, Europe, North America, the Middle East, and other West Indian islands. These groups, too, have greatly influenced Jamaican religious life.

As on other Caribbean islands, religion is central to daily life in Jamaica. Religion plays a major role in Jamaican society, politics, and expressive culture; for example, the islandwide festival of Jonkanoo (John Canoe) incorporates Christian and African religious traditions. Jamaica has more churches per square kilometer than any other nation in the Americas.

More than 80% of Jamaicans identify themselves as Christians. An overwhelming majority of Jamaicans belong to conservative (fundamentalist and/or evangelical) Protestant groups. Major Protestant denominations include Seventh-Day Adventists (10.8%), Pentecostals (9.5%), Church of God (8.3%), Baptists (7.2%), the New Testament Church of God (6.3%), the Church of God in Jamaica (4.8%), the Church of God of Prophecy (4.3%), Anglicans (3.6%), United Methodists (2.1%), Jehovah's Witnesses (1.6%), Brethren (1.1%), and Moravians

(1.1%). Four percent of the population is Roman Catholic. There is a long-standing Jewish presence; Jamaica boasts one of the first synagogues to be established in the Caribbean. Church-sponsored surveys report a total of 1,639,099 Protestants; 218,546 Roman Catholics; 209,189 Seventh-Day Adventists; 11,174 Jehovah's Witnesses; 300 Jews; and 5,463 Muslims. According to the 2006 *CIA World Factbook*, 34% of the Jamaican population reported themselves as belonging to "no religion" or "other religions." "Other" religions included Spiritualism, Revivalism, and Rastafarianism. Religious pluralism abounds. Many Jamaicans attend their own churches and the services of other religious organizations as well.

Membership in Christian churches has remained stable. In some respects, Jamaican religious life has changed little since the mid-20th century. Major changes include the decline of Jamaican folk religion (Myalism) and transformations within the Pukumina and Revival groups, the rise and growth of Pentecostalism, and—most notably—the advent of Rastafarianism.

Revivalism constitutes Jamaica's most widespread African-derived religion. Its focus is on possession by both African and Christian spirits. Revivalism was an extremely powerful political and religious force between 1890 and 1920 under the leadership of Alexander Bedward. Following World War II, a number of Revival groups merged with North American Pentecostals. Other Revival groups remained independent.

Jamaican Pentecostals include bodies affiliated with North American denominations as well as indigenous congregations such as the Church of God in Jamaica and the New Testament Church of God. Jamaican Pentecostal churches are united by their emphasis on ecstatic experience and the gifts of the Holy Spirit: healing, prophecy, and speaking in tongues.

Jamaica is the birthplace of a worldwide religious movement known as Rastafarianism. More than 100,000 Jamaicans identify Rastafarianism as their primary religion, while many more Jamaicans accept the ideas of Rasta and other similar religious groups. Rastafarianism has become not so much a religion as a way of life. Rastas derive their teachings from the King James Bible (with an emphasis on the Old Testament) but read the Bible from a distinctively African

point of view. Their religion is highly Protestant in outlook.

Rastafarianism began in the slums of Kingston in the 1930s, but its roots may be traced to 19th-century slave revolts such as the Morant Bay Rebellion of 1865 as well as 20th-century movements such as the United Negro Improvement Association founded by Marcus Garvey. Rastafarian beliefs vary greatly. Early Rastafarians professed that the one true God was Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie (known by his title, Ras Tafari). Ethiopia was the true Zion, and many early Rastas sought a physical return to Africa. Contemporary Rastas no longer seek a physical return to Africa, preferring a spiritual return instead. Rasta practices vary greatly, but most emphasize the ritual use of ganja (marijuana), reggae music, and the wearing of braids known as dreadlocks.

Stephen D. Glazier

See also Cuba; Haiti; Latin America; New Religions in South America; Pentecostal Movements

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JAPAN

Though Japan has traditionally been a very closed society, increasingly it has become open to global influences, has seen a large number of Japanese

living elsewhere in the world, and has become the home of waves of non-Japanese workers living on its shores. Since other entries in this encyclopedia cover the Japanese religions of Shinto, Pure Land Buddhism, Zen, Soka Gakkai, and new religions in Japan, this entry will focus on the religious culture of Japanese abroad and on non-ethnic Japanese living in Japan.

According to official statistics by the Japan Immigration Association, as of the end of 2006 there are 2,084,919 registered foreigners living in Japan, which is 1.63% of the total population of 128 million. Among them, the Koreans (approximately 598,000, 28.7%), Chinese (561,000, 26.9%), and Brazilians (313,000, 15.0%) are the three biggest groups, followed by Filipinos (9.3%), Peruvians (2.8%), and Americans (2.6%).

The changing population of Japan has resulted in the presence of diverse religious practices and affiliations. Of particular significance to the history of Japanese religious life are the presence of Koreans and Chinese, religious expansion under and after the Japanese imperialism and colonialism, Japanese emigration to the United States and Brazil, and the presence of Brazilian immigrants in Japan.

Chinese and Korean Migration

Although the concept of diaspora needs further clarification when applied to ethnicities other than Jews, it has recently been used to refer to Chinese and Korean migration as well. A scholar on migration studies, Chen Tien-Shi, estimates that of the 34.9 million people in the Chinese diaspora, a great majority live in Southeast Asian countries (notably 7.4 million in Indonesia, 6.5 million in Thailand, and 5.6 million in Malaysia), whereas 960,000 live in Canada, 2,830,000 in the United States, 1,000,000 in Peru, 1,000,000 in Russia, and 380,000 in Australia. The sociologist Koh Chung Hesung regards Koreans as the fourth biggest diaspora group, following Chinese, Jews, and Italians, and estimates that 7 million Koreans live abroad, 90% of them in the United States, Japan, China, or the former USSR.

The Korean and Chinese impact on Japanese societies related to its imperialist and colonialist past, beginning with the First Sino-Japanese War (1894–1895), followed by the cession of Taiwan to Japan in 1895, and the annexation of Korea in

1910. The defeat of Japan in World War II in 1945 destroyed this regime, depriving Japan of territories outside the Japanese archipelago. A number of Koreans and Chinese had lived in the archipelago until then and decided to remain. It is estimated that at the end of the war, more than 2 million Koreans lived in Japan, including around 700,000 laborers who had been forced to go, and 90,000 Chinese (56,000 from the mainland, among them 40,000 forced laborers, and 34,000 from Taiwan). Among the Chinese, 68,000 left Japan by 1950 (44,000 to the Chinese mainland and 24,000 to Taiwan). Although the Koreans and Chinese who chose to remain lost their Japanese citizenship in 1952, postwar legislation guaranteed that they could live in Japan with the status of “special permanent residence.” As of the end of 2006, the special permanent residence status applied to around 439,000 Koreans and 3,000 Chinese, while the ordinary permanent residence applied to 117,000 Chinese and 79,000 Brazilians.

Religions of Koreans in Japan

Among 598,000 Koreans, 140,000 live in Osaka and 108,000 in Tokyo. Scholars around Osaka have accumulated sociological research on Korean religions in the area in the past 20 years or so.

In the hilly area called Ikoma is a dense array of more than 60 Korean temples. These temples show features distinct from those of other Buddhist temples in Japan and have caught the attention of a number of researchers. Their precinct usually comprises a main Buddhist hall, another hall for natural deities that reflect a syncretic tradition from Korea, and a site for shamanic séances. Calendrical rituals are performed in the Korean temples, and on request by a client, a special séance is conducted for specific purposes such as healing, soul consolation for the vengeful dead, or giving thanks to one's ancestors.

Takafumi Iida, a sociologist, identifies other religious activities of Koreans in Japan, including Confucian rituals for ancestors and the ethnic Protestant churches. For Korean residents who have lived in Japan for more than one generation, concern about cemeteries and ancestral rituals naturally grows stronger. Besides having a grave in the local cemeteries, Koreans have developed their own cemeteries since the 1960s. Their tombstones

usually have a detailed familial genealogy engraved. The occasional visit to their grave, as well as other regular activities by extended family members, contributes to a revival of their family tradition and maintains the Confucian customs.

As for Korean Christians, Iida presents the assumption that since in an area in Osaka there are 2.2 times as many Christians as members of a major Korean Protestant church, the Korean Christian Church in Japan (KCCJ), there will probably be 2.2 times as many Korean Christians in Japan as the total membership of KCCJ (6,300 at the time of his research), that is, approximately 14,000. Iida thinks that half of them are permanent residents and the other half newcomers; thus, he estimated that the percentage of Christians among the permanent Korean residents was 1.3% (at the time of his research). Compared with the percentage of Christians in the Republic of Korea (around 25%), or among Korean Americans (70% or more), this percentage is surprisingly small.

KCCJ started its missionary work in 1908, supported by the Korean Presbyterian Church. Then the Korean Methodist Church joined them in 1912, and the Canadian Presbyterian Church also has been supporting the missionary work since 1927. From 1940 through 1945, KCCJ was forced to be incorporated as a Japanese church, but after the war it became independent, keeping its ecumenical character. According to the governmental official statistics published annually by the Agency for Cultural Affairs, KCCJ has 4,767 members in Japan as of the end of 2005.

Also active among Koreans in Japan are the branch churches of the Yoido Full Gospel Church of Korea. This Pentecostal church has 830,000 members worldwide and is said to be the biggest Pentecostal church in the world. According to Mark R. Mullins, a sociologist, its mission to Japan started in 1976 with the organization of a church in Osaka, and now it has a membership of more than 5,000.

Religions in Chinatowns in Japan

There are three main Chinatowns in Japan. The oldest is the one in Nagasaki, where the Chinese came to start trade in the 16th century; today, there are around 1,600 Chinese living there (of the total population of 450,000 in 2005). After Japan

opened the ports of Kobe and Yokohama internationally in the late 19th century, Chinese migrated there as well; in 2007, approximately 28,000 Chinese lived in Yokohama (total population 3,630,000) and 13,000 in Kobe (total population 1,530,000).

In Nagasaki, the Chinese established four Buddhist temples in the 17th century, each serving persons from the same area of China. This was partly because they needed to identify themselves as non-Christian, because Christianity was forbidden by the Tokugawa shogunate. These temples include mausoleums for Emperor Guān (a historical figure who became a god of war) and Māzū (a goddess who protects sailors) and reveal some sort of syncretism. These temples have fulfilled both religious and communal functions. In 1647, a mausoleum for Confucius was established. After many vicissitudes, it was renovated in 1967, and the Confucian ritual was resumed in 1986 by the Chinese community. A number of Chinese cultural elements have merged into the local culture and festivity of Nagasaki in the past four centuries.

In Kobe, the Chinese community established their temple with mausoleums for Emperor Guān and Māzū in 1888, following the earlier establishment of the Chinese temple in Osaka, where they performed their yearly rituals and festivals. In 1893, they established a Chinese Hall, which signifies both the building itself and the institution. It fulfilled functions of administration, commerce, culture, social welfare, and cultural exchange with Japanese for the Chinese community in Kobe and Osaka, which was composed of those who originally came from different areas of China and Taiwan. People gathered at the mausoleum for Emperor Guān to celebrate New Year and other yearly rituals, and also for ancestral rituals and funerals.

During the war from 1931 through 1945, the Chinese living in Japan experienced a harsh period of surveillance, oppression, and control, and a great number of them chose to leave Japan. In 1945, the U.S. bombing destroyed the Chinese Hall and the Mausoleum for Emperor Guān in Kobe. After the war, the Mausoleum was reconstructed in 1948, and it additionally functioned as an orphanage until the 1970s. Side by side with the postwar recovery of Japan, the Chinese community also recovered, and in 1998, the China Hall

was reconstructed after its destruction more than 50 years ago. The Chinatown in Kobe, called Nanjin Town, grew into a fashionable commercial area around 1980.

In Yokohama, a Chinese Hall and a mausoleum for Emperor Guān were originally established around 1870, where the yearly rituals and festivals have been conducted, although the mausoleum was destroyed a few times by earthquake, war, and fire. The present mausoleum was reconstructed in 1990, and it is located in the center of Yokohama Chinatown. This Chinatown has grown into a big cultural and commercial area since around 1953, when the mayor and the head of the chamber of commerce were inspired by visiting the Chinatown in San Francisco.

Religions During and After Japanese Imperialism

The presence of Koreans and Chinese in Japan is more or less related to the past imperialism and colonialism of Japan. During the imperialist and colonialist period, the two main Japanese religions, Shinto and Buddhism, expanded to the Japanese colonies, Taiwan, Korea, and other areas. Shinto shrines were established there, and their number outside the Japanese archipelago as of 1945 is summarized by Kōji Suga as follows: 995 in Korea, 243 in Manchuria, 200 in Taiwan, 128 in Sakhalin, and 90 in China and other areas. But the basic intention of the Shinto expansion was not to convert the local people of each area, even though visits to Shinto shrines were forced on them, as well as on Japanese residents overseas. On the other hand, Japanese Buddhist groups engaged in propagation activities, especially through education, but they had Japanese residents as their main target, providing them with ritual opportunities. Thus, after World War II, as Japan and the Japanese receded, Japanese religions also disappeared in Taiwan and Korea, except for converts to some religious groups that had made efforts for propagation in those colonies.

This exception applies especially to the case of Tenrikyō, a religious movement founded in 1838 by Nakayama Miki (1798–1887). Tenrikyō expanded outside the Japanese archipelago just as other Japanese religions accompanied the Japanese expansion, but it was also the most active of

Japanese religions, being propagated vigorously among the local people in Korea, Taiwan, and other areas. Around the same period in the 1920s, Tenrikyō also expanded in the United States, as well as in Hawai'i, Canada, and Brazil, though its propagation was focused mainly on Japanese immigrants. Tenrikyō had more than 60 churches in North America and Hawai'i in 1934 and 9 in Brazil in 1937, whereas as of 1945, it had 211 churches in Korea, 124 in Manchuria, 46 in China, 39 in Taiwan, and 6 in the Pacific regions. After the war, it maintained religious activities among Japanese immigrants in the Americas, while it lost Japanese followers in the Asian and Pacific regions. At some places in Asia, however, the local followers have reestablished their religious communities. As of 1996, Tenrikyō had 275 churches overseas, among which 78 were in Korea, 16 in Taiwan, 58 in the United States (mainland), 36 in Hawai'i, and 74 in Brazil. Starting under some influence of Japanese colonialism, the overseas propagation of Tenrikyō went beyond the influence of Japanese colonialism and continued successfully after the war.

Religion and Japanese Immigration

Recent findings of the International Nikkei Research Project reveal that people of Japanese descent are spread densely over North and South America and that around the mid-1990s, among 165 million Japanese immigrants abroad, approximately 760,000 lived in the United States, 620,000 in Brazil, and 60,000 in Peru and Canada. There are more than 300,000 Brazilians of Japanese descent living in Japan. Brazilians of Japanese descent constitute the largest number of Japanese living outside Japan. A great number of Japanese emigrated to Hawai'i and California from the mid-1880s until 1924, when the Immigration Act restricted their immigration. Japanese emigration to Brazil started in 1908 and to other Latin American countries around the turn of the century.

David Yoo, a historian of Asian Americans, takes a clue about religious affiliation among Japanese Americans in the formative period before 1924 from a Stanford University survey in the early 1930s. This survey found that among Issei (first generation), 78% claimed affiliation with Buddhism and 18% with Christianity. Among Buddhists of Japanese Americans, Jodo Shin

Buddhism (also called “Shin Buddhism”) has been the most influential as their ethnic religion. This branch of Pure Land Buddhism traces back to the 13th-century Japanese monk Shinran (1173–1262) and has affiliation with the Japanese Buddhist school Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha (also known as Nishi Hongwanji), which has approximately 7 million followers in Japan. Their mission to Japanese Americans began in 1899, and in 1914, they established their missionary organization, the North American Buddhist Mission, in San Francisco, incorporating 25 churches and branches. In 1944, they reorganized this Mission into the Buddhist Churches of America (BCA). Around the centennial of the history of Shin Buddhism in the United States, Kenneth K. Tanaka (a specialist on Shin Buddhism) noticed attrition in the number of general members and priests of the BCA. Its membership declined from 21,600 in 1977 to 16,902 in 1996, while the number of priests declined from its peak of 123 in 1930 to 71 in 1981 and to 61 in 1997. Although the BCA may well function as the preservation of the Japanese culture and ethnicity, with the current high percentage of out-marriages among Japanese Americans (around 50%), and with cultural transitions over generations among them, the BCA needs a general restructuring of its organization and its way of teaching. Besides the BCA, Zen Buddhism and Soka Gakkai deserve special attention as the other streams of Buddhism in the United States and other parts of the world. These are treated in separate entries in this encyclopedia.

The official missions of Japanese religions in Brazil started only after World War II, although some Japanese emigrants may have brought their own faith with them, either traditional Buddhism or a new religion, from the beginning of their migration, which began in 1908. This was because the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs prohibited missionaries from visiting Brazil until the end of the war for fear that it would raise anti-Japanese sentiments among the Catholic Brazilians. Since the 1950s, major Buddhist schools and new religious groups have been active in their mission activities, and a survey in the mid-1980s shows that among Japanese Brazilians, 60% are Catholics while 25% belong to some kind of Japanese religion. A couple of new religious groups are successful outside the Japanese Brazilian community.

According to Hideaki Matsuoka, an anthropologist, the following groups have around 1 million members in total, 95% of them being Brazilians of non-Japanese descent: Igreja Seichô-no-Ie do Brasil, Instituição Religiosa Perfect Liberty, and Igreja Messiânica Mundial do Brasil. The details of Japanese religions in Latin America and new religions from Japan are discussed in the entries under their respective headings.

Japanese Brazilians in Japan

The Japanese government introduced a new immigration control in 1990 that promotes the entry of foreigners of Japanese descent (the first through the third generations) to make up for the lack of labor force in the manufacturing and construction industries. The Brazilian workers in Japan are sometimes called *Dekasegi* in Japanese or *Dekassegui* in Portuguese, using an original Japanese word meaning “workers away from home.” In 1990, approximately 56,000 Brazilians lived in Japan, while there were 120,000 in 1991, 202,000 in 1996, and 302,000 in 2005. As of the end of 2006, there were 313,000 Brazilians, of whom 76,000 live in Aichi, 51,000 in Shizuoka, 21,000 in Mie, and 20,000 in Gifu. These are areas in central Japan well-known for automobile and other manufacturing industries.

Recently, the presence of Japanese Brazilians in Japan has received increasing attention not only among scholars but also in the society in general, but thus far, there has been no research specifically focusing on their religions. Even in the Catholic Church, apparently the foreign Catholics who live in Japan have not been studied. The Catholic Commission of Japan for Migrants, Refugees, and People on the Move (J-CARM) only presents an estimate about Catholics from abroad through calculation by multiplying the officially registered number of foreign residents by the percentage of Catholics in their native country that is issued by the Vatican. Thus, they estimated in 2005 that in the Yokohama diocese that covers Shizuoka, there were 54,000 Japanese and 119,000 foreign Catholics; in the Nagoya diocese that covers Aichi and Gifu, 25,000 Japanese and 107,000 foreign Catholics; and in the Kyoto diocese that covers Mie, 19,000 Japanese and 43,000 foreign Catholics. In this estimation, 73% of Catholics in these three dioceses are foreign residents.

Most Recent Newcomers: Muslims

Besides the case of Catholic newcomers, a brief mention should be made of Muslim newcomers. (The backdrop of their influx is reviewed in the entry on “Tokyo” in this encyclopedia.) Akiko Onishi, a clinical psychologist, estimates that there are between 70,000 and 100,000 Muslims in Japan, with perhaps 10% being Japanese citizens who profess Islam; they include migrants from South Asia, Southeast Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and China. The number of these foreign Muslims is expected to increase due to the impending labor shortage in Japan. This will make it necessary for a better understanding of Islam and Muslims among the Japanese people.

Michiaki Okuyama

See also Diaspora; Japanese Religions in Latin America; New Religions in Japan; Pentecostal Movements; Pure Land Buddhism; Shinto; Soka Gakkai; Tokyo; Zen Buddhism

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JAPANESE RELIGIONS IN LATIN AMERICA

Japanese religions both old and new are to be found throughout Latin America but mainly in Brazil, where traditions such as that of Shingon and Japanese versions of the Jodo Shinshu and Jodo Shu Pure Traditions have a relatively long presence. Here, the focus is on Brazil, where the Latin American headquarters and the holy grounds of most Japanese religions, including new religions (*shinshukyo*) such as Seicho no Ie (House of Growth), Sekai Kyūseikyō (Church of World Messianity), and Soka Gakkai (Value Creation Society), are situated.

Prohibited from entering Hawai'i and Peru a few years earlier, large-scale Japanese emigration to Brazil began in 1908 with the arrival of 791 Japanese emigrants at the port of Santos in São Paulo on the passenger liner the *Kosatu-Maru* to work on the coffee plantations of São Paulo. The teaching and propagation of Japanese religion was prohibited by the joint agreement made between the Brazilian government and the Japanese Imperial Company for Immigration, which forbade emigrants from traveling as a priest or a monk. This notwithstanding, one Japanese new religion—the Nichiren shoshu, derived from the Honmon Butsuryu Shu movement—did contrive to send one missionary to Brazil in the person of Tomojiro Ibaragui, born in Kyoto in 1886. Religion was to

play little part in most of the emigrants' lives until the post–World War II era. Important rituals such as death rituals were not seen as necessary in pre–World War II Brazil, where dying was regarded as death in a “foreign land”; it was believed that the soul of the deceased returned home to Japan for the appropriate funeral rites.

A dramatic change occurred after World War II as increasing numbers of the older Japanese emigrants committed themselves to remaining in Brazil, to have their bones interred in the country where their children would be living, since their children will identify more with Brazil than with Japan. While some Japanese new religions including Tenrikyō (Heavenly Wisdom), Omoto (Great Origin), and the previously mentioned Honmon Butsuryu Shu had entered Brazil earlier, the majority of the more than 30 now present in Brazil began to establish themselves there in the mid-1950s. Initially, most were ethnic churches with a mission exclusive to the Japanese community.

With the slowing down of emigration and the rise in the rate of intermarriage among Japanese emigrants, these new religions came to the realization that their ethnic character was a serious barrier to growth and that they were failing to take account of the changing aspirations and outlook of the Japanese community as it sought closer involvement in the wider Brazilian society. By the mid-1960s, most of the Japanese new religions had begun to reinvent themselves as universal religions, albeit with special Japanese features. The first and most important reform was the introduction of the Portuguese language alongside Japanese as the main language of communication and ritual. The process of adaptation has, in a number of cases, brought success in the form of numerical growth. The estimated current membership of Seicho no Ie and the Church of World Messianity is 2 million and 350,000, respectively. From the mid-1990s, growth in membership size generally—but not its influence on the wider society—has begun to stall. One response has been to use Brazil as a launching pad for expansion to Africa, in particular Portuguese-speaking Africa, and Europe.

Peter B. Clarke

See also Brazil; Japan; New Religions; New Religions in Japan; New Religions in South America

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JEMAAH ISLAMIYAH

Jemaah Islamiyah (JI; lit. “Islamic Community”) is a radical Islamic movement based in Indonesia with the goal of establishing an Islamic state uniting Muslims in Southeast Asia under an Islamic caliphate. JI emerged in the late 1970s as networks behind the Darul Islam rebellions of the 1950s and 1960s were revived. The Indonesian military initially cultivated relations with movement leaders to broaden support for the ruling party as well as build a bulwark against communism after the fall of Saigon. Those leaders who could not co-opt were arrested and accused of involvement in a dubious extremist organization known as Komando Jihad. Abu Bakar Ba’asyir and Abdullah Sungkar were identified as key leaders of Komando Jihad. They were also founders in 1971 of Pesantren al-Mukmin, later known as Pondok Ngruki, an Islamic boarding school on the outskirts of Solo in central Java, where JI was born. Ba’asyir and Sungkar were tried in 1982 and sentenced to 9 years in prison; however, these sentences were overturned on appeal, and they were released in 1985. They returned to Pondok Ngruki, where, inspired by the Iranian Revolution of 1979, they again revived the network of supporters of Darul Islam, now referred to as Jemaah Islamiyah. In 1985, when the Suharto government threatened to return Sungkar and Ba’asyir to jail, they fled to Malaysia.

JI drew inspiration from the writings of Ali Shariati and Murtaza Mutahhari of Iran, Hassan al-Banna and Sayyid Qutb of Egypt’s Muslim Brotherhood, and Abu’l-a’la’ Mawdudi of Pakistan. The bloody repression of a demonstration by Muslims in Tanjung Priok, Jakarta’s port, in 1984 and an Indonesian army attack on a JI community in Lampung, Sumatra, in 1989 contributed to radicalizing JI. In Malaysia, Sungkar and Ba’asyir began to recruit mujahideen to join the struggle against the Soviets in Afghanistan.

This led to contacts with al-Gama'a al Islamiyah, the radical faction of the Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt, which was closely linked to al Qaeda. In Afghanistan, JI established links with radical Islamists from Malaysia and the southern Philippines. Between 1985 and 1995, most of JI's senior leadership fought and trained in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

After the fall of Suharto in 1998, Sungkar and Ba'asyir returned to Pondok Ngruki, where Sungkar died of natural causes. Ba'asyir became the emir (spiritual leader) of JI. In 2000, Ba'asyir established the Indonesian Mujahidin Council (Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia, MMI), bringing together all the Islamist groups in Indonesia to work for the application of Shari'a law.

JI came to public attention in November 2002 with the arrest of Amrozi, a suspect in the October 12 bombing of a Balinese night club that killed 202 people. Indonesian and Australian police traced the bombers back to Pondok Ngruki. The arrest of Imam Samudra, who had planned the operation in Bali, confirmed the Ngruki connection and revealed that JI was responsible for a series of bombings, including coordinated bombings of churches that killed 19 people and injured dozens in nine Indonesian cities on Christmas Eve 2000. In 2003, JI successfully carried out the bombing of the JW Marriott Hotel in Jakarta, killing 12 people and injuring more than 150. JI was also responsible for a bombing of the Australian Embassy in 2004. In 2003, Ba'asyir was sentenced to 4 years in prison for involvement with JI, a charge he claims is a fabrication of the CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) to discredit Islam. He was released in 2006.

Elizabeth Fuller Collins

See also al Qaeda; Indonesia; Islamism (Political Islam); Malaysia; Terrorism; Violence

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JERUSALEM

See Israel

JESUS

More than a billion Christians around the world revere Jesus in a special way. Most regard him as the Son of God and consider him divine as well as human. No other person has had such claims made for him by so many. Most Christians believe that he lived, died, rose from the dead, and is an eternal presence. This entry cannot evaluate the validity of these beliefs but acknowledges that the influence of these beliefs on human society is profound.

More is known about the life of Jesus than about most other prominent figures of his time. Though it is occasionally suggested that Jesus is a mythical character, no serious scholar takes that view. Although no original manuscripts of the New Testament exist, that is true of all ancient writings: Save for the occasional inscription in stone or metal, the originals have all decayed, so that ancient works owe their transmission to medieval scribes. The written sources for the life of Jesus are both more numerous and older than those for other ancients. For example, of ancient classics, the eight manuscripts of Thucydides' *Peloponnesian War* date from 1,300 years after Thucydides' death (a few fragments are earlier); the oldest manuscript of Caesar's *Gallic Wars* dates from 900 years after Caesar's death. In comparison, in addition to fragments from about 100 years after Jesus' death, there are two manuscripts of the (almost) entire New Testament dating from about 300 years after his death and thousands of manuscripts from 400 years after his death. The canon (the list of the approved books) of the New Testament was first set in the second century and was fully established, with only a few changes, in its present form, in the period 367 to 382 CE.

The canonical books include the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; 21 letters by disciples (mostly by Paul); and the Book of Revelation. The Gospels seem to have roots in oral tradition. The original manuscripts of the New Testament have all decayed but are generally thought to date from about 40 CE to about 90 CE. In addition to the canonical sources, many other gospels and epistles originated from about 150 CE onward; these have received much attention lately, for example, the Gospel of Judas and the Gospel of Thomas. A “Secret Gospel of Mark” appears to have been forged in the 20th century. Non-Christian sources for the life of Jesus include the Jewish historian Josephus and the Roman scholars Pliny, Tacitus, and Suetonius, though none provide more than a snippet of information.

Controversies about Jesus have been intense since the first century and remain intense in the 21st century, whereas the same could scarcely be said for Caesar or Thucydides. The only plausible reason that this should be so is that Jesus is presented as a character like no other—as the Son of God. Without that claim, his story would be like that of Claudius or Plato—of some interest but little concern. His followers also referred to him as the *Christos* or *Messiah* (Hebrew *mashiach*: “anointed one” or “king”). His most common title for himself was the mysterious “Son of Man,” or in nonsexist and accurate translation, “The Son of Humanity.”

Jesus was born about 4 BCE in Nazareth to a Galilean woman named Mary, who raised him with her husband Joseph, a carpenter. Jesus worked at his father’s trade and must have been accustomed to skilled labor. Very little is reliably known—speculations have abounded for nearly two millennia—about his childhood or youth. About the age of 30, he began to travel and preach in the land then ruled by an Israelite *tetrarch* (official), Herod Antipas or Herod the Younger, under the authority of the Roman emperor Tiberius and his prefect Pontius Pilate. He is reported to have performed many miracles and to have created deep divisions in the Jewish community between those who accepted his claims to uniqueness and those who considered them blasphemy. The Sadducees (the Jerusalem temple priesthood) secured his condemnation and crucifixion at the hands of the

Roman authorities about 30 CE, when Jesus was about 34 years old.

The above history is generally accepted. For Christians, the story goes on, for he is believed to have risen from the dead 3 days after his crucifixion. Theology on this point remains divided and fractionated. The philosophically prior question is, of course, whether the resurrection is possible or impossible, dividing scholars who affirm the traditional belief and those who deny it. Among the latter, numerous suggestions have been made—the apostles stole the body, the Jews or Romans stole it, the apostles hallucinated his resurrection, the story was simply made up soon after his death, and so on. A number of people from the second century onward have claimed that he never died at all because he was pure spirit and had only the appearance of a man; recently, lurid and factually unfounded speculations have appeared that he had offspring and a line of heirs down to the present. Most such views were known in one form or another to early Christians and were rejected. The creeds promulgated in the fourth and fifth centuries set the standards for future Christian belief: one God, whose only human son is Jesus, who is himself eternally God and who also became fully human for the sake of humanity. He was crucified, died, was buried, and rose from the dead; he will come again at the time when the human race perishes, judge all, and establish his eternal reign on earth.

Such beliefs, codified in the creeds, have their roots in the Gospels and Epistles of earliest Christianity. Their social effects quickly widened the difference between the Jews who accepted Jesus and those who did not, and between Jews and Gentiles. Acceptance of Jesus spread first mostly among the Jewish communities, especially in the Diaspora, and then among the Gentiles, until the latter outnumbered the former. By the second century, an organization of Christian communities under the leadership of bishops (overseers) was established. By the end of the fourth century, Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire. From that time onward (although the theory was vastly larger than the social reality), it was believed that a single Christian community existed, ruled by bishops, emperors, and popes under the authority of Christ.

Since the 16th century, and especially since the 19th, the fragmentation of the Christian community has allowed extremely diverse views of Jesus. The traditional view, preserved most fully in the Eastern Orthodox Church, is that he is the creator and ruler of the entire universe, the *kosmokrator*. He has also been considered a warrior leading his faithful in battle against evil; a kindly friend, meek and mild; a Gnostic dispensing secret truths; a sage who learned his ideas from Buddhists in Tibet; a democrat; a social revolutionary; a libertarian; a blasphemer; an entrepreneur; a fraudulent magician; a hallucination caused by psychedelic drugs; a socialist or communist; a lunatic; a liberal; the embodiment of the Platonic logos; a superhero or superstar; a moral philosopher; an esthete; a Zealot; an Essene; a liar; a nice guy executed for being nice; the son of a prostitute and a Roman soldier; a manifestation of the archetypal dying and rising god; and much more. In art and literature, he is variously portrayed as European, Middle Eastern, African, Latino, Korean, Chinese, and more.

The social effects of a figure so diversely construed will doubtless continue to be diverse. Elements in society have variously regarded him as the divine authority behind hereditary monarchy or the infallibility of the pope or, on the other hand, the divine authority behind revolutionary liberation movements. Today, Jews do not accept Jesus as the messiah. Jesus is recognized in Islam as one of the three great prophets, but Muslims absolutely deny his resurrection and divinity and regard Christianity as heresy. Many Hindus regard him as a sage while rejecting Christian interpretations of him. Conservatives everywhere tend to regard him as guarantor of their traditions, while liberals tend to regard him as a challenge to tradition. The adaptation of this figure to so many radically different views has made Jesus the most recognized and most influential person of all time. Frequent and constant efforts to discover “the real Jesus” will continue, and answers will continue to be molded by society as well as helping to mold it. There is, of course, a real Jesus, but it seems unlikely that agreement as to what that reality is, and what role it should play in society, will be reached.

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See also Christianity

Further Readings

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JEWISH DIASPORA

The word *diaspora*, Greek for “dispersion,” applies to the cultural scattering of a group of people as an outcome of voluntary migration or forced expulsion. Although the term is used to describe the cultural dispersions of many groups of people, particularly in recent times, *Diaspora* (capitalized) in the past has usually referred to the phenomenon of Jews or Jewish communities living outside the historic land of Israel, including the modern state of Israel after it was established in the mid-20th century. In Hebrew, the term *t’futsa* (“diaspora”) first appears in the Hebrew Bible (the Old Testament) in Jeremiah 25:34; it comes from the root “to scatter” or “to disperse,” but this particular term is not applied to the larger dispersion of Jews from their land prior to the early 20th century.

The more ancient Hebrew term used for the dispersion of the Jews, *galut* or *golah*, meaning “exile” or “captivity,” is found throughout the later books of the Bible. Initially, it referred to the forced relocation of the 10 tribes from the northern part of the land of Israel by Assyria in 722 BCE (2 Kings 17:23). Subsequently and more widely, it applies to the exile of most of the Judeans (later known as Jews) from the southern part the land of Israel to Babylon in 586 BCE. From its historical context relating specifically to the Babylonian Exile, the terms *galut/golah* in the rabbinic era (post 70 CE) began to refer to any community of Jews living outside the Holy Land wherever they may reside (Mishnah, Rosh Hashanah 2:4).

The Concept of Diaspora Versus Exile

It is no accident that until modern times, Jewish and Gentile sources used the term *exile* in reference

to the Jewish dispersion throughout the world. Diaspora is a more value-neutral term—either an involuntary expulsion or a voluntary migration. Exile, in contrast, clearly implies that wherever Jews live, their rightful place, their home, is in the land of Israel and thus, every other place is, by definition, not truly home. Moreover, exile indicates that Jews have been forced to live elsewhere—by God, based on historical circumstance, or for some other reason. It implies that given the opportunity, Jews would leave that place and return to their homeland. In all cases, exile was seen as a provisional form of existence that could or should be terminated.

Conceptually, Jewish dispersion took on many meanings throughout the ages. In the Bible, exile is portrayed as a punishment for the Israelites' sinfulness that led to a breach of the covenant with God. On their repentance, God would gather them from among the nations where they had been scattered and bring them into the land (see Deuteronomy 28:64, 30:3–5). The rabbis continue this pattern of thought by attributing the exile of the Jews to their commission of the three cardinal sins of idolatry, sexual immorality, and bloodshed.

However, in rabbinic thought, *galut* and the entire notion of Jewish dispersion additionally took on profoundly new and complex meanings. For the rabbis, *galut* transcended time and place to become a metaphysical condition that would lead to eventual redemption, as continually iterated by Jewish liturgy. They incorporated into key prayers a profound longing for the ingathering of the exiles (*qibbuts galuyyot*) from “the four corners of the earth,” an allusion to the messianic future when ultimately God “will assemble the outcast of Israel and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth” (Isaiah 11:12). Thus, exile is likened to Jewish homelessness, alienation, and imperfection, whereas restoration to the land denotes Jewish security, messianic redemption, and finally utopia. Even the afterlife, known as “the world to come,” is contrasted with exile and envisioned within the aforementioned paradigm.

Two distinct approaches to the dispersion of the Jews can be discerned in rabbinic and medieval Jewish thinking. While the rabbis accepted God's perceived judgment and sought a deliverance from the suffering and ignominy associated with exile, they paradoxically recognized positive outcomes

to it at one and the same time. They noted that discrimination and threat from without often served to bond Jews together and strengthen their identity (B. Meg. 14a). In addition, living among non-Jews gave Jews the opportunity to spread their monotheistic message to the nations of the world (B. Pes. 87b).

With the advent of the Enlightenment in the 17th and 18th centuries and the Emancipation for Jews process in the 18th and 19th centuries, the notion of exile underwent further development. Certain philosophers universalized the meaning of exile, such that it had nothing to do with the actual land of Israel or to the Jews specifically but, instead, suggested the imperfection of the human condition as a whole. Reform Jewish thinkers reinterpreted dispersion as a blessing (rather than a curse) that enabled the notion of ethical monotheism to be spread across the globe and the dispersed Jews to serve as a light unto their neighbors, helping correct social injustices. One thing is certain—the Jewish Diaspora made Judaism a world religion.

Closely associated with the idea of exile is the notion of the Jewish people's eventual and desired return to *Eretz Israel* (the Land of Israel). However, today a large percentage of Jews do not perceive themselves as living in exile, nor do they long to return to Israel. Many Jews at present feel equally, if not more, at home in the countries in which they live, and they would not characterize their residence there as exilic in any way. This is especially true in North America, where Jews have enjoyed unparalleled acceptance as well as political and economic advancement. Indeed, the majority call their host countries their permanent homes and, thus, consider themselves as living in the Diaspora rather than in exile. Nonetheless, there are multiple organizations within nearly every Diaspora Jewish community that support and maintain relations with Israel, the historic homeland of the Jewish people, a place where Jewish cultural and religious life thrives in unique ways and where today the largest Jewish community in the world resides.

A Diaspora Like No Other

The distinguishing feature between members of a diaspora and regular migrants is the communal

organization that preserves their ethnic/national identity and communal solidarity. While preservation of cultural identity can complement and contribute to the host countries of diasporic groups, sometimes it leads to severe hostility against those in the diasporic communities. At the same time, dual allegiance to both the former and the newly attained culture can cause tension within the dispersed community as well. These multiple relationships—both cooperative and conflicting—that arise between the Diaspora, its homeland, and its host country have influenced and continue to influence international politics and contribute to cultural growth and change.

A variety of factors make the Jewish Diaspora unique from other diasporas. First and foremost, the Jewish Diaspora has proven its extraordinary cultural resilience even while being subjected to sociopolitical and economic adversity and oppression throughout its history. Even after tragic conflicts, including prosecutions and expulsions, Jewish diasporic communities reemerged and revived in these same areas of past conflict. For Jews, exile from the land of Israel lasted almost 2,000 years—an amount of time no other cultural group in history has survived almost entirely apart from its physical homeland. Although the Jewish diasporic community spread out widely throughout this period of time and often was the subject of forces seeking their cultural and religious assimilation, Jews managed to remain a cohesive group that encompassed multiple continents, scores of cultures, and countless languages. Furthermore, the Jewish Diaspora has made unrivaled contributions to global civilization. These contributions are seen within diverse fields such as literature, the arts, and the sciences, as well as in other traditions, such as Christianity and Islam, whose cores emanate from Jewish monotheism.

Ever since the destruction of the First Temple more than 2,500 years ago, the Jewish people spread to all parts of the world. Not all migrations were due to forced exile; escape from famine, pursuit of prosperity, and the desire for greater sociopolitical freedoms were among the many reasons for emigration throughout the ages. There are two major results from this dispersion. First, Jews have influenced the host countries and cultures that surrounded them. Second, the countries and cultures in which the

Jews resided influenced them, creating distinct and often extremely diverse Jewish communities within the Diaspora. Correspondingly, as the world community becomes more united via modern political, economic, and social systems, so too the uniqueness of many Diaspora communities has been lost or diminished.

Scholars debate the issue of Jewish Diaspora and exile. Some, like Shaul Magid, argue that the Diaspora exists and allows for the development of Jews outside the state of Israel and apart from Zionist ideals. Others separate the concepts of exile and Diaspora entirely, stating that the Diaspora is not an exile but the result of it. The first prime minister of Israel, David Ben-Gurion, was among the many early Zionists who claimed that the Diaspora would inevitably vanish due to assimilation and acculturation, on the one hand, and emigration from the Diaspora to Israel, on the other. Although many Israelis are pessimistic about the continued existence of Jewish life in the Diaspora, particularly due to high rates of intermarriage and apathy regarding Jewish life and culture, not all Israelis share the Zionist ideal of a centralized national sovereignty and the negation or elimination of all Jewish life in the Diaspora. Indeed, anti-, non-, and post-Zionist views challenge the ideals that paved the way toward the creation of the state of Israel.

The Historical Diaspora in Ancient Times

Jewish communities have dispersed beyond the land of Canaan/Israel, beginning with the Assyrian exile in 722 BCE. Although there are some who claim to have discovered evidence of the modern existence of the Lost Tribes of Israel (see, e.g., www.britam.org or www.kulanu.org), most scholars agree that only those who lived in or escaped to Judah/Judea in the south were able to withstand the seeming total cultural assimilation of their northern brethren. A living diasporic community did not form until after the initial Babylonian deportations that took place in 597 BCE, which reached their peak with the destruction of the First Temple in 586 BCE and the enslavement of a large part of the Jewish population. In 538 BCE, Cyrus the Great allowed the Jews to return to their land, resulting in the revival of Jerusalem and the rebuilding of the Second Temple.

Following the Babylonian Exile, Jewish life and settlement outside the land of Israel continued to increase during the subsequent Hellenistic and Roman periods. Jewish settlements were found in Egypt and Syria, and significant populations were documented in Pergamum, Parthia, Cappadocia, Persia, Media, and Elam, among other areas. At this time, Jews constituted between 10% and 12% of the total population of Babylonia. Ranging occupationally from farmers to traders, they became an integral component of the Babylonian economy. Under Parthian rule, Babylonian Jewry enjoyed a moderate amount of freedom from the ruling government, which allowed them to worship freely as well as govern various aspects of their communities.

During the Second Temple period, Judaism became a scripture-centered religion. Jews embraced the viewpoint that the exile from their homeland was attributable to divine will and idealized the Jewish role among other nations. A system of material support, generally consisting of half-shekel donations, was established in which the Jewish Diaspora supported the Temple and its priests in Jerusalem. Spanning both the Roman and the Parthian regions, this system of transport was protected under Augustus Caesar and Marcus Agrippa, who instituted penalties for sacrilege in cases of attacks on the caravans. During this period, many Babylonian Jewish scholars settled in Eretz Israel after enrolling in its academies; others, however, brought their newly acquired knowledge back to Babylonia—the result of these endeavors being the eventual creation of the Babylonian Talmud.

The proselytizing movement within Judaism reached its height around the first century CE with the conversion of the rulers of Adiabene (present-day northern Iraq) to Judaism, which led to an increase in the Jewish population along the Euphrates. Similarly, according to the Jewish philosopher Philo of Alexandria (20 BCE to 50 CE), the Jewish population in Egypt spanned well over 1 million people during his time, with the city of Alexandria constituting one of the largest Jewish settlements in the world, with synagogues located in all five districts of the city. Toward the end of the century, conflicts and hostility began to arise between the Diaspora and its host countries.

Hostilities reached their peak in 66 CE, when the Jewish communities stopped dedicating sacrifices

for their Roman rulers. Although Romans tolerated religious minorities, the refusal to honor the emperors triggered resentment, suspicion, and fear (Grabbe, 2000, pp. 309–310). As riots broke out in areas of Jewish settlement such as Alexandria and parts of Syria, many Jews were massacred by the ruling armies. Relations only worsened after the Roman destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE and the newly imposed tax on the Jewish populace, which lasted until the fourth century.

Nevertheless, even after the destruction of the Temple, Jews within the Diaspora continued to financially support the religious patriarchate in the Land of Israel and to travel to Jerusalem for pilgrimage, worship, and study. Furthermore, a significant portion of the Jewish Diaspora at the time was located in Babylonia and was thus safe from Roman oppression. When Emperor Trajan threatened Jewry in Eretz Israel, however, antagonism brewed, escalating into the Bar Kokhba Revolt (132–135 CE) against Trajan's successor, Hadrian. This 3-year-long battle ended with the destruction of the Jewish population in Jerusalem and the south, forcing Jewish life to largely relocate to the Galilee—the remaining Jewish stronghold.

Ultimately, the Bar Kokhba Revolt further strengthened the Diaspora, particularly throughout the Mediterranean and Asia Minor, via the sale of Jewish captives from the war as slaves and the flight of many Jews from their war-torn homeland. The period between the third and fourth centuries saw a decline in relations between the large and powerful Babylonian community and the declining population in Eretz Israel, relations that came to an end with Hillel II's (fourth century) adaptation of the Hebrew calendar, formerly a provenance denied rabbinic leaders in the Diaspora.

The Emergence of Different Cultural Groups Within Jewry

From perhaps as early as the destruction of the Second Temple (70 CE) and subsequent exile and enslavement of a large number of Jews from their homeland, Jewish populations existed in Europe, especially within the Roman Empire. It is thought that Jewish merchants established themselves in towns and cities along the main routes of commerce. The first evidence of Jews along the Rhine

in Germany is found in a letter dated 321 CE from Emperor Constantine to the prefect of Cologne regarding special taxes on the Jews. There are also records of Jewish communities in Gaul (modern France). There, the diasporic communities were given legal recognition as well as religious, economic, and sociopolitical autonomy. Throughout this period, Christian missionary activity surpassed Jewish proselytism and laid the groundwork for future conflict.

It was during the early medieval period that scholars believe that diasporic Jewish communities began to differentiate themselves into distinctly different cultural groups, albeit all within Jewry. Prior to that time, Jews lived in many different lands but had not developed the distinctly different customs and differentiated self-perception that would later emerge. The Jewish cultural group tracing its existence back the farthest is known as Mizrahi or Oriental (Eastern) Jews. Among them are classed the Musta'rabs, Arabic-speaking Jews thought to be indigenous to the Middle East (mainly in Syria, Iraq, Egypt, and Eretz Israel), and the Ma'aravis or Maghrebis, living in North Africa and speaking North African Arabic dialects. Also ancient but not included within Mizrahi Jewry are Romaniot Jews, Greek-speaking Jews living around the eastern Mediterranean, and Italian Jews, whose communities date back to the early Roman empire.

In the early fourth century, two other distinctly Jewish groups began to emerge—Sephardic or Spanish Jewry and Ashkenazi or German Jewry. As a result of their distance from the main centers of Jewish life in Eretz Israel and in Babylonia, Sephardi and Ashkenazi Jews slowly began to develop their own distinctive customs, educational institutions, and rabbinical leadership. By contemporary times, Ashkenazi Jewry, which for the next 1,000 years was the smallest of these groups, had become the biggest, numbering approximately 80% of world Jewry.

Early Medieval Diaspora Under Islam

By the seventh century, the Jewish Diaspora was located mainly in Egypt, Syria, and Babylonia. Smaller communities were dispersed throughout the Middle East, North Africa, and along the Mediterranean Coast. Between 571 and 632 CE,

Islam, a new religion based on Jewish and Christian teachings, was founded. Emerging out of Arabia, Islam spread rapidly throughout the Middle East and North Africa. Under Islamic rule, Babylonian Jews gained protection, flourished economically, and from 700 to 900 CE, functioned as an almost entirely autonomous community. During this period, yeshivas or learning academies flourished from Babylonia to North Africa, prompting some scholars to trace the emergence of Islamic madrasas (religious schools) and the development of Shari'a (Islamic law) to influence from their Jewish counterparts.

In 711, Arabic armies completed their invasion of the Iberian Peninsula and established their rule over Spain. Once again, Jewish communities were given greater freedom and autonomy under Islamic rule than they had been granted under Christendom. By the year 900, Spanish Jews not only caught up in scholarship but in many aspects surpassed their Eastern counterparts, entering into what would become known as the Golden Age of Sephardic Jewry (Gerber, 1992, p. 28). Toward the end of the 10th century, Spain's Jewish community established a strong cultural identity that was manifested in the creation of official Hebrew grammar, Hebrew poetry, and the translation of important Greek and Arabic texts into Hebrew. As Spain increasingly became the center of Jewish scholarship, mystical traditions coalesced into the creation of the Kabbalah. Meanwhile, the Jewish community of Babylon slowly declined as Jews increasingly moved out of the Middle East and into Spain and Italy from approximately 1050 onward (Johnson, 1987, p. 183). With the destruction of the 'Abbāsid Caliphate in Baghdad in 1258, Babylonian Jewry lost its preeminence in the Jewish world as Jewish population centers shifted elsewhere.

After nearly three centuries of cultural flourishing, many Spanish Jews were forced to migrate north to Christian lands or south and east to Muslim lands in order to escape the intolerance of non-Muslims exhibited by the Almohades conquest of Cordoba in 1148. Rabbi Moshe ben Maimon (Maimonides), the famous Jewish philosopher and physician, experienced anti-Jewish persecution firsthand when the Jewish community was given the choice of conversion to Islam, death, or exile. His family, along with most of the

Jewish community, chose exile, fleeing Spain—his birthplace—and ultimately settling in Egypt (Seltzer, 1980, p. 393).

Medieval Diasporas Under Christianity

Rome's religious toleration of the Jews ended when it became Christian around 350 CE. While ecclesiastical legislation against Jews steadily increased throughout the centuries, early medieval Christian society was relatively tolerant while the church was distracted by internal heresies and challenges of its own. It is estimated that between 800 and 1100 CE, 1.5 million Jews made their home in Christian Europe. They occupied a unique place outside the feudal system that ruled Christians, and thus, they were at first spared many of the feudal disadvantages that made life miserable for most Christians. For centuries, they were protected by royal and ecclesiastical powers because of the vital role they played in the fields of medicine, finance, and administration (Ben-Sasson, 1976, pp. 400–401, 409–413).

All this began to change when in 1096 Pope Urban II initiated the first Crusade against the Muslims in the Holy Land, during which entire communities of Jews in the Rhineland were slaughtered by Christians marching eastward. Faced with the choice of conversion, many European Jews opted for martyrdom instead. The Crusades that followed also resulted in continued loss of Jewish lives throughout western and eastern Europe, but none of the subsequent Crusades were as damaging and tragic as the first. As a result, Jewish-Christian relations only worsened. The large-scale movements between western and eastern Europe, triggered in part by the Crusades, eventually led to increased trade and, consequently, increased cultural exchange. In this respect, the contributions of the Jewish Diaspora were priceless. The Hebrew translations of Greek and Arabic scholarship in philosophy, medicine, and math spread throughout Europe and were in turn translated into Latin, transforming knowledge in every field in which this took place (Taitz, Henry, & Tallan, 2003).

As Christianity gained momentum and the Roman Catholic Church was able to consolidate its power, anti-Semitism spread. This coincided with the creation and rise of the Christian middle class, who felt threatened by economic competition

from the Jews and sought to eliminate them from towns and cities across Europe. By the 12th and 14th centuries, Dominican and Franciscan friars were publicly preaching sermons against Jews, and local ecclesiastical authorities were using religious art, plays, and sermons to incite the general populace toward greater and greater anti-Semitism. As a result, massacres of Jews erupted all over Europe, some of the worst taking place in the Rhineland, England, Franconia, and France. Additionally, beginning in 1290, when the Jews of England were formally expelled from the country en masse, a wave of expulsions against Jews took place for the next 200 years in various provinces and kingdoms in western Europe, often as a result of struggles between various powerbrokers within Christian secular and ecclesiastical bodies.

In Spain, conflicts arose as Christians attempted to convert Jews in the 1390s and 1490s—resulting in Christian hostility against *conversos* (“new Christians”). When Christians gained control of Spain in 1492, King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella forcibly exiled the Jews (as well as any remaining Muslims) who would not convert to Christianity. It is estimated that between 400,000 and 800,000 Spanish Jews migrated out of Spain northward into Navarre and Provence, south into North Africa, east to countries around the Mediterranean basin that were part of the Ottoman Empire, and west to Portugal, where they were forced to convert less than a decade later.

Between Anti-Semitism and Enlightenment

The Jews who left the Middle East but settled in central and northern Europe instead of Spain created autonomous communities run by religious leaders. Prior to the 14th century, these communities were able to steer clear of the Christian government as long as they met its tax requirements. However, European Jews' economic success was soon frowned on—mainly due to their exclusive ability to charge interest on loans, which was forbidden to Christians by canon law. Encouraged by church authorities, violence against Jews was commonplace—the perpetrators justifying their actions by citing false rumors and blaming Jewry for occurrences such as the Black Death. The cycle of accusation, violence, cancellation of debt, and the following expulsions pushed European Jewry

eastward and south to Poland, Bohemia, Italy, the Balkans, and what would become Russia.

The Balkan Jewish populations, at the time part of the Ottoman Empire, experienced forced migrations into newly acquired territories whenever the Ottomans conquered new areas, such as Salonika in 1430, Constantinople in 1453, and Rhodes in 1522. The Spanish and Portuguese Jews, too, migrated to these territories when turned away from other destinations after the initial expulsion and throughout the 1500s. Records show that the Ottoman sultans were quite pleased with the trades and skills the Jewish immigrants brought with them (Lewis, 1984, pp. 123–139).

The Jewish population under the Ottoman Empire not only grew more massive with the empire's annexation of Iraq, Syria, and Eretz Israel but also represented several distinct groups with their own languages and traditions, indicating just how heterogeneous the Diaspora had become since 597 BCE. The Spanish Jews, known as Sephardim, were especially successful in preserving their languages and traditions in the Ottoman lands. Within three generations, their ritual observances were adopted in the majority of the synagogues, even by those Jews who were native to the area and did not trace their roots to Spain.

Beginning in the mid-14th century, Jews expelled from various German cities had begun to migrate to northern Italy. When the Count of Milan issued a charter permitting German and Italian Jewry to trade, the Jews were assigned designated land in which to live and thereafter engaged in trade and banking occupations. Spanish and Portuguese Jews also fled the persecutions taking place in their homelands and settled in Italy. Ashkenazim, Sephardim, and Levantine Jews all sought refuge in Italy, each group bringing their own synagogues into their new country. Although experiencing temporary expulsion from various cities throughout Italy, Italian Jews, for the most part, enjoyed religious and economic freedom (Abrahams, 1985, pp. 400–401).

The period of the Italian Renaissance was a positive one for Italian Jews, who took part in its cultural and intellectual growth via contributions to art, literature, and music. As Italian women during this period inched forward toward equality with men, so too did Jewish women—in some instances even being educated as well as men

(Taitz, Henry, & Tallan, 2003, p. 105). However, as the Renaissance concluded, Jewish conditions took a turn for the worse once more, as manifested in the creation of the first Jewish ghetto, a walled-in quarter specifically to separate the Jewish community from others, in 1516 in Venice. About 50 years later, Jews were prohibited from all monetary occupations other than selling used clothing. In the following decades, Italian Jews migrated north, where they were again restricted to living in ghettos under oppressive legislation.

In the 16th and 17th centuries, a privileged few among the most wealthy segment of Ashkenazi Jewry were given the opportunity to serve in royal courts as “court Jews”—creditors who, in exchange for greater privileges, offered a variety of financial services to the rulers of various localities throughout central and eastern Europe. Most court Jews received the benefits of living outside the ghetto and to their credit worked on multiple occasions to gain favors for their Jewish communities (Ben-Sasson, 1976, pp. 736–738).

As the Ottoman Empire began to decline in the late 16th century, so too did the Jewish communities—both economically and in terms of status—a situation compounded by the harsher discriminatory laws promulgated by the Ottoman sultan Murad III subjugating the empire's Jews. Jewish communities fell into poverty and in turn experienced a decline in both secular and religious education. A new interest in mysticism sprang up, where the persecutions that the Jews were experiencing throughout the Diaspora were interpreted as confirmations that the End of Days was approaching. Thus, when the Ottoman-born Jew Shabbetai Zvi of Izmir traveled throughout the Middle East in the 17th century claiming that he was the Messiah, he gained a large following, not only in the regions he visited but among Ashkenazi Jewry, who themselves were in dire straits and sought relief from persecution and poverty. When he converted to Islam on pain of death by the Turkish authorities, he left many Jews disillusioned and crushed in spirit throughout the world (Lewis, 1984, pp. 140–147).

Concurrently, despite the order of expulsion in 1492, many Jews had decided to stay in Spain and Portugal as crypto-Jews (Jews disguised as Christians), while others boarded ships to recently discovered lands in the New World, where they

were able to practice Judaism openly from 1541 through 1571, when the Inquisition unfortunately reached the Americas as well. The Inquisition continued well into the 1600s, spreading throughout both Central and South America. Yet because economic opportunity for everyone was so favorable in New Spain and travel was so hazardous and costly, many crypto-Jews chose to assimilate completely instead of moving to lands beyond the Inquisition's reach (Seltzer, 1980, pp. 502–505).

Having been pushed eastward from their ancestral homes, Jews began to find a more tolerant home in Poland from the mid-14th century onward. By the 17th century, the Ashkenazi Jewish Diaspora (those who traced their origins to Germany and spoke a German Jewish dialect known as Yiddish) was mainly located east of the Rhine River valley, with a minority still living in western Europe. Jews were found in both rural and urban areas and had unique roles in their host countries. Polish Jews were spread out among all classes, while Ukrainian Jews mainly occupied the middle classes. The 16th and early 17th centuries were known as the Golden Age of Polish Jewry, when Jews were allowed more economic freedoms than they had known in their former habitations, and internally, they established great academies of higher learning, which led to a thriving intellectual society (Ben-Sasson, 1976, pp. 639–644, 654–656).

In the New World, the Jewish community of Brazil grew prosperous under the newly established Dutch rule. When the colony was granted freedom to trade, Jews from all parts of Europe migrated to Brazil. Their occupations involved everything from managing sugar plantations to trading precious stones. However, when the Dutch lost the colony to the Portuguese, the Inquisition was reinstated with full force once more. Consequently, a small group of Jewish refugees managed to escape the oppression and, after a string of unlucky incidents, ended up in New Amsterdam, today's New York City (Gerber, 1992, p. 206).

By the mid-18th century, Jewish congregations had been established in the colonies of New York, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, and South Carolina. By 1776, Jews were living side by side with Christians and by and large shared equal rights. With the advent of equal rights came the struggle against acculturation that their European brethren faced as the Jews in the New World tried to maintain their

cultural and religious identity. Furthermore, as part of an amalgamation of a variety of Jewish communities coming from various parts of Europe and Asia, they had to come to terms with the differences among themselves and their traditions and establish a united community. Despite their myriad differences, American Jews were able to establish and maintain functional and prosperous communities. Nevertheless, the Jewish communities still lacked the unity they had experienced in Europe (Johnson, 1987, pp. 279–280).

In the 18th and 19th centuries, as anti-Jewish pogroms (government-sponsored massacres of Jews) spread throughout the East, the Ashkenazi Jewish Diaspora began shifting westward once more to countries where the Enlightenment intellectually and the Industrial Revolution economically were changing worldviews. Jews were now accepted in societies where new philosophies such as humanism and deism were being explored. Within the Jewish community, this cultural flowering was known as the *Haskalah*. In this new climate of religious tolerance, Jews across the Western Diaspora were slowly given more rights (Ben-Sasson, 1976, pp. 780–789).

In the 1750s, a new religious movement in Judaism was born in eastern Poland, known as Hasidism (based on the Hebrew word for “piety”). Abandoning the stress placed on scholarship, Hasidism focused on simple devotion to God, acts of loving kindness, and a merging of mysticism, exclusively the provenance of the Jewish elites, into everyday life. Although several great rabbinical leaders were at odds with Hasidic Jews at its start, the two groups eventually saw past their differences to discourage what they saw as even more of a threat from the negative influences of the Enlightenment movement. In the enlightened German Diaspora, some Jewish women had achieved quite a high public status as “salon Jewesses,” or hostesses who would set up their living rooms to entertain guests from a wide variety of backgrounds for intellectual conversations spanning a range of topics such as art, politics, science, and philosophy (Taitz, Henry, & Tallan, 2003).

After approximately 400 years, Jews were allowed to migrate back to England. Though their immigration was approached with mistrust by the English, their skill in trade was appreciated as it significantly improved the economy. In Germany,

the relationship between Jews and their host governments was quite different from what it was in other places in western Europe. In Prussia, Jews experienced relatively good living conditions under the leadership of the Jewish philosopher Moses Mendelssohn. Mendelssohn not only represented but played a significant role in shaping the “New Jew,” one who was both religiously observant and well educated in secular studies. In contrast, other parts of the Austro-Hungarian Empire held a large population of uneducated Jews to whom Emperor Joseph II offered free education and citizenship rights in an attempt to assimilate them into the general, non-Jewish culture.

As the 18th and 19th centuries progressed and Jews were accepted as citizens in more and more countries within western Europe, the Jewish religious leadership began to lose its power over the community to the secular governments of the host countries. Within the Jewish communities of England, France, and Germany, a number of different responses arose to the challenges posed by Enlightenment thinking; the decline in rabbinic power; greater economic, political, and social freedoms; and greater exposure to non-Jewish culture.

One such response was the Reform movement within Judaism, which developed in Germany in the early part of the 19th century. While tentative in its attitude toward change at first, in time Reform Judaism advocated granting women more equality within Jewish religious life, decreasing elements in Jewish law and culture that emphasized Jewish distinctiveness from non-Jews, and using secular scholarship of religious literature, particularly regarding the Bible, to change religious customs and practices as well as thinking. These changes were met with fierce resistance by many, both within and outside Germany, spawning the creation of further branches within Judaism, which are known today as Ultra-Orthodoxy, Modern Orthodoxy, and Conservative Judaism (Ben-Sasson, 1976, pp. 834–846).

As Taitz, Henry, and Tallan (2003) have described, the Jewish Enlightenment movement in eastern Europe incorporated religious ideals, and in addition to encouraging assimilation into Russian culture, it promoted a focus on Hebrew and Yiddish literature and gave birth to philosophies such as Jewish Socialism and Zionism.

Ironically, although in 1791 French Jewry was granted citizenship rights by the revolutionary assembly and Italian ghettos were temporarily opened, anti-Semitism in western Europe seemed only to grow as the 19th century progressed. However, the bulk of the European Jewish Diaspora lived by then in eastern Europe, in what are now contemporary Hungary, Poland, Ukraine, Russia, and the Baltic States. There Jews were restricted in many ways economically, politically, and socially, but internally, their culture thrived. However, by the 1880s, the political situation once again turned bleak with the government’s enactment of further anti-Semitic legislation and its support of pogroms that led to the widespread killing of Jews in various locales. As a result, when they were able, many Jews, particularly the young and adventurous, left for North America, where from 1882 to 1914 approximately 2 million eastern European Jews emigrated. Some also chose to emigrate to the Land of Israel, then known as Palestine, to rebuild Jewish life in their ancestral homeland.

Modern Diaspora

Today, the Jewish Diaspora, numbering around 15 million, is concentrated primarily in North America, France, the Former Soviet Union, Latin America, and Israel, representing far fewer countries and more distinctive cultural communities than even a century ago. This is due to a variety of historical factors, two of which stand out. First, the Holocaust perpetrated by Nazi Germany in collaboration with local governments and populations led to the murder of 6 million Jews throughout western and eastern Europe as well as the Balkan countries around the Mediterranean (one third of world Jewry at that time). Within 12 years (1933–1939, when Jews sought to escape from Nazi persecution, and then 1939–1945, when they were slaughtered en masse), Jewish Diaspora communities and their rich cultural heritage, some of which had existed for well over a millennium, were completely wiped out. Refugees and survivors of the Holocaust, who migrated mainly to North and South America, were able to bring some of their culture with them. However, they could not reestablish the breadth and depth of what had existed before. Another consequence of the Holocaust was

the decimation of the two main languages of European Jewish culture—Yiddish (a German Jewish dialect) and Ladino (a Spanish Jewish dialect)—in which much literature and poetry had been produced.

The second event that altered modern Jewish Diaspora life was the emergence of the state of Israel in 1948 as a result of the 1947 United Nations (UN) resolution dividing Palestine into two separate countries for Jews and Arabs. The Arab nations surrounding Palestine did not accept the UN resolution and, on withdrawal of British troops, attacked the country, seeking to place all of it under Arab control. After fierce fighting, the Arab armies were vanquished, and Jews controlled more territory than they had been originally granted. Egypt controlled the Gaza Strip and Jordan, the West Bank, preventing Palestinian Arabs from establishing their own country.

As a result of the Arab defeat, waves of anti-Semitism—some purely mob violence and some government sponsored—arose in Muslim countries, such as Iraq, Syria, Egypt, and other North African nations. Jews there felt their lives were in peril and sought to leave en masse to the relative safety of Israel, often the only country willing to welcome them. In addition, although protected from large-scale violence, Jews from Morocco were nevertheless inspired by the possibility of returning to their ancient homeland after 2,000 years in exile and emigrated in waves throughout the decades following the establishment of the Jewish state. Thus, from 1948 to the 1980s, Jewish Diaspora communities that had existed for 2,000–3,000 years or more (in Iraq, as a primary example) were emptied of Jews in just a few short decades as approximately 1 million Levantine or Eastern Jews emigrated to Israel. While their distinctive cultures still exist there, like the Ashkenazi Jews in North and South America, they too are slowly losing their particular heritage as younger generations assimilate into mainstream modern Israeli culture.

Today the preeminent Diaspora culture is American Jewry due to its size, 2.5–3 million, and its prosperity. Following World War II, as America on the whole became a more open and progressive society vis-à-vis its minority populations, American Jews thrived in an era of full equal rights and unfettered access to higher education and economic

opportunity. American Jews are prominently represented in every significant field of economic and cultural endeavor and increasingly in American politics as well. However, with an intermarriage rate between Jews and non-Jews of 52%, some wonder how much longer distinctive Jewish life and culture will thrive given this challenge.

Zion Zohar

See also Ashkanaz; Christianity; Halakha and Shari'a; Hebrew; Islam; Israel; Judaism

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JIHAD

Jihad in contemporary usage is a contested term, often translated in quite different ways as either an Islamic “holy war” conducted against any “infidel” broadly conceived of as a “non-Muslim,” or as a peaceful striving against the self as a form of spiritual reformation toward personal and communal peace in opposition to more bellicose motives. Themes of self-sacrifice, or martyrdom in the path of God, are often associated with these interpretations.

These interpretations are narrow dimensions of the full etymological and historical signification of the word, derived from the Arabic trilateral root *j-h-d*, signifying a striving toward a specific objective. The semantic field of the root indicates its broader usages within Arabic social, political, and legal discourse. Terms such as *ijtihād* (the work of scholars and independent jurists for solutions to legal problems) and *jahd* (strain, endeavor, attempt) suggest that popular conceptualizations of *jihad* as either a political or a spiritual enterprise are artificial binaries that obscure the historical formations of the concept as an instrument of legal thought, social doctrine, and political duty. As a legal concept, jihad is drawn from Islamic textual authorities such as the Qur'an, the Hadith, and the Sunna (the sayings and actions of Prophet Muhammad) by scholars, commentators, and jurists-prudents to form regulations and strategies for four types of sociopolitical activity, often related to warfare: (1) the expansion of territory, (2) the consolidation of hegemony, (3) the protection of property, (4) and the sustenance of the community. Prior to the revelation of the Qur'an beginning in 610 CE, jihad does not appear to have had any specific belligerent meanings, and of the 36 relevant Qur'anic references to the term, less than one third have any particular reference to warfare. The most cited of these, in both historical and contemporary contexts, is the "Verse of the Sword," from the fifth *aya* (verse) of the ninth sura (*al-Tawbah*, Repentance). Verses discussing warfare, such as the "Verse of the Sword," required substantial textual interpretation to be formed as authoritative legal doctrine.

The Qur'anic conceptualization of jihad constructs a complex tension between violent exercises against a foe and spiritual exercises focused on the self, all of which are directed for the sake of God toward God's cause. It is an incumbent duty that the struggle (jihad) of the believer must always be in alignment with the will of God whether in combat or in spiritual matters. This jihad occurs as both a gift of the believer to God—a freely given self to God's cause—and a form of commercial transaction between the believer and God. Prior to any specifically belligerent understandings, jihad, as a struggle, is a gift performed for God that generates a particular recompense available to all believing Muslims insofar as the jihad is appropriately practiced.

In the lifetime of Prophet Muhammad, following early persecutions, there were several open conflicts and battles waged between the emerging Muslim community and local tribes of pagan Arabs, Jews, and Christians. Though these battles were often minor skirmishes and raids, major engagements, such as those of Badr (624 CE), Uhud (625 CE), Khandaq (627 CE), Mecca (630 CE), and Hunayn (630 CE), indicated the emergence of combat as a legitimate behavior for adherents of the faith. Sections of the Qur'an such as those found within the 2nd (*al-Baqarah*), 8th (*al-Anfal*), 9th (*al-Tawbah*), and 22nd (*al-Hajj*) *suras* discuss the legitimacy of killing those who present a threat to the believing community.

The tradition of the sayings and actions of the Prophet demonstrate a nuanced understanding of this combat. A tradition narrated on the authority of Abu Hurayra, one of the companions of the Prophet, and compiled by al-Bukhari indicates that according to Muhammad, jihad in the cause of God was second only to personal belief in God and his messenger, in religious practice. The death of a *mujahid*, one who participates in jihad, is considered to bestow a reward for martyrdom in the path of God. There were, however, particular rules to be obeyed. Among these rules were prohibitions against the murder of women and children, the necessity of an open invitation to non-Muslims to embrace Islam, and the opportunity for peoples of the Book (e.g., Jews, Christians, and Zoroastrians) to pay the *jizya* (poll tax) in lieu of fighting. The discussions of the jihad within the Qur'an seem to indicate that jihad itself was a religious practice that during times of social and political conflict might also feature a distinctly martial purpose.

Within the broad corpus of Sunnī legal thought, most succinctly expressed by the four *madhāhib* (schools) of Hanafi, Mālikī, Shafi'i, and Hanbali jurisprudence, the doctrine of jihad is discussed as a form of warfare. In his influential ninth-century thesis on Islamic law, al-Shafi'i (d. 820 CE) systematized readings of the Qur'an and Hadith to form a method of legal theory. Although concerned with jihad, the focus of al-Shafi'i contextualized the theory of warfare as one instrument toward preserving a greater social order. For several centuries following the revelation of the Qur'an, legal scholars viewed jihad as a means of propagating the faith through legitimated and structured methods

of combat and governance. Such structures were often discussed in manuals of jihad (*kitab al-jihad*).

Through Islamic history, and into the present moment, the question of jihad has often dealt with issues of personal duty (*fard'ayn*) contrasted with collective duty (*fard kifaya*), proper Islamic governance, and issues of declaring Muslims of unbelief (*takfir*). General understandings of jihad express it as a communal obligation, incumbent on the individual only when an extraordinary situation exists. This is the opinion of many Shi'a communities that view jihad as communally obligatory. However, since within these communities only the imam may call for offensive jihad against the non-Muslim world, and the imam has gone into occultation, only defensive jihad remains acceptable. The Shi'i, however, share the Sunnī understanding of jihad as a personal struggle against inner desires and impurities regardless of external threat.

Muslim responses to the crusading Christian armies (ca. 1096–1291) from the West and the invading Mongol hordes (ca. 1200–1300) from the East influenced new interpretations and applications of theories of jihad. Theorists from Andalus (Islamic Spain) such as Ibn Hazm (d. 1064) and Ibn Qudama al-Maqdisi (d. 1223) revised prior theories of jihad to address the changing political conditions. Most notable of this period, however, was Taqi al-Din Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328), who, though often labeled a cynical critic of Muslim governments, issued a number of influential fatwas (legal rulings) detailing the process of *takfir*—a proclamation of the illegitimate status of Mongols who had converted to Islam. For Ibn Taymiyya, any individual proclaiming loyalty to the faith must demonstrate this loyalty by engaging in jihad in the path of God. Those who were unwilling to fight, including government officials, were considered to be in a state of disbelief and open to violent action.

This ability to pronounce Muslims as unbelievers (*kafirun*) through the process of *takfir* remained highly influential in the colonial and postcolonial period. The Egyptian Muslim intellectual Sayyid Qutb (d. 1966), in his influential work *Ma'alim fi al-Tariq* (Milestones), describes jihad as a method used to abrogate all authorities, organizations, and ideologies—Muslim or non-Muslim—deemed to be in a state of ignorance (*jahiliyyah*) of the Qur'an and its message. For Qutb, jihad has no

relationship to modern forms of warfare but is rather bound to the nature of Islam and its role in the world. This is a statement readily accepted by Osama bin Laden (d. 2011), who, under the tutelage of spiritual advisors Abdullah Azzam and Ayman al-Zawahiri, had cited both Ibn Taymiyya and Sayyid Qutb in his frequent expositions for his al Qaeda organization on the necessity of jihad against Saudi Arabia, the United States, both the state of Israel and the Jewish people, and the broader Western world.

Within Shi'i political organizations such as Hezbollah (the Party of God), which originated in Lebanon between 1982 and 1985 CE, jihad is not envisioned as a global war against the enemies of Islam but rather as a struggle, exceeding military conflict, undertaken as both a defensive resistance against specific threats and an edifying act meant to ameliorate and control harmful human desire. Naim Qassem, Deputy Secretary-General of Hezbollah, suggests that as a personal duty it is impossible to differentiate the act of jihad in terms of religion or politics. The act might have political objectives, such as Hezbollah's stated aim of resisting Israeli political objectives, or religious objectives, such as the objective of martyrdom and its recompense sought by a *mujahid*.

Interpretations of jihad as a violent act, and its practice as such, have often resulted in debates over the definition of suicide, martyrdom, terrorism, and legitimate violence. Contemporary jurists such as Egyptian Shaykh Yusuf al-Qaradawi (b. 1926 CE) have warned of the illegitimacy of religious extremism—in the form of bigotry, commitment to excessiveness, and the overburdening of others (including non-Muslims)—and have sought to reclaim the authority of the jurist from those considered extremist.

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See also Cosmic War and Cosmic Conflict; Halakha and Shari'a; Islam; Islamism (Political Islam); War on Terrorism

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JOHN PAUL II (1920–2005)

John Paul II was the 262nd pope of the Roman Catholic Church (1978–2005). He was the first Polish pope and the first non-Italian to be elected Bishop of Rome in 455 years (since the Dutch pope Hadrian VI, 1522–1523). At age 58, he was the youngest man to be elected to the office and had the second longest pontificate after Pius IX in 1846. He was born Karol Wojtyła on May 18, 1920, in the small working-class town of Wadowice. As a student, he was both a poet and an actor, a talent he used to his advantage in his time as a media figure on the world stage. A devout young Catholic, he worked as a laborer during World War II. By 1942, Wojtyła began concentrating on priestly studies in a clandestine seminary, forced underground during the Nazi occupation of Poland. He had hoped to become a solitary monastic but was ordained a diocesan priest in 1946 in a country marked by years of war and then domination as a satellite of Soviet communism. After study in Rome, he returned to Poland for pastoral duties and seminary teaching. Fiercely opposed to totalitarianism, he diplomatically worked with the communists in Poland, determined to eradicate their power. He worked up the hierarchical ranks and became Archbishop of Krakow in January 1964. He particularly used his influence as pope to support workers' democratic rights as well as civil and religious liberties in his native Poland. Given his

public support for Eastern European pleas for freedom from Soviet domination, he was an essential catalyst in the chain of events leading to the collapse of the Soviet Empire.

Elected pope after the short reign of John Paul I, he took the name John Paul II, ostensibly to indicate his interest in maintaining the spirit of reform begun by his predecessors, John XXIII and Paul VI, who called and carried out the Second Vatican Council. Although committed to the spirit of Vatican II, much of his papacy contained or halted the ideas and practices of progressive Catholics who worked for the renewal of the Church that the Council inspired. For this reason, while seen as a spiritual leader and social reformer who advocated the rights of people to live without fear, to work freely, and to practice their religion without opposition, John Paul II's papal legacy is conservative and restorationist. He was a man of contradictions: publicly warm and charismatic but in matters of faith, doctrine, and obedience to central authority, rigid and unyielding. For example, he ordered that various contemporary theological matters, such as the ordination of women to the priesthood or permission for male priests to marry, not be considered or even discussed by Roman Catholics. The worldwide scandal of child sexual abuse by priests, abetted by a hierarchy of enabler bishops, came to light publicly during his administration. John Paul II's response to the scandal has been criticized by some Catholics as ineffectual.

John Paul II became the most traveled pope in history. He visited 129 foreign countries as an international figure supporting human rights, political freedom, and the sanctity of life from conception through debilitating illness to death, a point he exemplified in his own painful and public struggles with Parkinson's disease. He also survived assassination attempts in 1981 and 1982.

This pontiff made important strides for dialogue with other world religious traditions, becoming the first pope to visit a synagogue (Rome, 1986) and a mosque (Damascus, 2001). His lengthy papacy made him a powerful and influential figure for several generations of Catholics. His successor, Benedict XVI, quickly moved John Paul II into consideration for Roman Catholic sainthood.

Leonard Norman Primiano

See also Benedict XVI; Christianity; Encyclicals; Liberation Theology; Poland; Politics and Religion; Religious Dialogue; Roman Catholicism; Vatican City State and the Holy See; Vatican Council, Second

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JORDAN

In Jordan, a landlocked Middle Eastern kingdom bordered by Israel/Palestine, Syria, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia, Sunnī Islam is the official religion of the monarch and the state; however, legal existence is granted to a dozen Christian denominations. Officially, 96% of the population is Sunnī Muslim, while Christians amount to 4%. Religious affiliation is a compulsory element of the civil status of all Jordanian citizens, but freedom of belief and religious practice are guaranteed by law. Jordan constitutes an interesting example where, under an Islamic order of religious coexistence and pluralism, the state has carved a communal space for the expression of several faiths and the performance of their respective religious duties, while a relatively neutral space is maintained for political participation. Islam is regulated by state institutions that exert control over the building and management of mosques and the appointment of imams (preachers) through a specialized ministry—the Ministry of *Awqaf* or public religious endowments). Recognized Christian denominations have full rights to build churches and maintain educational, social, and charitable institutions. They are autonomous with respect to internal matters and the personal status and family affairs of their members.

Political participation is guaranteed to all citizens on equal terms, and representation of Christians is ensured through quotas for parliamentary elections.

From the 1950s to the 1970s, the Hashemite monarchy supported the social and religious activities of the Muslim Brotherhood to contain the development of opposition political ideologies with a secular or atheistic orientation. On the other hand, Jerusalem's Muslim and Christian sites, under Hashemite rule between 1948 and 1967, were a major aspect of Jordan's official national identity and religious pluralism. After these sites fell under Israeli occupation following the 1967 war, Jordan maintained an official role vis-à-vis Muslim sites, a role contested by the Palestinian National Authority. As of the 1980s, and following internal and regional dynamics, the public sphere and space in Jordan experienced Islamization through an increase in the proportion of mosques, the development of media and educational programs with a religious content, enforcement of the fast of Ramadan in public places, and the activities of Islamic charitable societies and political parties. However, the political inclusion of the mainstream Islamist party, the Islamic Action Front, and its ability to articulate agendas on religious terms have produced ideological moderation rather than the radicalization witnessed in other national contexts. To balance the public tokens of Islamization, the regime has developed its own conception of moderate Islam that it promotes inside and outside the Islamic world. The monarchy is actively engaged in interfaith dialogue with Christians and Jews worldwide and defends religious pluralism at home under the guardianship of its version of modernized Islam.

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See also Islamism (Political Islam); Israel; Middle East; Muslim Brotherhood; Palestine; Politics and Religion; Religion and State; Sunnī Islam

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JUDAISM

Judaism has become a global religion, though some might say that it is the only religion of the three Abrahamic faiths to become global unwillingly and against its nature. While Christianity and Islam expanded their boundaries from their humble beginnings to mighty empires and from a restricted locale to worldwide expansion, Judaism was forcefully expelled from its place of origin, dispersed to all four corners of the world by the Roman conquerors of Judea, and reluctantly turned into a wide-reaching universal religion. Judaism was cultivated and maintained wherever Jewish exiles settled and made their home. Their religion went with them wherever they wandered in their global quest for autonomy and tranquility to practice their own community life. Unlike the proselytizing and missionary character of Christianity and Islam, Judaism characteristically is an exclusive faith that does not seek converts and does not aspire for endless expansion. Its rules of admitting new believers (the process of *giyur*) are deliberately strict and unattractive to repel prospective disciples from joining. If permitted, conversion must be for its own sake or due to a genuine change of beliefs and not out of convenience.

The Diaspora

The enforced dispersion of the Jews after the botched insurrection against the Romans and the burning of Jerusalem and the Holy Temple in 70 CE, entailed many enormous changes for the expelled survivors. One major ramification was the imposed transformation of the character of the Jewish community in exile with regard to members' affiliation and the basis of attachment to the collective. Due to the termination of Jewish independence or self-rule, Jews were compelled to follow the directives of the local authorities within each location they settled. Instead of natural and, later, voluntary communities in which Jews cultivated their religious and cultural unique identity from birth and then continued and perpetuated their association by free choice, in the Diaspora, the belonging to the community became enforced and compulsory. The rulers of ancient Mesopotamia,

Catholic Spain, or Medieval Ukraine, as examples of large concentrations of exiled Jewry, had a similar political preference: to designate and isolate "their" Jews in separate and segregated social enclaves amenable to rigorous control and manipulation. This situation meant that the Jew as an individual citizen did not exist and his or her sole reality was expressed as a component of the community. The personal identity was submerged and taken over by the collective identity. Furthermore, since out of expediency, the hosting authorities usually empowered the Jewish governance to levy taxes on their people, these local community elites accumulated a tremendous amount of power and command over their constituencies, rendering the Jewish community all-inclusive and self-sustaining in every possible walk of life. Hence, while the globalization of Christianity and Islam meant dispatching individual believers to personally expand the horizons of their religion and encounter new worlds and faiths to be subdued, the globalization of Judaism was a humbling experience with introverted and reclusive consequences that made the Jewish communities ever more pestilent and alien in the eyes of their host nations.

However, these dismal conditions of loss of political sovereignty and jurisdiction and total economic dependency created the necessity to adjust and generated new types of Jewish community life, institutions, and leadership. Adaptation yielded innovative approaches and an emphasis on community building and self-sustenance. Due to the absence of a unified political center and a single hierarchical system, decentralization of authority and multiplicity of autonomous communities became the central feature of Jewish reorganization and readjustment to the postexilic world. First, still in Palestine and its immediate vicinity, Syria, Egypt, Babylon, and Mesopotamia, next in expanding concentric circles to the Near East and the Mediterranean, and then with the Islamic expansion between the 7th and 12th centuries to North Africa and Spain, these structures and principles of Jewish existence prevailed. After the expulsion from Spain in 1492, the contours of the Jewish Diaspora were extended even further to central and eastern Europe. Yet through these tribulations, and perhaps because of them, Jewish communities managed to preserve and cultivate their updated exilic existence, which was composed of

four unique and newfound main tenets: (1) communal organizations and communal bases of power, (2) spiritual and educational leadership, (3) an emphasis on oral law, and (4) Messianic dreams of redemption. The communal structure was an inevitability spawned by the historical developments that pulverized the Jewish commonwealth into small and underprivileged entities reliant on the mercy of local authorities. Under such circumstances, Jewish collective existence became reticent, introverted, and inwardly oriented. Assimilation with the host population was unfeasible, impractical, and undesired, while assuming sovereignty and political independence was also a far-fetched and deceptive dream. Hence, the only plausible option left to maintain their unity and unique identity was for Jews to invest their energy and skills in regrouping and upholding their distinct way of life from within. Since political and economic existence was totally dependent on external powers, building an internal infrastructure of subsistence and retaining their inimitable character really meant concentrating on education and spiritual conservation. Communal leadership committees such as the Council of the Four Lands (*Vaad Arba Aratzot*) in Poland, Lithuania, and other eastern European territories of the 16th and 17th centuries were typical examples of such local leadership arrangements. The leaders of such bodies managed and supervised the administrative affairs of their respective communities in addition to being the liaisons between their societies and the state authorities. This crucial responsibility of mediating between the official government of the land and the Jewish constituency was mainly expressed in the assessment and collection of taxes for the central establishment.

Leadership in Diaspora Communities

Alongside the clerical and administrative leadership, another category of leaders gained legitimacy and respectability among the Diaspora communities: the spiritual leadership of rabbis, sages, and mystics. The spiritual and clerical elites found themselves frequently at odds with one another as they were vying for ascendancy and influence among their *Kahal* (Hebrew for “audience” or “potential followers”). The spiritual leadership was in charge of religious, judicial, and educational

issues. In the crystallization of the exilic Jewish identity devoid of political, economic, military, industrial, or commercial viability, the spiritual type of leadership quickly gained prominence, and managing religious practices including the application of religious law and education became the centerpiece of being Jewish in exile. In the times of Jewish independence in *Eretz Israel* (the Land of Israel), prior to the enforced dispersion and globalization of Judaism, three foci of power coexisted in delicate balance: kings, priests, and rabbis. In the Diaspora, without a kingdom to lead or protect and without a holy temple to administer and maintain, the first two elites were unnecessary, while the third achieved an unprecedented status of reverence and prestige. Unlike the managerial and secretarial elites, the rabbis and sages were admired, and they inspired loyalty and devotion in their adherents. They were also the main stimulation and driving force behind the preeminence and popularity of the oral law of Judaism, the Halakha, as opposed to the written law or the scriptures. According to the rabbinic tradition, when in Israel, the Torah (Bible) was transmitted from generation to generation by word of mouth and memorizing techniques. The Holy Scripture, the original written law bequeathed by Moses to the people of Israel, was too sacred to be added on or amended. Thus, the only way to ensure continuity and heritage was to verbally pass the ideas and values of the Torah to the new generation of believers. This tradition was feasible as long as the Jews lived together, free and independent, in their own land. When that reality was shattered and the remnants of the Jewish nation were scattered all over the globe, an urgent and genuine need to document and record the oral law had emerged. Rabbis and sages promptly began the daunting task of writing the spoken tradition, a task that was finally completed according to tradition by Rabbi Yehuda haNasi, the head of the Sanhedrin, the Jewish parliament. His work was called *Mishnah* (“repetition”), and it contained a redaction of all oral traditions. Through the years, it was coalesced together with three centuries’ compilation of commentaries and interpretations on the Mishnah, termed *Gemara* (“culmination”). Together, the Mishnah and Gemara created the *Talmud* (“learning”), the ultimate anthology of Jewish oral law.

Written and Oral Law

In the postexilic situation, when Jewish communities were under constant pressure of despotic and oppressive regimes and ever-present hostile public moods, occasional outbursts of violence, and impending threats of deportation and banishment, faithfulness to the written law or the original unchanged version of the Torah limited and inhibited the attempts to survive under such conditions of uncertainty and imminent calamity. For these precarious and volatile circumstances, flexibility, adaptability, and creativity were of an essence to carry on and endure the overbearing angst of insecurity. By emphasizing and encouraging the oral law (or in the original Hebrew Torah, *She-beal pe*), the religious leaders were accommodating the concerns and fears of their followers that rigid and unyielding interpretation of the Bible would cripple their ability to tolerate and cope with the woes of exile. Being attentive to their audiences' distress, the rabbis in many dispersed Jewish communities without coordination or collaboration promoted the use of the memorized tradition, the repeated storytelling, and a broader, pluralistic, and forbearing perception of the scripture. This resilience and accommodativeness helped in attenuating and smoothing the transition from the previous state of affairs, whereby sovereignty, independence, and self-determination guaranteed familiar and secured compliance with an invariable written law, to the current situation in which Jews lived under tentative and unstable conditions, where maneuvering and improvisation became prerequisites for survival and inventiveness the key for perseverance. Oral law, with its emphasis on interpretation and analysis, granted that essential space or leeway for such creativeness to get by. Consequently, it can be said that the gradual and excruciating transformation of Judaism into its globalized form bore some constructive consequences as well by rendering it relatively more tolerant and open-minded, at least in the initial difficult period of adjustment to an itinerant and disjointed existence.

Messianism

A fourth new distinguishing feature to emerge since Judaism turned unwillingly global was the messianic dimension, a strong expectation of

metaphysical or miraculous salvation. As long as they lived in their own land and under their own king, free to practice their religion and secure in their independence, Jews felt no need to seek redemption or to anticipate a liberating messiah. The eschatological element in their life was tenable and accessible: The holy temple existed; the Davidic line of kings was right there, functioning and thriving; and the end-of-days was waiting unabated and assured in the ultimate future. It wasn't a fantasy or a hallucination but a natural and forthcoming evolution provided that the believers remain pious and observing of their religious commitments. The brutal abolition of the Jewish kingdom, the destruction of the temple, and the heartbreaking, seemingly unbounded, and infinite exile wreaked havoc on the protected and solid continuity of existence of the Jews. To survive their new insufferable fortune and to get by with their unbearable affliction, a growing number of believers in various communities at different and remote locations began to develop a profound and overwhelmingly consuming inclination toward the mystical, supernatural, and numinous. The distance from the land of Israel and the remoteness from their promised inheritance produced a split between the immediate, realistic level of being and the imagined, out-of-this-world level of being. While in the former, many Jews carried on experiencing their predicament in the Diaspora in a passive, docile, and acquiescent fashion, in the latter, they became active, enthusiastic, and vigorously involved. Eschatological redemption became, for many Jews, destitute and desperate to make sense of their catastrophe, an escape hatch or a magical getaway for an all-embracing alternative reality. This vacillation between daily concrete anxieties and the eschatological option of breaking away became commonplace among Jewish expatriates wherever they dwelled. Since the messianic trend was proven to be an effective and powerful therapeutic approach and a consequential salutary procedure, many took after the new penchant, consolidating and invigorating the messianic facet of postexilic Judaism to a considerable size. The hopes and expectations of messianic redemption caught like fire among Jewish refugees all over the world and awarded them with at least some consolation and support.

The idea of guaranteed redemption, regardless of how long it should take, presented the Diaspora as an impermanent phase, a transient calamity that eventually will be overcome. Unlike a score of other minorities forcefully dispersed by conquerors of the ancient world, Jews never accepted their new locations of domicile as normative. Consistently and adamantly, exile is portrayed as negative, harmful, and debilitating. In many prayers and religious verses, the stay in the Diaspora is described as an extended punishment for moral sins and unfaithfulness. The eschatological orientation reaffirmed the spiritual nexus Jews kept with their legacy and homeland. Distinct from other vanquished nations, which have accepted their defeat and deportation and for the most part availed themselves of a new beginning either by convergence or by assimilation with their immediate surroundings, the Jewish communities remained defiant and apart from the hosting milieu, hoping that the warranted deliverance would justify their voluntary insulation and reward them for their long-term sacrifice. Messianism, the belief in a messiah from the House of David who would salvage his people and lead them back home, was accompanied by another escapist concept that prospered in the initial harsh days of the Diaspora, the idea of martyrdom or dying for the sanctification of God's name (*Kiddush Hashem*). This ritual of self-immolation in times of persecutions and pogroms or forced conversion and imposed apostasy demonstrated the absolute commitment of Jews to their faith. Favoring death to the renunciation of their faith was an inspirational choice that glorified those who took it and made them hallowed role models to the following generations. It also underlined Jewish solidarity and feelings of shared destiny, which further stimulated their closing of ranks and insulated commonality in the face of external challenges and threats.

Both orientations, the unearthly salvation and the deliberate and willing sacrifice for the preservation of one's faith, underlined the attitude to the Diaspora as temporary and provisional. It stressed the belief that the entire exilic experience is a test of will for the chosen people to endure and to purify themselves in order to be ready and qualified for regeneration in their primordial land. This widespread frame of mind among Jews in their scattered Diaspora communities made them

apolitical and ahistorical: They did not participate in politics and refrained from shaping or contributing to the world around them. They lived in quiet desperation, observing their religious precepts in their secluded and familiar surroundings, with only the shimmering anticipation of a messiah to help them carry on through their daily hardships and ephemeral existence. These trans-historical tendencies fraught with millenary and utopian undertones further alienated Jews from their host societies, and it was a major concern for sages and community leaders that such a detachment from the here-and-now might be disadvantageous to the endeavor of community building and the protracted and Sisyphean process of revitalizing the Jewish way of life in their diverse places of sojourn. In short, an immanent conflict was fermenting between responsible and realistic leaders, civil and religious, who feared false expectations and antinomian outbursts against the constraining Halakha laws, and escapist visionaries or self-proclaimed redeemers, who insisted on intermittently rekindling a surge of hope for messianic redemption. Such surges of aspirations typically erupted in the wake of persecutions, turmoil, and distress. Some of them, namely, the Molkhonian and Sabbatean movements, were immensely popular and intensely challenging to the rabbinical institutional hierarchy.

Diversity and Heterodoxy

Beyond these intermittent flares of power confrontations, various lifestyles, priorities, and interpretations of the Jewish experience in exile coexisted in relative tranquility. The heterogeneity within Jewish communities in the Diaspora was another consequence of a globalized religion that had lost its territorial and jurisdictional concentration. Under a central commanding hierarchy, which operates within a coherent, single political setting, goals, regulations, and main concerns are clearly defined and effectively implemented. The volatile and capricious circumstances in exile did not approximate the provisions of organized control and effective administration attained in sovereignty and independence. Consequently, the mainstream rabbinic tradition had to ultimately tolerate factions and movements it knew little about and hence found difficult to cope with at first. Mystical,

escapist, and ascetic propensities shared the Jewish communities' public space and members' commitment with the leading predisposition of unrelenting and devoted religious and legal study. Rabbis and legal scholars vied with mystics, shamans, and seers for the attention and approbation of the crowds. This benevolent disparateness was born out of the necessity to maintain Jewish subsistence and survival under any situation. For that sacred cause and with the passage of time, any eccentric or unconventional denomination within the Jewish postexilic world became endurable due to the vital duty of keeping the community integrated and protected. Leaders of Jewish communities in their disparate locations equally endeavored not to supply their host governments with incentives to intervene in their internal affairs. Interior divisions and intrafactional strife would have been an excellent occasion for the authorities to intercede and devastate the community's spirit of solidarity and unity. Accordingly, the impending peril of an injurious intrusion to their carefully preserved universe steadily transformed the Jewish communal and political ethos in their disseminated global existence into a more pluralistic and considerate form than it ever was when they were concentrated in their ancient homeland.

Until the modern era, this heterodoxy within the rabbinic preeminence did not overwhelmingly shake the fundamentals of the internal traditional order. There were challenges and controversies that kept the guardians of the faith vigilant and concerned, but there was no irrevocable impairment of the close-knit community. Even the harshest times, both externally and internally, that Jewish communities in exile went through did not manage to destroy their long-established spiritual legacy or to rupture their strong bond to their cultural and religious heritage. But modernity, especially from the 16th century onward, rocked the foundations of Jewish communities and threatened for the first time to sever significant portions of Jews from their long-standing identity and venerable inheritance. The new era ushered in copious incentives and stimuli from the outside world that could not be bluntly and manifestly staved off as in previous generations. It became more arduous to preserve distinctiveness and unity in the face of such abundant challenges. Every traditional society was put to the test by emerging ideas and

concepts of association and commitment, let alone secluded and ahistorical social groupings such as Jewish Diasporas, in which leaders attempted to shield their adherents from any possible vicissitude and safeguard them from the outside world until the arrival of the messiah. The most daring challenge to the viability and survivability of Judaism since the beginning of its transnational state arrived with the wake of the Sabbatean movement in the 17th century. A self-proclaimed redeemer called Sabbatai Zevi, a rabbi and a Kabbalist from the city of Smyrna in Anatolia, announced that he was the long-awaited Jewish messiah. The Jewish masses from the Balkan region and then the Mediterranean, who were craving redemption, were inundated by millenarian dreams prevalent around the significant year of 1666. They heeded his call as part of the global anticipation of religious awakening and founded the Sabbatean movement to promulgate Sabbatai's messages and to publicize his arrival. This heartrending experience tore apart the Jewish exilic world with unprecedented intensities and passions. It also set a model for later movements and groups to openly defy customary rules of the Jewish way of life and to claim alternatives. More and more factions got accustomed to disobeying or contravening the habitual Jewish religious and cultural routine and lifestyle, and the global facet of Jewish existence grew more cumbersome and more intricate to keep together.

Yet what kept the Jewish tradition and indeed Judaism as a distinct and unique religion or culture despite all the dire ordeals and adversities along history was the continuous viability and adaptable ingenuity of the Jewish oral law, the Halakha. Across borders and eras, the capacity of the halakhic norms, values, and regulations to maintain common bounds and supply a framework for all Jews regardless of their location and disconnected mundane realities, was absolutely stupendous. The Halakha became the backbone that sustained the Jewish people in their separate places of exile as one coherent entity with a shared worldwide identity and its rabbis, the implementers and protectors of this spiritual and symbolic unity. The nature of the Halakha as an evolving and accumulative text, which was constantly and relentlessly enriched and cultivated by ongoing events, developments, and crises, played a decisive role in the resilience

and pliability of Judaism away from its homeland. The spiritual leaders endeavored to weave their religious creeds and practices into the fabric of daily life so that Jews would be able to live and savor in their culture. Only through tolerance and compassion for other views could the Jewish Law accommodate such strange and frequently antagonistic bedfellows as the legalistic tradition and the learning tradition, the ritualistic mystics and the erudite philosophers, the scholars and the prayers, and Ashkenazi and Sephardic Jews. Paradoxically, the abnormal and shattering exilic experience had consolidated the Jewish faith and enhanced its durability. Against all odds and in the face of perennial feebleness, the Jews struggled to remain a part of the family of man, participating in and contributing to the cultural progress of human civilization around them. Despite the willful seclusion of their communities, they nevertheless continued to be cognizant of their environment and keep abreast with contemporary development. Although, in most cases, Jews were politically and economically inactive and disobliging, they resisted their pariah status by playing a part, at times a major part, in the world's cultural and intellectual discourse, enriching and edifying their immediate vicinities as well as more remote regions in numerous ways. From this all-encompassing perspective, the 2,000 years of exile were certainly not a waste.

Jewish Contributions to Culture

The Jewish influence among the nations owing to their historical dispersion has been recognized and appreciated in many fields. This influence was promulgated in implicit and explicit ways, through direct interactions between Jews and Gentiles and by osmotic or diffuse circulation of ideas and values. Some Jewish contributions to Western culture were never properly credited, while others were endorsed and emulated as such. Some influence was disseminated through literature, other through people. Had Judaism been eradicated with the Roman destruction of Jerusalem, Jewish literature would have left a mark on global culture, but since the Jews survived, in addition to the power of Hebrew scriptures, the actual existence of Jewish communities among their Muslim and Christian hosts facilitated and expedited the spread of knowledge and the dissemination of values and

ideas in a direct, unabated fashion. Overall, the impact of Jewish presence on the host nations and cultures East and West cannot be denied or exaggerated: At some point around the ninth century, Jews had become known as the intellectual intermediaries of the world or, as the famous French historian Ernest Renan called them, "the traveling salesmen of philosophy." This honorable title was conferred not only symbolically, as bridging the ancient and the modern, but literally as well since many translators of classic texts from their original Arabic to Latin and other European languages were Jews. Another way Jews gained their special position as intermediaries between cultures or spheres of influence in medieval times was as merchants and traders in the trans-Eurasian path from East to West. Carrying with them not only artifacts and material goods but also customs, beliefs, norms, ideas, habits, fables, folk stories, and poetry, Jews constantly nurtured and enticed the communities that absorbed them. Such a fortuitous status rendered itself possible to Jews because they were allowed to move about and travel back and forth in both the Islamic and the Christian spheres of influence. Due to their condition as deportees, itinerants, and perpetual travelers, the Arab rulers who aspired to disseminate westward their heritage and what they deemed as their superior culture, including Greek classicism, preserved and translated into Arabic, saw the wandering Jews as the ultimate transporters for that mission. Jews were also instrumental in the expansion of Arab domination westward via North Africa and into Spain as they were the assistants and advisors to the great Islamic spiritual leaders such as Ibn Bajjah and Ibn Rushd, who were aided by their Jewish wasirs Ibn Chaprout and Ibn Nagdela, respectively. However, the most salient impact on Christian thought in medieval Europe was imprinted by the poet Ibn Gabirol, or Avicbron in Christian references, and the philosopher Moses ben Maimon, or Maimonides. They both had a widespread and profound effect on philosophical thought in general and on the chief Christian scholastics of the 13th century, including Thomas Aquinas, who mentions both Maimonides and Avicbron several times in his writings, especially in his popular *Commentary on the Sentences*. Similar influences, perhaps in lesser degrees of scope and volume, were felt in the fields of

medicine, astronomy, mathematics, theology, and poetry by erudite scholars and translators such as Tibbonides, Kalonymus, Immanuel of Rome, and Jacob Anatoli, who have all enjoyed the privilege of being able to purvey knowledge and wisdom from one world to another or from one epoch to a new one. It is intriguing to wonder about whether Maimonides and the other Jewish thinkers and scholars in the Diaspora would have achieved such a worldwide influence and recognition had they been confined geographically and geopolitically to the boundaries of old Eretz Israel or Judea and had Jews never been deported from their homeland.

There is one domain that stands apart from all others with regard to Jewish influence on their host, especially European, countries. Though politically and socially Jews were generally totally dispossessed of rights, treated as outcasts, and loathed, they still fulfilled an indispensable role in all the sociopolitical systems around them: They were the seismographs or the indicators of political tolerance in general and the attitude toward minorities and dissenters in particular. It is historically well documented that surges in violent riots against Jews were instigated and sometimes organized and sponsored by authorities in times of internal disarray and political turmoil. The age-old mechanism of distraction or scapegoating, whereby attention and dissatisfaction from policies or policymakers is diverted elsewhere, preferably toward foreigners, came into full force during times of persecutions and pogroms. In times of political leniency and social forbearance, the political atmosphere in relation to minorities, and Jews specifically, became bearable. However, once circumstances changed and intolerance returned, it was accompanied by bigotry, prejudice, and fanaticism. Jews, who were notoriously nonconformist with a built-in aversion to authority and a long history of rebellious mavericks, were chosen as instant and convenient culprits of political disobedience and dissidence, which together with social eccentricity and an oddball culture and religion rendered them the eternal victims. This inclination became even more conspicuous when reform movements rose against the obduracy and conservatism of mainstream Christianity. At times of broad political reforms, such as those launched in southern France by the Languedoc rulers, the host societies had a positive, even cordial, outlook

toward Jews, and some of them even took on themselves to promote the political and economic situation of their Jewish communities. But once they secured power or their reforms were endorsed and implemented, their attitude would change again to being hostile and antagonistic. Consequently, Jews found themselves oscillating tumultuously between political acceptance and discrimination, between being cajoled and being harassed. As such, the Jewish existence as an estranged political constituency within a Gentile sociopolitical establishment became an acid test for the open-mindedness and patience of the regime.

In light of these ongoing reciprocal influences and mutual interaction between the Jewish communities in exile and their immediate surroundings, the achievement of Jewish survival and perseverance through persecutions, pogroms, expulsions, and conversions through the ages is even more remarkable than if Jews had successfully maintained total segregation and avoided any contact with the outside world. Protecting their particular nature and group cohesion while allowing selective communication with external stimuli was a prudent and delicate balancing act masterminded by sensible and farsighted leadership. The achievement was even greater as it wasn't just a question of survival but of winning respect, admiration, and even converts from other religions. Through the dissemination of knowledge and wisdom, Jewish sages and erudite scholars reached out to and touched people's lives in the non-Jewish world, a corollary that would probably have been far-fetched had history taken another course and Judaism not transformed to a globalized religion. The most obvious indication of these outstanding developments was the harsh reaction by leaders of the Christian church. Alarmed and anxious that Jewish heresy would take root and lure true believers away, they resorted to papal bulls and religious decrees of church councils to initiate and promote pretexts for hounding and harrying Jews wherever they resided.

The advent of modernity—which some analysts place in the year 1700, others in the latter half of that century, or, more accurately, the years of the American and French revolutions, and yet others in the middle of the 18th century, the Age of Enlightenment—was the threshold with regard to Jewish existence in exile. The global aspect of

Judaism was about to transform again from inferior and shadowy to autonomous and proud. The two revolutions ushered in fresh and novel ideas such as liberalism, democracy, and human and civil rights. These along with the quest for emancipation—the political empowerment of the disenfranchised—have liberated Jews from discriminatory and subjugated laws and allowed them to become equal citizens. Consequently, at least in the countries that experienced the democratic turn and the ascendancy of citizenship, alien lands became new homelands for many Jews, and the meaning of exile was altered forever from enforced to one of choice.

Samuel Peleg

See also Ashkanaz; Bible; Diaspora; Halakha and Shari'a; Israel; Jewish Diaspora

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JUNG, CARL GUSTAV (1875–1961)

Carl Gustav Jung, a Swiss psychiatrist and psychologist, founded his own school of analytical psychology. Unlike many of his contemporaries, most famously Sigmund Freud, Jung was sympathetic to the healing, integrative power of religion.

Born in Kesswil, Switzerland, in 1875, Carl Gustav Jung was the son of a disenchanted pastor in the Swiss Reformed tradition. His mother struggled with depression and what she described as visitations from spirits. Rather than follow his father into a life of ministry, Jung earned a medical degree from the University of Basel in 1902. After graduation, he worked under Eugen Bleuler at the Burgholzi psychiatric clinic of the University of Zurich. There, through his successful application of association tests, Jung began to formulate his earliest insights into what would become his distinctive analytical psychology. He later studied at Paris with the pioneering French psychologist Pierre Janet. In 1907, Jung met Sigmund Freud, with whom he subsequently enjoyed a mutually enriching intellectual friendship. Famously, they traveled together in 1909 to Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts, to deliver lectures on their groundbreaking work in psychology. With Freud's endorsement, Jung was the first president of the International Psychoanalytic Society, which he held from its founding in 1911 until 1914.

Around 1914, Jung began to differentiate his thought from Freud's, a development that led to a rupture in their friendship and professional collaboration. Two significant points that Jung disagreed with were, first, what he viewed as Freud's limited view of the unconscious as a storehouse for repressed elements from the individual's personal history and, second, Freud's emphasis on the libido understood exclusively as sexual in nature.

During the period after his break with Freud, Jung underwent a period of discernment that, in spite of its emotional and psychological duress, proved to be exceptionally fruitful. Jung developed a theory of the personality and the unconscious by building on his studies in psychiatry and psychology as well as his wide-ranging, interdisciplinary study of philosophy, mythology, archaeology, and world religions.

Jung's theory of the unconscious is most pertinent to the study of religion. He differentiated between the personal unconscious, which consists of memories, thoughts, and feelings derived from personal experience, and the collective unconscious, which consists of inherited material that dates back to the earliest recesses of history and that is shared by all people. The collective unconscious is communicated through archetypes, which are represented

to the consciousness through symbols or images that appear in dreams, myths, and religious systems. Examples of archetypes include, but are not limited to, the earth mother, the hero, and the old wise man. Jung's insight into this phenomenon dates back to his work at the Burgholzi and his later dream analysis work, wherein patients would associate with symbols and themes that correlate to symbols and mythological themes from different historical periods and cultures that would otherwise be outside the patients' awareness and experience.

According to Jung, religion could not be proven to be either true or false. He affirmed its usefulness as an authentic avenue to personal integration of the psyche, which he described as individuation and which he believed to be the sine qua non condition for achieving world peace.

Nicholas Rademacher

See also Campbell, Joseph; Freud, Sigmund; Mysticism

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JUREMA OF THE BRAZILIAN NORTH

Jurema relates to certain indigenous spiritual practices of Afro-Brazilian people. In Brazil, the word *jurema* has the following meanings:

1. Bushes thought sacred by indigenous populations and *caboclas* (*mestiças*, people of mixed European and indigenous Indian ancestry), mainly in the northeast: the *Mimosa hostilis* Benth [black jurema] and the *Mimosa verrucosa* Benth [white jurema])
2. A drink prepared with the bark and leaves of the plant, with hallucinogenic properties, ritually consumed
3. Religious and therapeutic manifestations (*toré*, *catimbó*) that integrate elements of indigenous culture, popular Catholicism, and Afro-Brazilian religions, where mediums enter into a trance, mainly with masters (old curers) and *caboclos* (Indians, representatives of the first habitants of Brazil)
4. Spiritual entities that live in jurema (the plant) or where it grows: "jurema people"
5. Feminine spiritual entity represented as Indian, popularized in *umbanda*, well known in many Afro-Brazilian religious manifestations: the Cabocla Jurema

The jurema plant is important in indigenous rituals for ancestors and in *catimbó*—the religious and therapeutic system found mainly in urban peripheries of the northeast alongside *caboclo* populations, of rural origin and low income. The drink prepared with jurema leaves and bark is found at rituals and celebrations of *umbanda* and Afro-Brazilian religions for non-African entities: *boiadeiros* (cattle workers) and *caboclos*.

In some *caboclo* and *umbanda Candomblé* worship centers, the *boiadeiros*, "negro ancestors" of northeastern populations, constitute the black-jurema category. The *caboclos de pena* ("Indian"), who usually presented in those worship centers as *donos da terra*, or "indigenous ancestors" of the Brazilian population, make up the white-jurema category. These black and white categories, also found in botany, attest to the importance of the jurema plant in that religious context.

In the north of Brazil, the *caboclos de pena* (of jurema) are more linked to *pajelança* than to *catimbó* and integrate a system of non-African spiritual entities where the *boiadeiros* are almost non-existent and the majority of the entities are classified as *caboclo da mata* (neither Indian nor *boiadeiro*). *Pajelança* is a syncretic religious and therapeutic system considered to be of indigenous origin and, like *catimbó*, is found mainly on the peripheries of cities and rural areas of the north and of Maranhão (Northeast Occidental), where since the middle of the 19th century it has been found in black populations.

The Cabocla Jurema is a *cabocla de pena* represented as a great hunter ("never having aimed and missed"), received and honored in Afro-Brazilian rituals and of indigenous origin. As well as having the name of the sacred bush, of the drink that

enables communication with the ancestors, and of a category of caboclo entities, it is also the name of a religious and therapeutic system of indigenous northeastern origin; the Afro-Brazilian religions have a lot in common with *pajelança* of the north. It can be seen as a link in the chain connecting many different Brazilian religious manifestations.

Mundicarmo Ferretti

See also Africa; Brazil; Candomblé; New Religions in South America; Santería; Vodou

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JUST WAR

Just war is an ethical theory that may be spoken of in two ways. The first designates a particular set of notions that may be described as the “political-military doctrine” of the Western world. From its inception in ancient Rome, the idea of *bellum iustum* (just war) may be traced through the teaching of the Christian churches, in the development of international law, in military manuals, and in the writings of contemporary publicists.

In a second sense, just war conveys a more widespread set of notions. A survey of world civilizations indicates that human beings have developed ways of distinguishing right from wrong in matters of war. Given the fact of international integration, it is important to compare the just war idea with political and military traditions across the globe.

Cicero

The writings of Cicero depict the Roman way of war as connected with notions of honor and religious practice. With respect to the former, this statesman considers it important to keep one's word, even to enemies; he relates paradigmatic stories of those who do so even when an enemy is cruel and keeping one's word may cost one's life.

There are also limits on military action against one's enemies. Once an adversary is defeated, there is no need for further destruction, though one may take measures to deter further attacks. There are wars of defense, in which the national interest is threatened. There are also wars fought to enhance national power and glory. With respect to the latter, behavior toward an enemy should be more lenient. And, in either case, wars must be initiated by the priestly caste. As Cicero has it, all the norms of *bellum iustum* are ancient and embedded in religious practice. For this reason, wars must begin with members of the *fetiales* (Roman priests) offering an enemy the choice: Accept the terms of peace or deal with the Roman might.

Cicero's account of just war occurs primarily in *De Officiis*, his treatise on the duties of Roman officials. It is worth noting that the first extended account of *bellum iustum* by a Christian author occurs in Ambrose of Milan's account of the duties of the clergy (also titled *De Officiis* and clearly modeled after Cicero's). As Bishop of Milan, Ambrose wielded considerable authority. One might even say that, in Ambrose's view, the Christian priesthood had succeeded the *fetiales* of ancient Rome. Thus, Ambrose thought it his duty to deny communion to Emperor Theodosius following the massacre of 7,000 men, women, and children in Thessalonica in 394, on the grounds that such behavior violated the standards of just war.

Augustine and Aquinas

Ambrose's treatise marks a critical stage in the development of the just war idea. It would fall to his disciple Augustine to provide a fuller account. Throughout his long career as Bishop of Hippo (in North Africa), Augustine counseled magistrates, wrote treatises, and preached to the faithful about the responsibilities of rulers and citizens in these matters. The outcome of Augustine's efforts was an account of history in which war represented both a result of and a remedy for sin. As with other human endeavors, Augustine set war in the context of the Christian story of creation, fall, preservation, and redemption. Human beings are made by God; they have potential for good and for evil. As such, war was not inevitable. But human beings turned from their creator, and thus, their existence

is colored by sin. Envy, rage, and, above all, the will to power lend themselves to violence, and Augustine writes that these are the real evils present in war. There will come a time when God will eliminate such evils; indeed, the existence of the Christian church is a kind of promissory note, signifying the coming redemption of the world. In the meantime, however, sin remains powerful. Good people must use the means provided by God to resist and contain evil. One of these means is the idea of just war.

In this overarching account of the place of war in human history, Augustine says numerous things about the substance of just war. The most important of these would be summarized some centuries later, when Thomas Aquinas noted that a just war must meet three criteria. First, just wars are authorized by a competent public authority. War is not a matter of private vengeance or dueling. It is fought at the behest of those who exercise leadership for the common good. Second, just wars are fought for just causes. These include defense of territory, recovery of things wrongly taken, and punishment of wrongdoing. Third, just wars are fought with the right intention—a term that suggests avoidance of envy and the will to dominate, about which Augustine warned but which also connects with notions of just conduct in war. For example, soldiers fighting a just war must make efforts to distinguish between civilian and military targets. Wanton destruction cannot be a part of just war, nor can deceit or treachery, in the sense of violation of agreements with an enemy.

Early Modern Period

Thomas's three criteria set the context for the early modern discussions associated with the development of international law. For example, theologians like Francisco de Vitoria and Francisco Suarez debated the merits of Spanish exploits in the New World. Military action against the indigenous population of the Americas could not be justified by their lack of Christian faith; their theological position made it clear that a difference between the religious beliefs of the adversaries was not in itself a just cause of war. Spanish armies might have reason for action if the natives denied travelers right of passage or interfered with legitimate Spanish interests in exploration and trade.

Even then, however, military action should be governed by standards of just war conduct. In particular, civilians ought never to become direct targets, and all tactics and weapons should be evaluated to the rule that only the amount of force could be employed that was necessary to attain a legitimate military goal. On the Protestant side, the Dutch lawyer Hugo Grotius spoke about the military aspects of exploration and colonization in terms of a law of nations, meaning a set of practices endorsed by treaties, custom, and religion going back to ancient Rome. For Grotius, Christianity played an important role in the development of these practices, particularly by bringing considerations of charity into the treatment of enemies.

By the end of the 17th century, the just war idea took its characteristic modern shape, in which the justice of particular military actions may be judged with respect to two sets of criteria. In the first, *ius ad bellum*, the justice of resorting to war is at stake, and military action is or may be just if it is (a) authorized by legitimate public authorities, who commit troops to fighting for (b) just causes, including but not limited to national defense; in other words, military action to secure trade routes or access to valuable resources or to defend the rights of oppressed people might also constitute just causes. The next criterion is (c) having the right intention, which requires that those authorizing war show good faith with respect to (d) the overall proportionality between the costs and benefits of a particular military action—including costs and benefits to the enemy and to the international political system, (e) the likelihood that military action will succeed in attaining just goals, (f) estimating whether military action is “timely”—in the sense that diplomacy and other nonmilitary means of action will not work, and (g) determining whether military action will, in the end, serve to restore or enhance peace. Similarly, with respect to justice in the conduct of war (*ius in bello*), military action is or may be just when there is a good faith effort (a) to distinguish between combatants and noncombatants or military and civilian targets and (b) to avoid the use of tactics or weapons that involve levels of destruction that are disproportionate or excessive with respect to particular military objectives. Throughout the 18th, 19th, and early 20th centuries, these criteria

provided a framework for discussions by religious and political leaders, military strategists, and lawyers in evaluating a variety of types of military action. In Europe, Antoine-Henri Jomini spoke about the justification and conduct of war in relation to balance-of-power considerations. In the United States, the lawyer Francis Lieber tried to relate international standards of justice in war to the Union Army's campaign against the Confederacy.

Twentieth Century

Disenchantment with the conduct and costs of World War I led to a reduction of interest in the just war idea, as the 1928 Kellogg-Briand pact attempted to outlaw war as a means of settling international disputes. By the late 1930s, the expansionist policies of Germany, Italy, and Japan fostered renewed interest in the old tradition; theologians like the Jesuit John C. Ford debated the morality of allied policies of aerial bombardment in the European and Pacific theaters, and following the allied victory in 1945, the United Nations Charter built notions of just war into the provisions for collective security outlined in Chapter 7. During the Cold War, debates over nuclear deterrence and the war in Vietnam drove discussions of just war. Since 1988 and the end of the Cold War, issues of humanitarian intervention and, more recently, the military action against terrorist groups received a great deal of attention. In these more recent debates, the various pronouncements of the U.S. National Conference of Catholic Bishops provide important examples of just war thinking, particularly if one reads them in connection with the criticisms offered by just war thinkers like Michael Walzer and James Turner Johnson.

Present and Future of Just War Theory

With respect to the broader sense of just war, one may turn to a variety of studies of Muslim, Jewish, and Buddhist analogs to the Christian-Western idea of just war. The Muslim *ahkam al-jihad*, or

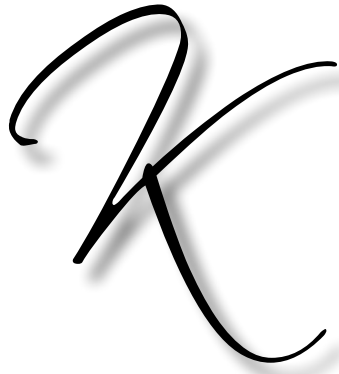
“judgments pertaining to armed struggle,” provides one example and is important in understanding contemporary Muslim evaluations of al Qaeda and other militant groups. The Jewish distinction between “obligatory” and “permitted” war (*milhemet mitvah* and *milhemet rashut*) is similarly important with respect to Israel's conflict with Palestinians and other Arab groups. Finally, a Buddhist version of the just war idea deserves mention in connection with the conflict between Sinhalese Buddhists and Tamil groups in Sri Lanka. In each case, one finds an articulation of and argument about criteria of justice in relation to particular military actions. While many more studies such as these are needed, it seems clear that the notion of just fighting, given certain conditions, is a global phenomenon and, thus, that the ancient Roman practices Cicero associated with *bellum iustum* have a broad resonance in quite diverse linguistic, cultural, and religious settings.

John Kelsay

See also Christianity; Cosmic War and Cosmic Conflict; Ethics; Politics and Religion; Religion and State

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KABIR (CA. 1398–CA. 1448)

Kabir was the preeminent figure of the *sant* tradition of North India, a devotional school of poet-saints who stressed such features as the formless (*nirguna*) quality of God and a doctrine of deliverance that attached no significance to caste or external modes of worship. There is a great deal of legendary material about him, but little is known concerning the historical facts of his life. The occasional references that he makes in his works provide only glimpses of the actual details. He was born in Banaras and belonged to a family of weavers that had recently been converted to Islam. However, to be a Muslim in North India in the 15th century would mean to be still half Hindu, because low-caste Hindus who converted to the religion of the conquerors to improve their social status did not necessarily forsake their former gods and practices. In his own sayings, Kabir does not seem to identify himself as either a Hindu or a Muslim; instead, he refers to his *Julaha* (weaver) caste and the family craft of weaving, which he followed in his life. His social background as a low-caste weaver makes it likely that he was more or less illiterate. It is, however, possible that he may have learned meditative and devotional practices in the company of the saints in Banaras, a widely recognized center of Hindu religion, learning, and culture.

The earliest collection of Kabir's utterances is found in the Sikh scripture, the *Adi Granth*, going back to the third quarter of the 16th century. There are two other major collections of Kabir's

works, the *Kabir Granthavali* and the *Bijak*, revered by the *Dadu Panthi* and *Kabir Panthi* traditions, respectively. The dates of origin of these two collections are uncertain, but both can be assumed to have taken shape in the 17th and 18th centuries, somewhat later than the *Adi Granth*. Although there are a number of verses common to the three collections, each one taken as a whole presents a different image of Kabir. Notably, Winand M. Callewaert has put together in *The Millennium Kabir Vani* (2000) all the works attributed to Kabir in the three collections based on various manuscripts.

Throughout his poetic utterances in different genres, Kabir drew from the many religious traditions around him—Sufi, Vaishnava, *Nath*, Tantric, Buddhist, and others. Interestingly, both Hindus and Muslims were ready to assault him physically during his lifetime because of his vigorous attack on the ritual and excesses of outward observance in both Hindu tradition and Islam. Since his death, however, they have been ready to assault each other over the privilege of claiming him as their own. The very fact that his sayings were included in the *Adi Granth* along with the utterances of the Sikh Gurus and other medieval poet-saints and that at least two *panthic* traditions trace their origin to Kabir points to a reputation of high spiritual attainment that he may have enjoyed already during his lifetime.

Pashaura Singh

See also Bhakti; Sufism

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KALI

The Hindu goddess Kali (in Sanskrit, “she who is black”), well known for her terrifying iconography and general association with death and destruction, is one of the most widely worshipped goddesses in all of India and also one of the most globally recognizable deities of Hinduism.

Kali is typically portrayed as a dark, half-naked, bloodthirsty goddess with a lolling tongue. She has long disheveled hair, multiple arms, a skirt of severed arms, and a necklace of severed heads.

Kali's early history indicates that she was likely a fierce tribal deity on the periphery of Sanskritic Hindu culture. Over time, however, Kali was appropriated by Hindu civilization and transformed, at least partially, to fit its moods and motivations, thus moving beyond her earlier marginal identity and attaining a Pan-Indian and even global importance.

Kali first appears prominently in Sanskrit literature in the roughly sixth-century CE work, the *Devi-Mahatmya* (Greatness of the Goddess). Though Kali is not the primary goddess of this text (Durga is), she does make several important appearances in it, the most prominent being her confrontation with the demon Raktabija. Raktabija has the uncanny ability of replicating himself whenever a drop of his blood falls to the ground. Durga succeeds in wounding him, but with every drop of blood he sheds, another demon appears, until a veritable army results. This so infuriates Durga that Kali springs forth as a concentrated manifestation of her rage. Kali then wins the day by devouring the demon army with her gaping mouth and sucking Raktabija's blood dry—thus

rendering him lifeless and helping to save the cosmos.

Though Kali would go on to assume greater significance after her portrayal in the *Devi-Mahatmya*, her basic character is clearly articulated in this text. She is ferocious, terrifying, and hungry for blood—a violent agent of death. Such characteristics would figure prominently, for example, in her association with Tantrism, a tradition that often places great value on one's ability to confront and eventually overcome the forbidden or polluting aspects of existence. Due to her association with death and blood (two profoundly polluting realities according to normative Hindu culture), Kali came to be seen as the exemplar of the forbidden and polluting aspects of life. She, therefore, acted as a deity that the tantric practitioner could heroically confront and, through her, overcome the socially constructed forbidden aspects of life. Kali thus helped the tantric practitioner to transcend a duality that was artificially, socially imposed on reality and break through to an underlying primordial unity. It is in such contexts that one begins to see a softer side to Kali—as, here, where she is revealed as an ultimately gracious and benevolent granter of liberating insight.

This somewhat softer side achieves greater importance in bhakti, or Hindu devotional traditions, where, perhaps surprisingly, Kali is viewed as a mother figure. This devotional approach to Kali was exemplified by Ramprasad Sen, an 18th-century poet from Bengal. To this day, in part due to Ramprasad, Kali worship is especially prominent in this region of India. Unlike the tantric practitioner who heroically confronts Kali, the approach of the devotee is typically that of supplication—as a child to a mother. Kali's frightening character persists, but the hope of the devotee is that Kali will, despite her harsh exterior or “tough love,” ultimately respond to her children's needs and show them a more complete vision of reality.

Feminist and New Age groups, especially outside India, eager to move beyond patriarchy and traditional, typically masculine, Western theologies, see Kali as a valuable “Eastern” symbol of female empowerment. Such an interpretation is based largely on Kali's boundless sexual energy, an energy she has by virtue of remaining aloof from the more domestic or passive roles that

many cultures associate with femininity. Kali challenges such norms, even flipping them, when, for example, the Hindu god Siva (sometimes viewed as her consort) must, through his own subjugation, come to tame Kali after she threatens the cosmos with a dance of destruction (hence a popular representation of Kali has her standing on Siva's supine body). These groups have therefore appropriated the power of Kali's raw femininity to fit a Western context, seeing her as a divine model of female strength, or even dominance, that can act as an example for individual empowerment.

David Fowler

See also Brahmanical Hinduism; Goddess; Hinduism; Shaivism

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KANT, IMMANUEL (1724–1804)

The philosopher Immanuel Kant, born in 1724, in the Prussian city of Königsberg, is recognized as one of the most important figures of the 16th-century Enlightenment. In reaction to the ritual and disciplined pietistic atmosphere that prevailed where he grew up, Kant developed a theory of duty based on human autonomy.

According to Kant, human will is fair—a good will—only if actions are motivated by duty itself. The idea of God is necessary from the practical point of view—as the idea of the supreme moral ruler of the world and the source of moral norms. Thus, the fundamental reason for religion is practical because, over and above particular doctrines, its ultimate function is to guide individual moral life and lead humanity to the moral destiny of peace. The establishment of an ethical commonwealth, the way to universal and eternal peace, is only possible as the organization of the people of God

under laws of virtue, as an invisible church that gathers every just person in the world. The visible church must evidence that invisible one as the presence of God's moral kingdom on earth through its unity, purity, freedom, and immutability.

Only a pure rational faith makes it possible for the universal visible church to practice the religion of reason, natural religion; but this pure moral religion needs the help of a religion of God's service and worship to attract believers from a historical faith to the rational faith. Any true historical religion must perform this function for the human species.

For Kant, there are three essential questions to assess what ought to be done in human life: (1) the existence of God, (2) the possibility of a future life, and (3) the freedom of human will. Paradoxically, these important questions cannot be answered by human reason because they are not a subject of knowledge and all attempts to explain them are only speculation. The affirmation of the existence of God is a regulative principle accepted by moral faith, and people must act as if God and future life really exist, because, just like freedom, these two statements are postulates of practical reason. If they do not exist, moral law is just a fiction.

Kant interpreted the Bible from a moral point of view and subordinated the message of the sacred texts to practical reason, from where the sense of the biblical texts comes. In 1794, after the publication of *Religion Within the Boundaries of Mere Reason*, Kant was accused by King Friedrich Wilhelm II of changing the original sense of some basic faith elements and also of altering the biblical message. Kant rejected the accusation but did not publish any text on religion until the king's death in 1797.

Kant died in 1804 in Königsberg. His writings on religion were to have a profound influence on the secularization project of modernity.

Edgar Antonio López

See also Enlightenment; Modernism; Secularization

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KARBALA

Karbala is a modern city located in central Iraq. However, Karbala as a legendary space is best known as the site of a historic conflict that took place on the plains there in 680 CE. Husayn, the third Imam by Shi'i Muslim accounts, revolted against the Umayyad caliph Yazid. Yazid's much larger force brutally crushed Husayn's contingent and proceeded to round up the noncombatants and parade them in defeat around the capital at Damascus. Husayn's death at Karbala and subsequent events are viewed as a defining moment in collective Shi'i memory. In more recent years, the battle of Karbala has been largely reinterpreted as strictly an occasion for mourning. Modern retellings of the battle have transformed the traditional emotionally charged mourning of the battle into sermons of resistance; the martyrdom of Husayn is often used as a rallying cry to sacrifice in order to resist any disenfranchisement of the Shi'i, as symbolized in Yazid and his army. Husayn and Karbala have to a degree become the symbols of a modern Pan-Shi'i identity, which transcend national borders. Karbala has even extended beyond just Shi'i discourse and has been adapted by Sufi and Sunnī Muslims as well.

The religious experience of Karbala is intimately connected with *Ashura*, the festival commemorating the incident, during the month of Muharram (the 1st month in the Islamic calendar). The Ashura festival has traditionally been observed as a mourning process where the Shi'i take part in reenactments and retell particularly graphic accounts of the battle. In more recent years, there has been a shift toward viewing Ashura not merely as a lamenting of Husayn's fate but also as a visible and vicarious affiliation with Husayn in his sacrificial resistance to oppression. In urban and more "modernized" Shi'i communities, many of the perceived less "civilized" elements of Ashura, such as self-flagellation, have been abandoned or reinterpreted.

These more recent reinterpretations of the events of Karbala begin largely in the 20th century among numerous Shi'i revivalist/activist clerics, particularly those educated in the schools in Najaf, Iraq. Influential clerics such as Khomeini, Musa al-Sadr, and Ali Shariati were some of the first to

insist that Karbala was not only a historical occurrence to be mourned but further a transcendent symbol of the necessity of martyrdom as a means of resistance to oppression. In this transfiguration of meaning, Karbala moved beyond a merely religious observance to an occasion uniting Shi'i across social and economic classes. This is not to say that Karbala has not retained a religious meaning, just that belief and social responsibility have become linked through the retellings of Husayn at Karbala.

The events at Karbala have not been confined just to the Shi'i. For instance, Muhammad Iqbal, a 20th-century Sunnī reformer, drew on references to the events at Karbala in his attempts toward a Pan-Islamic ideology that bridged sectarian divisions. The meaning of Karbala has often been signified in universal terms as a call to resistance and hope in the midst of despair and oppression, and in this way, it has been incorporated in both Shi'a and non-Shi'a circles for various purposes.

Caleb McCarthy

See also Iraq; Khomeini, Ruhallah Ayatullah; Martyrdom; Najaf; Shi'a Islam

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KARMA

Karma (also *karman*, *kamma*) has been a foundational concept in Indian religions since the Vedic period (1500 BCE), appearing in various Hindu schools of thought as well as in Buddhism and Jainism. The term shifts in meaning between these traditions (and, indeed, between various streams of Hinduism). As a result, understanding *karma* requires situating it in specific historical, cultural, and philosophical contexts.

There is no clear origination to the concept of karma. The term comes from the Sanskrit root *kr*

(“to do or make”). In the Vedic context (1500–500 BCE), karma refers specifically to sacrificial action, ritual work. An individual performs ritual action, and the consequences are automatic, governed by cosmic laws of cause and effect. It is important to note that the laws governing karma are impersonal. The gods themselves are subservient to the rules governing ritual action and the results of that action. Specific actions generate specific consequences, quite apart from the intention or sincerity of the ritual practitioners. Within the Vedic system, this applies to consequences that influence one’s daily life (children, cattle, prosperity, long life, etc.) as well as the attainment of heaven. Thus, *karma* was understood in terms of the correct (or incorrect) performance of sacrificial rites, thereby generating wanted (or unwanted) results. A key element that laid the groundwork for future understandings of karma was the notion that consequences of actions may be deferred—that is, consequences do not always appear immediately. In the Vedic texts, deferred karmic consequences manifest later in one’s lifetime or in a heavenly reward. Only after the Vedic period do we find the notion of multiple lifetimes.

In the Upanishads (ca. 800–400 BCE), karma takes on a broader meaning, inextricably linked to notions of cyclical reincarnation (samsara) and liberation from this cycle (moksha). In Upanishadic thought, karma refers to the consequences of one’s actions in general, beyond the ritual sphere. These consequences follow an individual from one lifetime to another, affecting the conditions into which one is born as well as certain events one experiences. For example, the fact that someone is born a man or a woman, in a high *jati* or a low *jati*, is a direct result of one’s actions in a previous lifetime. The *Chandogya Upaniṣad* (ChUp) 5.10.7 states that for

those who are of pleasant conduct here—the prospect is, indeed, that they will enter a pleasant womb, either the womb of a *brāhmin* or the womb of a *kṣatriya*, or the womb of a *vaiśya*. But those who are of stinking conduct here—the prospect is, indeed, that they will enter a stinking womb, either the womb of a dog, or the womb of a swine, or the womb of an outcast. (Radhakrishnan & Moore, 1957, pp. 66–67)

An oft-repeated passage states succinctly that “one becomes good by good action, bad by bad action” (*Bṛihadaranyaka Upaniṣad*, BrhUp, 3.2.13). The goal for the individual is release from the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth, which is generated by the karma generated in each lifetime. In this context, karma is understood in terms of virtuous or evil acts that, in turn, generate positive or negative consequences in the next life. Ultimately, one desires *mokṣa*, liberation from samsara, which ultimately means release from karmic consequences.

The Bhagavad Gita (400 BCE–400 CE) is important to this discussion for two reasons. First, the Gita (BhGita, 4:19–21) teaches the renunciation of the fruits of one’s action:

He whose undertakings are all free from the will of desire, whose works are burned up in the fire of wisdom—him the wise call a man of learning. Having abandoned attachment to the fruit of works, ever content, without any kind of dependence, he does nothing though he is ever engaged in work. Having no desires, with his heart and self under control, giving up all possessions, performing action by the body alone, he commits no wrong. (Radhakrishnan & Moore, 1957, p. 117)

In the narrative, Krishna teaches that one should act in accordance with one’s prescribed duty (dharma), without thought for the fruits of one’s actions. In this way, one is liberated from samsara. Note that in this context, karma refers to one’s everyday actions, not just ritual activity. In addition, the Gita outlines three religious yogas or “disciplines” that one may practice to attain liberation: (1) karma yoga (the discipline of action, specifically detachment from the fruits of action), (2) dhyana yoga (the discipline of knowledge, specifically knowledge of the absolute Brahman), and (3) bhakti yoga (the discipline of devotion, specifically devotion to Krishna).

Over time, other means for being freed from karma developed. Pilgrimage, for example, offers individuals the means to travel to sacred places where their accumulated karma can be eradicated. Pilgrimage sites include cities, rivers, and *tirthas*, or “sacred crossings” where the deities are believed to have been. In addition, yoga developed as a means of liberation from karmic consequences.

Classical yoga teaches that one may break free from samsara through ascetic practices. Various strategies were developed for this (meditation, ascetic disciplines), and both Buddhism and Jainism originate in these renunciate streams.

The concept of karma spread beyond Hindu thought. Buddhism (in the late sixth century BCE) built on early-Upanishadic notions that desire leads to action (in Pāli, *kamma*, referring to physical or mental actions), which generates consequences. The nature of these consequences depends on whether the original desires were good or bad, which determines whether the actions are good or bad. A widely known saying summarizes this process:

According to the seed that is sown, so is the fruit from which you reap. The one who does good will gather good, the one who does evil will reap evil. Sown is the seed, and you shall taste the fruit therefrom. (*Samyutta Nikāya*)

Only the desire for “existence” generates good *kamma*, because this is action with awareness. As a result, the conditions one experiences in the present life are ultimately the result of one’s character and desires from a previous life. This has far-reaching implications: One’s individual physical characteristics and social and economic status are all the result of past choices and desires. However, within this lifetime, one is free to choose how to respond to these conditions, thus generating good or bad *kamma* for this and the next life. Scholars debate where the bonds of past *kamma* end and individual choice begins, but they agree on the need to distinguish *kamma* from fatalism here. One always acts freely—the conditions to which one has to respond may have been determined in a past life, but individuals always have free choice over their actions in any current situation.

Note that in this context, *kamma* is helpful in two ways: (1) it explains conditions that otherwise seem to have no cause or explanation (e.g., seemingly undeserved suffering) and (2) it provides a foundation for ethical conduct. However, *kamma* does not solve the problem of endless birth, death, and rebirth. Rather, *kamma* keeps the cycle going. Ultimately, the goal is release from *kamma*’s effects, which in Buddhism takes the form of nirvaṇa.

In the Jain tradition (sixth century BCE), the understanding of karma is closely linked to the understanding of the nature of the soul. Jainism teaches that the soul, which is eternal, takes on distinct embodied forms. These forms include, but are not limited to, human, animal, and plant forms (thus, Jainism teaches nonviolence to any sentient being that may possess a soul). The body one takes up is determined by one’s karma. In Jain thought, this karma is a substance. At death, the soul, “stained” by the accumulated karma of the present life, is channeled to its new embodiment. Ultimate release occurs only when the individual eradicates old karma and stops generating new karma. This is accomplished through ascetic living and right understanding.

The cause of the soul’s embodiment is the presence in it of what is called karmic matter. The self is never separated from matter until its final release. The way to deliverance is through the three “jewels” of right faith, right knowledge, and right conduct. (Radhakrishnan & Moore, 1957, p. 251)

The monastic life is ideal for pursuing liberation, but lay people practice modified forms of asceticism as well.

All of these traditions link their understandings of karma to their understanding of the soul, cyclic existence, and liberation from samsara. However, while karma provides an explanation for the suffering in this life and the potential for an improved life in the future, the ultimate goal of the Indian-based religions is complete liberation from the bonds of karma.

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See also Hinduism; Jainism; Mahayana Buddhism; Radhakrishnan, Sarvepalli; Veda

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KASHMIR

Kashmir, the mountainous region divided between India and Pakistan, continues to be one of the most contested areas between these two countries. Part of the conflict is due to religion: While a large percentage of the population is Muslim, Kashmir is also home to a large and important Hindu community and was formerly ruled by a Hindu maharaja.

At the time of British colonial withdrawal from the subcontinent, there were two classes of states in the British Indian Empire. The first were the states of British India, which were ruled directly from London, with the Viceroy in New Delhi serving as the representative of the British Crown. The second were the "princely states," which enjoyed national autonomy as long as they accepted the Crown as the paramount power in the region. The Crown, under this doctrine, controlled three crucial policy domains of the princely states—defense, foreign affairs, and communications.

As British rule drew to a close, the last Viceroy, Lord Mountbatten, decreed that the princely states faced a choice: They could join one of the two emergent self-governing states, India or Pakistan. He also asserted that predominantly Muslim states that abutted either of the two wings of Pakistan would be part of Pakistan. The state of Jammu and Kashmir, however, posed a conundrum. It had a predominantly Muslim population but a Hindu monarch, and it shared borders with both Pakistan and India. Furthermore, Maharaja Hari Singh, the monarch, was averse to joining either state. Despite Lord Mountbatten's entreaties, he failed to accede to either state even after their formal declaration of independence on August 14 and 15, 1947, respectively. In the event, his hand was forced when rebellious tribesmen with the assistance of the Pakistan Army threatened his realm in late October

1947. With his forces facing imminent defeat, he appealed to India for assistance. India promptly offered military assistance, and the Maharaja acceded to India, but not before the invading forces seized a third of the state. On the advice of Lord Mountbatten, India referred the case to the United Nations Security Council, which brought about a cease-fire on January 1, 1948. United Nations peacekeeping forces have continued to patrol the cease-fire line ever since.

Subsequently, India and Pakistan have fought two wars over Kashmir, in 1965 and 1999. The dispute over this state has proven to be so intractable because its origins can be traced to competing conceptions of state construction in South Asia. Pakistan, which was created as a homeland for the Muslims of the British Indian Empire, claimed Kashmir on the basis of the state's Muslim-majority population. India, on the other hand, claimed Kashmir to demonstrate that Muslims can thrive under the aegis of a predominantly Hindu but secular state.

Over the years, both India and Pakistan's ideological claims over Kashmir have been undermined. Pakistan's religious basis for asserting authority over Kashmir collapsed in the wake of its breakup in 1971 and the emergence of Bangladesh. Since religious affiliation alone could not keep its two wings together, its irredentist claim to Kashmir was now bereft of meaning. Similarly, given the recrudescence of Hindu nationalism in India and the erosion of its secular commitments, India's secular claim to Kashmir is now based mostly on political exigency.

In 1989, owing to institutional decay and rapid political mobilization, an indigenous ethnoreligious insurgency erupted in the Indian-controlled portion of Kashmir. Thousands of Kashmiri Hindus fled to other parts of India for safety. Sensing an opportunity to exploit India's difficulties, Pakistan entered the fray on behalf of the insurgents. Since then, the region has been the site of an ongoing and sanguinary insurgency, exacerbated by the rhetoric of Islamic militancy on the rebel side.

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See also Bharatiya Janata Party; India; Islamism (Political Islam); Pakistan

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KAZAKHSTAN

Since 1991, following the dissolution of the former Soviet Union, the central Asian country of Kazakhstan has undergone significant growth in religious institutions and in people's religious consciousness. The number of largely Muslim religious communities has increased, and many religious facilities have been built. From the mid-1980s, the number of declared believers has increased more than two-fold: from 20%–25% to 60%–65%. Muslims and Orthodox Christians together constitute more than 90% of all religious adherents. According to the national census of 2009, the population of Kazakhstan is 16,004,800. More than 70% are Muslims, 26% are Christians, 2.8% are atheists, and 1.2% of the population have other religious views. (The first census, in 1999, did not ask about religious beliefs.)

Of the religious communities in Kazakhstan, 2,488 are Islamic, 292 are Orthodox Christian, 84 are Roman Catholic, 1,267 are Protestant, and 46 are followers of new or nontraditional religions. Charitable foundations and other societies number 47. There are 2,270 mosques, 262 Orthodox churches, 93 Roman Catholic churches, 6 synagogues, and more than 500 churches attended by Protestant and other denominations.

There are eight religious universities (two Islamic, one Roman Catholic, five Protestant), six secondary special schools, and three comprehensive religious schools in Kazakhstan. Also, some mosques and Christian churches have permanent educational courses and Sunday schools. Currently, close to 400 missionaries from 20 countries live and work in Kazakhstan.

Islam in Kazakhstan

Islam disseminated into central Asia and Kazakhstan in the seventh and eighth centuries from the southern areas. It became the state religion in 960, during the period when the Karakhanids governed the territory of what would later become modern Kazakhstan. In the early 13th century, the spread of Islam was slowed under Mongolian conquest, but later Mongolian conquerors turned to Islam and adopted the Turkic language.

Sunnī Islam was approved as the official ideology of the Kazakh Khanate in the 15th century. Islam also influenced the political and cultural lives of the different Kazakh tribes that would form the basis of Kazakh ethnicity and statehood.

The Russian Tsarist administration tried and failed to turn Kazakhs to Orthodox Christianity. Later, Christian politics was replaced by support of Islam. The Tsarist administration supported Tatar mullahs with salaries and provided finances for building mosques and Muslim schools (*Medrese*). The migration of Uighurs and Dungans from China (east Turkestan) influenced the growth of Islam in southeastern Kazakhstan during the 1870s and 1880s.

After 1917, the adherents of Islam were severely persecuted by Soviet authorities. In 1929, the teaching of Islam was prohibited in Kazakh schools. Thousands of mosques were closed in the Soviet Union, including Kazakhstan, in the 1930s. Under the official policy of atheism, the Soviet bureaucracy controlled Islamic institutions: During the period from 1960 to the late 1980s, the number of mosques in Kazakhstan was only 22–28.

Since then, Kazakhstan has witnessed a significant growth of Islamic institutions. Muslim communities from 1991 to 2009 increased from 68 to 2,488. The number of mosques increased from 296 in 1993 to 2,441 in 2008.

The Kazakh-Egypt Islamic University Nur Mubarak was opened in Almaty (the former capital of Kazakhstan). The number of pilgrims to Mecca increased from 228 in 2001 to 4,300 in 2007.

Kazakhstan is a member of the Islamic Conference Organization. The Spiritual Administration of Muslims of Kazakhstan was founded in 1990 and presently unites the majority of Muslim communities. Since 2000, the head of this organization is the

Supreme Mufti Absattar-Qazhy Derbissali. Most of the Muslims of Kazakhstan practice the Sunnī of Khanaphi Mazkhab; Chechens and Ingushes practice Sunnī of Shaphii Mazkhab. There are also some Muslims who practice the Sunnī of Khanbali Mazkhab.

Christianity in Kazakhstan

According to the medieval historian Biruni, the first Christians came to the central Asian city of Merve in the third century CE.

Orthodox

Since 1991, Orthodox Christians have become the second largest faith community in Kazakhstan. There were 55 parishes of the Russian Orthodox Church in Kazakhstan in 1956. In 1999, the number of parishes increased to 212, and 8 monasteries were built. As of 2009, there were 281 Orthodox communities, 255 churches, and 9 monasteries in Kazakhstan.

In May 2003, the Sacred Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church made a decision to found the Metropole district, a specific united form of archdioceses, which the Russian Orthodox Church founded only in Kazakhstan. The district's aims are the coordination of religious, educational, publishing, social, and other public activities of the archdioceses in Kazakhstan. The district's head is the Metropolitan of Astana and Almaty Mefody (Nemtsov). The Metropole district consists of three archdioceses: (1) the Astana and Almaty Archdiocese, with the center in Astana; (2) the Uralsk and Guryev Archdiocese, with the center in Uralsk; and (3) the Shymkent and Akmola Archdiocese, with the center in Shymkent.

Roman Catholic

The first Catholic missionaries to come to Kazakhstan were the Franciscan friars in 1245. In the 18th and 19th centuries, Catholicism grew with the arrival of Polish exiles, military, and migrants. Between the 1930s and 1950s, deportations of Germans, Poles, Ukrainians, and the Baltic peoples to Kazakhstan fostered the growth of Catholic settlements. Kazakhstan established a formal relationship with the Vatican in 1992.

The present structure of the Catholic Church in Kazakhstan was created in 2003. The Catholic Metropole of Kazakhstan consists of an archdiocese with the center in Astana, two dioceses in Almaty and Qaraghandy, and the apostolic administration in Atyrau.

Currently, there are 80 Catholic and 4 Greco-Catholic communities in Kazakhstan, where two archbishops, three bishops, and more than 60 priests work. Nearly 300,000 Catholics live in Kazakhstan. The services in the Catholic churches are conducted in the Russian, Ukrainian, German, English, and Polish languages.

Protestant

Protestantism arrived in Kazakhstan with the migration from Russia in the 1880s, when some Lutheran, Baptist, and Mennonite communities moved to Kazakhstan. The mass migration of Protestants is linked with the deportation by the Stalin regime of some ethnic groups to Kazakhstan between the 1930s and 1940s. From the mid-1950s, communities of the Lutheran church, Gospel Christian Baptists, Adventists, and Mennonites appeared in the country.

There were 109 communities of Gospel Christian Baptists in Kazakhstan in 1991. Later, the number of Baptist communities increased to 129 in 1993, 281 in 2002, and 290 in 2007. There were 358 Baptist communities in Kazakhstan in 2009.

Also, in 2009, Kazakhstan registered 64 Pentecostal churches, 248 Presbyterian churches, and 351 Charismatic churches. The most known Christian communities are Grace, Emmanuel, New Life, Agape, Sun Bok Ym, and the Church of Complete Gospel. Many Pentecostal and Presbyterian churches were founded by missionaries from South Korea and the United States of America. Presently, the number of Protestant communities in Kazakhstan is more than 1,200.

New Religious Movements in Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan has some religious confessions that are new to the country. The spread of new religious movements began during the Soviet period with the missionary activities of the Society for Krishna Consciousness, Baha'i, charismatic branches of Protestantism, Jehovah's Witnesses, Dianetics, and

others. Some of them began to appear in the early 1990s. The most active are communities such as the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, the Church of Vissarion, Transcendental Meditation, and the Church of Unification (Church of Union).

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See also Christianity; Islam; Russian Federation

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KENYA

Kenya is one of the most important countries in East Africa. Religious belief and active engagement play important roles in Kenya's cultural, political, and economic arenas. Most Kenyans claim adherence to either Christianity or Islam, with the remaining population professing adherence to indigenous or traditional beliefs. Forty-five percent of Kenyans are Protestant Christian, 33% are Roman Catholic, 10% roughly identify with Islam, 10% profess adherence to indigenous beliefs, and the final 2% claim belief in some other form of religious identity or activity (a large majority of Kenyans are Christian, but estimates for the percentage of the population that adheres to Islam or indigenous beliefs vary widely depending on the study measuring religious identity in the country). Furthermore, Kenyans are very committed to their religious identities through active religiosity. Kenyans are regular attendees at religious services. Most Kenyans attend church or mosque service at

least once a week or more (82%). Economic and political variations exist across religious identities, especially between Muslims and Christians, in Kenya. The Supreme Council of Kenyan Muslims acknowledges the economically as well as socially and politically disadvantaged position in which most Kenyan Muslims find themselves. Yet these differences have yet to play out in destabilizing or in public interactions.

These high levels of religiosity have translated into positive political engagement in Kenya. Civil society organizations, of which faith-based organizations are key front-runners, maintained opposition to autocratic practices in Kenya during colonial and postcolonial times. Civic organizations such as the Supreme Council of Kenyan Muslims, the National Council of Churches in Kenya, and the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission worked alongside opposition political parties to fight against the autocracy of the 1970s and 1980s in Kenya. After the reintroduction of multiparty elections in 1992, however, they stepped up the fight for democratic transition with a vengeance. Post-Cold War economic struggles, political liberalization, and the faltering capacity of the Kenyan state to provide social welfare goods to its citizens all created space for these nonstate actors to intervene in previously state-monopolized activities. Religious organizations led the fight for further democratic changes and the effective challenge to the stronghold of President Daniel Arap Moi and the Kenya African National Union party. These organizations offered inroads to political activism that was missing under the repressive, personalistic dictatorships that dominated the first 30 years of Kenya's independence. Religious groups across specific creeds have led the way in civic education and election monitoring, vocally opposing human rights abuses, such as those against women and ethnic minorities, and political corruption and functioning as training grounds for Kenyan public engagement. A Muslim, Christian, and Hindu interfaith collaborative worked together and in contest regarding the 2005 and 2010 constitutional referenda, passing out literature, holding training sessions, and conducting public forums to promote positive political development in Kenya. Finally, faith-based organizations and religious leaders have been the primary actors working on reconciliation

following the postelectoral violence in 2008, working on the symptoms and root causes of this aggression.

Thus, Kenya is a society highly infused with religious identity and engagement. And the prominent role of religion has served Kenya well in fostering democratic political growth and efforts toward stable democratic consolidation.

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See also Africa; Christianity; Churches; Civil Society; International NGOs; Islam; Politics and Religion

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KHALISTAN MOVEMENT

The Sikh separatist agitation for a sovereign homeland in Punjab, India, found its ultimate expression in the *Khalistan* movement of the 1980s and 1990s. The Sikhs, a religious minority constituting approximately 2% of Indian society but a majority in the border state of Punjab in the northwest, nursed grievances centering on religious identity, economic and political discrimination, and social and cultural harassment. A Sikh diasporan community in North America, Europe, Africa, and Southeast Asia played an increasingly significant role as the ideology of Sikh self-determination, calls for assertion of human rights, and underground support for the violent Khalistani insurgency developed. Indeed, even as Punjab itself quieted by the turn of the millennium, the global Sikh community continued to uphold sovereigntist claims.

The year 1984 was a pivotal date for the Khalistan movement. After nonviolent protests for years over the array of grievances the Sikhs had with the central government of India, a small minority had stepped up their campaign to include violent action. In June 1984, the Indian Army assaulted the Golden Temple Complex at Amritsar, Sikhism's holiest site, in ostensible response to an array of crimes committed by the militants who had taken refuge there. In the assault, occurring on a major holiday, "Sant" Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, a prominent Sikh preacher and leader of the Khalistan movement, was "martyred" at the

Golden Temple, along with at least hundreds (by government account) and probably thousands (by human rights accounts) of entirely innocent visitors. Many of the sacred buildings were defaced or destroyed. Later in the year, after two Sikhs assassinated Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in retaliation, thousands of Sikhs were brutally murdered in pogroms coordinated by Indian political workers across several Indian cities. Suddenly, the sympathies of all Sikhs were turned toward the separatist agitators and away from India. A declaration of independence was signed in April 1986, and guerilla forces were organized.

The decade from 1984 to 1994 can be considered the height of the Khalistan movement. Villagers and townspeople across Punjab dared not go out at night for fear of their lives. Police organized “Village Defense Forces,” a sort of civilian vigilante scheme, arming people to fight against the increasingly well-armed Khalistani insurgents. It was suspected that the Khalistani guerillas were receiving weapons and training from within Pakistan, although the Pakistani government has always denied this. They were divided into several main organizations, such as the Khalistan Liberation Force, the Khalistan Commando Force, the Babbar Khalsa, the Bhindranwale Tiger Force, and the Sikh Students Federation. A Panthic Committee unified the whole of the movement, and it maintained liaisons in the diasporan communities—always central to the effort, particularly as human rights abuses increased and refugees swelled the ranks of British, Canadian, and U.S. Sikh populations.

The last major violent event of the Khalistan movement was the 1995 assassination, by a suicide car bomb, of Punjab’s chief minister in Chandigarh. Since then, the claim has been that Punjab has been “normalized,” though tensions continue and Khalistani sympathies remain high in the diaspora. The grievances that sparked the movement have not been resolved. It should also be noted that the Khalistan movement played a key role in sparking the Kashmiri independence movement starting in 1989 and also other minority autonomy movements now current in India.

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See also India; Kashmir; Politics and Religion; Sikhism; Terrorism; Violence

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KHARIJI

A derogatory name used in modern Muslim societies to designate a radical Islamist who attacks fellow Muslims, *Khariji*, along with terms such as *jihadi* and *takfiri* (one who excommunicates fellow Muslims), became part of the discourse associated with national and transnational Islamist violence and the global war on terror.

Khariji is the Arabic singular form of the plural *Khawarij* (typically rendered in English as Kharijites), the name of a seventh-century sectarian movement that defined itself over and against what became the two dominant sects in Islamic tradition, Sunnī and Shi’a. The Kharijites rebelled in 657 against the then leader of the nascent Islamic empire, Ali b. Abi Talib. They were infamous for judging fellow Muslims as nonbelievers (pronouncing the *takfir* on them), thus rendering them apostates from the faith and subject to death. Islamic historical sources are replete with bloody and seemingly random paroxysms of *Khariji* violence. Ali was himself killed by a *Khariji* in 661.

The Kharijites were also known for their egalitarian customs, which allowed any Muslim man to become the leader of the community. The Sunnī and Shi’i had specific qualifications for this position. As an actual movement, the Kharijites were active until the mid-10th century, by which time their uprisings had been quelled. But the name *Kharijite*, in the Islamic literary tradition, came to symbolize anyone who rebelled against legitimate Muslim political authority.

It is this symbol that was reawakened in modern countries such as Egypt and Syria to anathematize Islamists who took up arms against the government and fellow Muslims or whose activities seemed to threaten state interests and the political status quo. In Egypt, discussions about the Kharijites have been prominent—starting in the

1950s and continuing into the 1990s—in newspapers, magazines, and television; in book-length studies of Islamists, comparisons with Kharijites became common. One of the earliest accusations of being a *Khariji* was directed at Hassan al-Banna, the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood. Sayyid Qutb, the ideological successor to al-Banna in the brotherhood, had the label attached to him extensively after he was implicated in a plot to assassinate Nasser; his militant treatise *Maalim fi'l-Tariq* (*Milestones*) was thought to be a *Khariji*-inspired work because it accused fellow Muslims of the kind of sinfulness (*jabiliyyah*) that required either (re)conversion to Islam or death. The label *Khariji* in Egypt has been attached to every militant Islamist group that has emerged after or as an offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood, such as Takfir wa al-Hijra, al-Gamm'a al-Islamiyah, and Jihad.

Since the September 11 attacks, Muslim moderates around the world have engaged in debates about neo-*Khariji* activities and have used the label to condemn radical Muslim behavior, including the terrorist acts carried out by al Qaeda. The name *Khariji* has also received attention in the West as governments, militaries, and the media try to understand and counter the threat posed by Muslim radicals.

The global surge in *Khariji* references and discourse attests to both the growth in acts of Muslim violence that are religiously justified and the desire among moderate Muslims to counter this violence with an alternate vision of Islam. It also attests to modern society's continuing dependence on religion to legitimize and safeguard otherwise secular political values.

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See also Egypt; Islamism (Political Islam); Muslim Brotherhood; Shi'a Islam; Sunnī Islam

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KHOMEINI, RUHALLAH AYATULLAH (1902–1989)

The charismatic leader of the Islamic Revolution of 1979 in Iran, Sayyid Ruhallah began his political career as a revolutionary leader quite late in his life, when he had already attained the highest Shi'ite clerical rank of *marja'-e taqlid* (Source of Emulation) and bore the title of Grand Ayatullah (lit. "Sign of God"). His political campaign culminated in the overthrow of the monarchy on February 11, 1979. He was called Imam Khomeini by his followers during the revolution and was designated the Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran in its 1979 constitution.

Ruhallah was born into a clerical family that traced its descent to the seventh Imam of the Twelver Shi'a, Musa al-Kazim, in the arid town of Khomein in central Iran, a few years before the Constitutional Revolution (1906–1911) opened the era of modern politics in Iran. His father was murdered before he was 1 year old, and his mother died when he was in his teens. The reign of Reza Shah (1925–1941), whose policies of centralization and secularization greatly weakened the Shi'ite religious establishment, encompasses Khomeini's formative years. He was atypical in his studies and chose to specialize in mystical philosophy, which was highly suspect in the legalistic scholarly community of Qom. In the 1930s, while teaching mystical philosophy to a small number of students, he also began teaching courses in ethics for a much larger audience. The popularity of these lectures made the police apprehensive. Khomeini never forgot the loss of clerical power and the humiliation of clerics by Reza Shah; he transferred his visceral hostility to the latter's son, Mohammad Reza Shah (1941–1979), whom he contemptuously referred to as "the son of Reza Khan" throughout the revolutionary struggle.

Khomeini's entry into the public arena began in 1944, a few years after Reza Shah's departure from Iran, with an anonymous book written against an anticlerical pamphleteer and a clerical advocate of reform of Shi'ism, in which he vigorously defended

the religious establishment and traditional Shi'ite practices. He first appeared on the national political scene in 1963 as an outspoken critic of the Shah and his reform program. He was imprisoned and, after violent suppression of demonstrations by his supporters, exiled to Turkey. He then moved on to the Shi'ite holy city of Najaf in Iraq. By the late 1970s, he had enlisted the loyalty of many of the ablest and most energetic Shi'ite clerics. The militant clerics rallied behind in opposition to Western cultural domination, which they found to be threatening Islam with corruption, and to the Shah's policies, which they considered a threat to the existence of religious institutions.

In his 1944 book, *Kashf-e asrār* (Revelation of Secrets), Khomeini maintained that religious jurists (*mujtahids*) had the authority to supervise parliamentary legislation and the deeds of the monarch. In the following decade, he took a radical position in a tract on independent law finding (*ijtihad*), which he had apparently written in the early 1950s but not published until 1964 to 1965. He used the term *hākim* not only in the Arabic, technical sense of (religious) judge but also in the Persian everyday sense of governor, to extend the judiciary authority of the *mujtahid* to the political sphere as the right to rule. While in exile in Najaf, Khomeini developed this idea further into his theory of the mandate of the religious jurist to rule, both in a series of lectures in Persian that were published in Beirut in 1970 under the title of *Vilāyat-e faqih* (Mandate of the Jurist) and in a work of jurisprudence on transactions, *Kitāb al-bay'*, published in 1971. According to the traditional Shi'ite theory, the political authority of the infallible imams fell into abeyance after the occultation or disappearance of the 12th Imam, the Mahdi, in the ninth century. The authority of the imams as teachers of religion and the Sacred Law, however, was transferred to the Shi'ite jurists. The scope of clerical authority gradually expanded over the centuries. Khomeini was the first Shi'ite jurist to open the discussion of the "Islamic state" (*hukumat-e islāmi*) in a work of jurisprudence, and he took the radical step of claiming that the imams' right to rule also devolved on the jurists during the occultation of the 12th Imam. Not only did the mandate to rule devolve on the religious jurists, but if one of them succeeded in setting up a government, it was the duty of the other jurists to follow him.

With his theory of theocratic government made known in clerical circles, Khomeini began to prepare a beleaguered Shi'ite establishment for the takeover of a hostile, secularizing state, though without any general public discussion of the Mandate of the Jurist, for which the time was not considered ripe. The vaguer but more emotive phrase *Islamic state* was used as the slogan of the Islamic Revolution. Khomeini mobilized many younger clerics from humbler rural and small-town backgrounds who preached his revolutionary message in mosques and religious gatherings, and his former students supplied the leadership of the militant clergy and later occupied the highest positions of power in the Islamic Republic. Other groups, too, became vocal in their opposition to the Shah when he tried to liberalize his regime in 1977. As massive demonstrations and strikes paralyzed the government in 1978, all political groups who formed the revolutionary coalition against the Shah enthusiastically accepted the leadership of Khomeini.

On the victory of the Islamic Revolution, Imam Khomeini insisted that he was setting up a government based on Islamic law (*hokumat-e shar'iyya*) and appointing a prime minister "by the general and the sacred mandate" (*velāyat-e shar'i va velāyat-e 'āmm*). He treated the property confiscated from the Pahlavi family and other industrialists of the old regime as war booty according to religious law and constituted them into a number of foundations, the most notable being the Foundation for the Disinherited. Most of the foundations were put under the direction of clerics. Khomeini also appointed Mehdi Bazargan, the leading member of the liberal and nationalist elements in the revolutionary coalition, as the prime minister of a provisional government. Nevertheless, a clerically dominated Assembly of Experts, elected in place of a constituent assembly, bypassed the draft constitution prepared by the provisional government and proposed a theocratic government based on Khomeini's Mandate of the Jurist, now designated the Leader of the Islamic Republic, with a Guardian Council whose clerical jurists were appointed by the Leader and had veto power over legislation not conforming to Islamic standards, an elected parliament (*Majlis*), and an elected president. This was approved by a referendum in December 1979, shortly after the occupation of the American embassy and the taking of its

staff as hostages resulted in the resignation of the provisional government of Bazargan. By backing the taking of hostages, Khomeini also caused a major international crisis.

In the course of the ensuing power struggle of the early 1980s among the partners in the revolutionary coalition, Khomeini sanctioned the violent suppression of the leftist and secular elements. The most important group eliminated in the process in street and house-to-house fighting was the Islamic radical group the Mujahidin-e Khalq. The Iranian state and the revolutionary structures were brought under clerical control. Once the revolutionary power struggle ended with the complete victory of his supporters, Khomeini sought to maintain unity between the conservative and the radical clerics and their respective allies. He also oversaw the constitutional development of the Islamic theocratic republic he had founded, endorsing what came to be called the “governmental commandment” (*hokm hukumati*) of the ruling jurist (*vali-ye faqih*). He established a Council for the Determination of the Interest of the Islamic Regime (*majma’-e tashkhis-e maslahat-e nizām-e islāmi*) to resolve the differences between the Majlis and the Guardian Council in 1988 and ordered the revision of the 1979 constitution on a number of specific points in April 1989, shortly before his death. The amended constitution, incorporating Khomeini’s new idea of the “absolute (*mutlaqa*) mandate of the jurist,” was ratified by a referendum in July 1989, the month following his death.

Khomeini opposed the ending of the increasingly unpopular war with Iraq (1980–1988) until he was finally persuaded to accept a cease-fire in view of the gravity of the military situation on July 18, 1988. Doing this was, he said, like “drinking a cup of poison.” In the following weeks, he ordered the execution of some 3,000 members of the Mujahidin-e Khalq who had served or were serving sentences given them by revolutionary courts. The incipient collapse of communism in the last year of his life renewed Khomeini’s optimism, and he told the Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in January 1989 that he needed to learn about Islam as communism now belonged to the museum of history. Khomeini caused one final international crisis by issuing, on February 14, 1989, an injunction (*fatwa*) that sanctioned the death of the writer Salman Rushdie, who lived in England, for allegedly

insulting Prophet Muhammad in his novel *The Satanic Verses*.

Khomeini died on June 3, 1989. He was a charismatic leader of immense popularity. Millions of Iranians massed to welcome him when he returned as the Imam from exile in 1979, and a million or more joined his funeral procession after he died 10 years later.

Saïd Amir Arjomand

See also Iran; Islamic Reform; Islamic State; Shi’a Islam

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KIERKEGAARD, SØREN (1813–1855)

Søren Kierkegaard was a 19th-century Danish philosopher and theologian who produced some of the most influential works in existential philosophy and modern Protestant Christian theology. He combined these two discourses to articulate three hierarchical modes of existence that incite Christians to live a radically religious life. He offers Abraham, with his total devotion to his faith in God, as one exemplar of such a life in his famed reading of Abraham’s near sacrifice of his son Isaac in Genesis 22.

Kierkegaard’s youth was spent attending parties, operas, and the theater and spending money freely on clothes and drink, but he became more serious following his father’s death in 1838 and eventually wrote his academic thesis, *The Concept of Irony*. He studied philosophy in Berlin, where

he encountered and was critical of Hegel's concept of dialectic, which achieves resolution following the synthesis of two contradictory movements. Kierkegaard's own concept of dialectic had two components, not three, so that it results in the tension of an either/or that can be resolved only by an individual act of decision. He articulates this dialectic in *Either/Or*, published pseudonymously in 1843.

That same year, his essay *Fear and Trembling* was published under the pseudonym Johannes de Silentio. Both texts undertake examinations of the modes of existence that Kierkegaard outlines: the aesthetic, the ethical, and the religious. The aesthetic is concerned with individuality and sensuous immediacy, taking a passive attitude and allowing life to happen. Hence, the aesthetic lacks any permanent commitment, any stability or responsibility, and any sense of interiority. The ethical is marked by interiority and self-reflection, self-determination, and self-transformation in keeping with the principles of duty and responsibility. The ethical expresses the universal, as does a tragic hero or heroine who sacrifices for a moral principle. The religious, however, is singular: Having received a divine call, the religious responds in an unmediated relation to the absolute, namely, God. *Either/Or* explores the relation of the aesthetic and the ethical, while *Fear and Trembling* explores the relation of the ethical and the religious. This it does by creatively interpreting Abraham's near sacrifice of his son Isaac. For Kierkegaard, Abraham exemplifies the religious because he answers God's call to sacrifice his son—a call requiring him to do something that the ethical judges as wrong. Abraham engages in a teleological suspension of the ethical through a movement of faith, where faith names the paradoxical situation in which the singular (the religious) is higher than the universal (the ethical). Abraham realizes this paradox through a leap of faith, a concept that Kierkegaard inaugurates in this text, as he leaps from the ethical to the religious, which means that he leaps into a paradox. This makes Abraham the knight of faith, but it also reduces him to silence, for he cannot explain this paradox. Kierkegaard's subsequent texts expound on this radical faith in their attacks on Christendom.

William Robert

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KILLING FIELDS (CAMBODIA)

In April 1975, the Khmer Rouge (KR), a communist guerilla force, was victorious in Cambodia's 5-year-long civil war under the leadership of a former schoolteacher using the pseudonym Pol Pot. Almost at once, and without explaining their rationale, the KR forcibly emptied Cambodia's towns and cities; abolished money, schools, private property, courts of law, and markets; forbade religious practices; expelled foreigners and closed embassies; and set almost everybody to work in the countryside growing food. The country's entire population was forced to relocate to agricultural labor camps, a process of resettlement and political retribution in which many died in what are today referred to as the "killing fields." Everyone was forced to work 12 to 14 hours a day, every day. Children were separated from their parents to work in mobile groups or as soldiers and were encouraged to spy on adults. Buddhist monks and nuns were not allowed to practice their religion and were forced into labor brigades. Workers were fed one watery bowl of soup with a few grains of rice daily. Babies, children, adults, nonethnic Khmers, the educated urban elites, the handicapped, and the elderly were systematically killed. This was the central part of the KR plan—to preside over an extreme version of a radical Marxist-Leninist-Maoist revolution.

Between April 1975 and the 1st week of 1979, at least 14,000 men, women, and children had been held at a location in Phnom Penh designated S-21, a high school converted into a secret prison. Many of them were KR soldiers or followers who had refused to obey the extreme orders of their leaders. Tortured or threatened with torture, few

prisoners maintained their innocence for long. Considered guilty from the moment they arrived, thousands of men, women, and children were expected to confess their guilt in writing before they were taken off to be murdered. The KR had a paranoid fear of imagined enemies, and the search for them was a crucial ingredient of its bureaucratic practice. Because Cambodia's leaders subscribed to the Maoist doctrine of permanent revolution, counterrevolutionary "enemies" were continuously imagined, and purges were continuously needed to ensure the safety of the party center and to maintain the revolution's purity and momentum. Everyone held at S-21 was eventually killed; it was the regime's intent that their confessions would testify not only to their "crimes" but also to the party's omniscience and clairvoyance.

During the 3 years, 8 months, and 20 days of Pol Pot's rule, Cambodia faced its darkest days; an estimated 1.5–3 million Cambodians, some 20%–30% of the country's population, died by starvation, torture, or execution. Almost every Cambodian family lost at least one relative during this gruesome holocaust. The KR state of Democratic Kampuchea was toppled on December 25, 1978, after Vietnamese forces entered Phnom Penh to address the KR murder of hundreds of ethnic Vietnamese along the Vietnam-Cambodia border region. This, however, did not mean freedom for the people of Cambodia; instead, it set the stage for a two-decade-long war in Cambodia. The Vietnamese finally withdrew from Cambodia in 1989, leaving their client regime, the People's Republic of Kampuchea, to fend for itself against the KR and its allies. For 30 years, the KR haunted the Cambodian landscape and people through attempts to identify old KR leaders and charge them with war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The KR displaced many Cambodians. Neighboring Southeast Asian countries, especially Thailand, became a safe haven from oppression. Cambodian refugees emigrated abroad as well, to the United States, France, Australia, and New Zealand. Today, one of the largest Cambodian diasporic communities is in Long Beach, California.

Cambodians and Cambodia are still struggling to understand and heal from the dark days of the KR era. In August 2010, the United Nations-backed tribunal convicted Kaing Guek Eav, known as Duch, for war crimes against humanity in what

was the first trial of a major KR figure. Duch's sentence was reduced to no more than 19 years in prison. Cambodians all over the world reacted negatively to this and viewed it as justice being denied.

The collective trauma of the Killing Fields has yet to be healed. Many Cambodian refugees have battled posttraumatic stress syndrome, which has hindered their ability to acculturate into their host countries. In refugee communities, the lack of financial resources to construct Buddhist temples resulted in the creation of Buddhist shrines in private dwellings, which became important sites for children's moral education and socialization.

Jonathan H. X. Lee

See also Cambodia; Marxism; Southeast Asia; Vietnam

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KING, CORETTA SCOTT (1927–2006)

Though she was well known as the wife of Martin Luther King Jr., Coretta Scott King became a human rights activist and leader of international stature in her own right in the decades following her husband's assassination in 1968. Most notably, she founded and served as the first president and CEO of the King Center for Nonviolent Social Change in Atlanta, led the more than 15-year-long campaign that established Martin Luther King Jr. Day as a U.S. national holiday, and played a prominent role in the Free South Africa movement. Scott King also stood for an expansive interpretation of her husband's legacy by emphasizing

gender justice; supporting LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender) rights; lending her name to the Coretta Scott King Book Awards for children's literature; and bringing attention to proper dietary practices by becoming a vegan.

Mrs. King had come to activism before meeting her husband, and the Kings' marital partnership was always understood by the couple as also a political partnership for social justice. Even while courting, they actively discussed their mutual commitment to devoting themselves to social change. In a 1967 interview, Dr. King explained, "I wish I could say, to satisfy my masculine ego, that I led her down this path but I must say we went down together" (Applebome, 2006).

While Coretta gave her primary energies to raising the couple's four children, her marriage was unconventional in its other-centeredness and the degree to which Scott King willingly risked her own safety for the movement. As she herself put it, "I did not just marry a man, I married a destiny" (Vivian, 2006, p. 109).

When whites bombed our home in Montgomery, Alabama, I was in the home with my infant daughter. We could have been killed, but I refused to give in to fear. . . . I never saw my own life as personal, outside of the collective good. I never separated my love of family, church and community. (Reynolds, 2006, p. 4)

Coretta Scott King also anticipated the increasing attention her husband would give to the international stage toward the end of his life when in 1962 she served as a Women's Strike for Peace delegate to the 17-nation Disarmament Conference in Geneva, Switzerland. Scott King had previously witnessed the independence of Ghana with her husband in 1957. Later in life, Scott King's activism led her to speaking engagements throughout Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America. She became the first woman to deliver Harvard's Class Day address and the first woman to preach at a statutory service at London's iconic St. Paul's Cathedral, witnessed the historic 1993 handshake between Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Chairman Yasser Arafat, lobbied for peace in the administration of U.S. presidents from John F. Kennedy to George W. Bush, stood with Nelson Mandela as he was sworn in as president of South

Africa, and held audiences with Pope John Paul II, the 14th Dalai Lama, and Archbishop Desmond Tutu. By the end of her life, Martin Luther King Jr. Day was being celebrated in 100 nations, and Coretta Scott King herself had become a global icon for peace and justice.

Aaron S. Gross

See also Equality; Human Rights; King, Martin Luther, Jr.; Nonviolence; Politics and Religion

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Website

The King Center: www.thekingcenter.org

KING, MARTIN LUTHER, JR. (1929–1968)

Martin Luther King Jr. was born in 1929 in Atlanta, Georgia, where his father was the pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church. King earned his bachelor of arts degree from Morehouse College, his bachelor of divinity degree from Crozer Theological Seminary, and his doctorate of philosophy from Boston University. King spent his adult life as a Baptist pastor and highly influential civil rights leader. He was assassinated on April 4, 1968, in Memphis, Tennessee.

King is recognized nationally and internationally for his work as a leader in the U.S. civil rights movement and for his advocacy of nonviolence.

He was instrumental in organizing nonviolent boycotts, direct-action protests, sit-ins, and marches against racial segregation and discrimination. King framed racial segregation and racism as sinful and immoral, and he argued that ending segregation and racial inequality was a moral imperative. As a nationally recognized spokesperson for the civil rights movement, King pushed the U.S. government to pass laws ensuring equal rights for all U.S. citizens (including the Civil Rights Act) and to enforce newly passed laws that made racial segregation illegal.

King is known worldwide for his belief in, and advocacy of, nonviolence. He based his belief in nonviolence on the Christian concept of agape, or Christian love. While he viewed nonviolence as an expression of Christian love, his understanding of nonviolence was also influenced by a number of other sources, including Henry David Thoreau's *Essay on Civil Disobedience*, Mohandas Gandhi's work and thought, and Black nonviolent activists such as Baynard Rustin and Glenn Smiley.

King received international recognition in 1964, when he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his leadership in the civil rights movement and his practice of nonviolent protest and resistance in the fight against racism, poverty, and inequality. In addition to his work for racial equality in the United States, King spoke out against poverty, colonialism, and war, especially the Vietnam War. "Beyond Vietnam," a speech King gave on the Vietnam War in 1967, is often seen as a prime example of how he viewed nonviolence as an important philosophy and practice both nationally and internationally.

Emily Linthicum

See also Equality; Gandhi, Mohandas; Human Rights; King, Coretta Scott; Nonviolence; Politics and Religion; Racism

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KINGSHIP

The institution of kingship has been fairly widespread globally from ancient times, through the medieval period, and into the contemporary era. The biblical and Greco-Roman worlds and the great dynasties of Egypt were characterized by a succession of kings, emperors, and queens who made their mark in history. Many of these monarchies were sacral in character.

Indeed, the link between religion and governance has a long history, and the link is especially evident when governance is perceived as leadership, as illustrated by the concept of the "divine right" of kings, which was to gain currency in the history of Europe. Thus, some previous and existing forms of political power are dependent on structured belief systems. The institution of divine kingship is one extreme manifestation of the intersection of religion and governance. There is now a tendency in the West, particularly in Europe and the United States, to distinguish between religion and society or to make a separation between church and state; these relationships, which have become contentious, are in actual fact less distinct in many other parts of the world. A striking example is the case of Africa.

Ever since James Frazer delineated divine kinship in 1890 with his theories on the pattern of myths and ritual, the focus of investigation has been largely on Africa. The notion of divine kingship was closely related to Ancient Egypt, where kings ruled at least since about 3000 BCE, when the Pharaohs, the early Egyptian kings, came to power. Other kingdoms developed in North Africa and large areas south of the Sahara, such as the Yoruba and Benin kingdoms (Nigeria), the Asante kingdom (Ghana), and the Zulu, Sotho, and Swazi kingdoms (southern Africa). Edward Evans-Pritchard's socio-anthropological study on the divine kingship of the Shilluk (Sudan) espouses the place of the institution against the backdrop that the kingship, not the king, is divine, that divine kingship is as much a political as a ritual phenomenon, and that the office must be viewed in the total context of the social

structure. Mary Douglas demonstrates the significance of institutions in shaping the minds of individuals in society and their influence on collective action.

The institution of kinship in Africa is pervasive, a phenomenon that is deeply ingrained in the sociopolitical fabric and the religio-cultural experience of virtually all African societies. Not all African societies have had traditional rulers in the form of kings, queens, or chiefs. In other contexts, communities are governed by elders, the clan, or village heads. But where kings and chiefs existed, their office is usually regarded as having been divinely instituted or maintained. The ritualization of the office does not only make the king stand out among all others in society, it also keeps him in constant touch with the source of power. The traditional rulers hold a significant place in African life and concepts by virtue of their office. The institution of kingship embraces political, ritual, and cosmological aspects. According to John Mbiti, these kings and chiefs are looked on both as political heads and as sacred personages who symbolize the prosperity and welfare of their nations. Kings are political and economic role models, mystical and religious heads, and the divine symbol of their people's health and welfare. They are significant for their ritual and constitutional aspects, which tend to form a common pattern.

As a sacred and divine institution, kings were also considered to be sacred and divine, and the progeny of the Supreme Being whose duty it was to establish and maintain cosmic balance and social order. In several African societies, one of the several attributes bestowed on the Supreme Deity is as the Great King and Ruler of the universe. This indicates that the people consider the deity to rule not only in human affairs but also over nature. The deity's portrait as king, conveying supreme authority and absolute power, is very much colored by that of human rulers, the institution of kingship. The king acts as the intermediary between the royal ancestors and the whole nation. Some mythical narratives indicate that some divinities were deified ancestors who were previously earthly kings. The *Obi*, king of Benin (Edo-speaking peoples of Nigeria), represents the tradition of kingship where monarchs are viewed as sacred and living deities participating with the gods and ancestors in a sacred divine community.

Historically, the kingship institution is indispensable and fundamental to African social, cultural, political, economic, and religious life. A people's worldview is central for understanding their institution of kingship as a traditional system of governance.

The institution of kingship and chieftainship could be viewed from the perspective of its place in the center of the traditional political system and as it relates to the generation of the political values that are cherished and practiced in traditional politics. In the traditional African political practice, the will of the people plays a significant and crucial role, for the king or chief has to rule with the consent of the people. This people's will is usually expressed formally in the kingmakers' council of chiefs and in other constituted assemblies. Royal lineages are significant stakeholders in indigenous governance. Among the Ashanti of Ghana, kingmakers are responsible for the nomination and election of the king. The king is chosen from the royal lineage, and the crowning is done by the queen mother.

Kingship as an institution is not simply a system of traditional governance; there are crucial elements with cosmological and epistemological underpinnings. African cosmological formulations of sacred kingship are anchored on myths. Myths surround the origin and person of the king. Among the Yoruba peoples of West Africa, sacred kingship is an ancient institution where the *Oduduwa* (the emperor of the Yoruba people) is conceived in myths as the progenitor of the original crowned kings. Rulers are therefore treated as special persons with special roles, venerated, and well respected by their subjects. They occupy a special office and symbolize the link between the human and the supersensible world. Cosmological and cosmogonic myths legitimize the kingship institution and imbue them with a huge dose of sacrality. The king's role in African cosmological systems was to exercise his authority as the earthly viceroy of the Supreme Deity and of divine power and to perpetuate cosmic order by maintaining justice and fulfilling ritual obligations. Thus, their power and strength lies in the religious myths, traditions, and taboos that eclipse them.

In modern-day Africa, kings or chiefs are still to be found performing ritual functions. The Asantehene, king of the Asante (Ghana), continues to observe

ancestral rites such as the *Adae* ceremonies. It is the Asantehene who enters the sacred shrine of the ancestors and makes food offerings to the sacred stools of royal ancestors on behalf of the kingdom. Other religious rites that demand the king's presence and patronage are the annual purification ceremonies, the harvest offering, and rituals to appease particular divinities. Such communal rituals celebrate and reinforce the intimate link between humanity and the spirit world.

The power and sacrosanctity of indigenous kingship systems in Africa was adversely affected during the colonial and postindependent era. The administrative, social, and religious changes that took place weakened the indigenous kingship institution. The expansion of Christianity and Islam in several African countries has affected the institution by sapping the spiritual authority of the king. The power and the religious significance of the kings and chiefs have also been undermined by new forms of governance and under modern conditions. There was progressive secularization of the king's or chief's office not only by erstwhile colonial governments but also by some national governments.

Nonetheless, the resilience of sacral kinship is evident in how independent African states are constantly and consciously negotiating the office of kingship, the status and roles, within the purview of modern democratic governance. Several African countries have maintained or transformed the traditional structures of "kingmakers," the "house of chiefs," for installing and upholding the checks and power balances of kings or even for dethroning or destooling them. "Councils of traditional rulers" and "ministries of chieftaincy affairs" have acted as advisory bodies to national parliaments to function with consultative power. For instance, in postindependent Ghana, as in other parts of Africa, governments have continued to ensure the sociopolitical, ritual, and constitutional relevance of kings/chiefs, culminating in the Chieftaincy Act of 1971. This act was strengthened in 1992 and subsequently to create an interface between traditional and Western democratic governance structures. This reinforces the centrality of kingship in several African societies in the face of modernity and globalization. Although the rise of modern nation-states has diminished the power and influence of kings, the institution of kingship still holds

crucial meaning and relevance for many Africans. Kings, chiefs, and other traditional rulers remain living symbols of ethnic identity, sociopolitical cohesion, and cultural history.

Afe Adogame

See also Africa; Divine Law; Politics and Religion; Religion and State

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KIRIBATI

Known as *Tungaru* in the indigenous language, the South Pacific island nation of Kiribati was previously known as the Gilbert Islands (from the local word for "Gilbert's") and is composed of 33 islands inhabited largely by Christians. Located at the intersection of Micronesian and Polynesian cultural areas, nearly all the citizens are indigenous, living in the Tungaru chain of islands, with more than one third of the total population residing in urban south Tarawa. Fifty-five percent of the residents adhere to Roman Catholic Christianity, with the indigenous Kiribati Protestant Church claiming another 36%. Smaller religious communities include the Church of the Latter-Day Saints (2%, though the church the independently claimed 11% of the population in 2009), the Baha'i (2%), and the Seventh-Day Adventists (2%). Christian missionary activity has greatly influenced traditional beliefs, but spirits (known

as *anti*) remain important figures and enjoy wide respect into the 21st century. In traditional Kiribati mythology, the world was created by the giant spider Nareau, who was followed by *anti*, half-*anti*, and finally humans. Traditional deities were thought to take the form of animals or natural phenomena and had great symbolic importance as totems for communities; a Kiribatian's island of origin remains an important marker of identity that predates colonization.

Most westerly islands have had residents for more than 3,000 years, while other islands in the archipelago have only been inhabited since the 20th century. Colonials from Great Britain arrived on the islands in 1837, soon followed by Protestant missionaries from the Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions and the London Missionary Society in 1857 and 1870, respectively. Catholic missionaries from the Order of the Sacred Heart arrived in 1888, and the resulting rivalry still resounds in the demographics of Kiribati, with mostly Catholic northern islands and a largely Protestant south. In 1870, the British replaced the clan system that had been operative on the islands since the 1400s, and they would later abolish the monarchic structure in 1963 to give governance to councils of elders (*unimane*), which governed daily local activities into the 21st century. After it officially became a British protectorate in 1892, the history of Kiribati was dramatically shaped by World War II; several islands were occupied by Japanese forces, and the battle of Tarawa in 1943 remains one of the bloodiest in the history of the U.S. Marine Corps. Kiribati gained full self-governance on July 12, 1979, and established the central national government, which was still extant at the time of this writing. The United States had claimed rights to some of the Phoenix and Line islands and had used them for early nuclear tests but relinquished all rights in 1983.

At the beginning of the 21st century, the nation was ideologically divided into a conservative south and a more progressive northern and central region, which follows the introduction of the varied Christianities active in Kiribati. Where a largely French and English clergy previously held sway over the population, they now have been replaced by more indigenous religious officials. Kiribati's plurality cannot be spoken of monolithically; where some spirit mediums and other practitioners

from the nation's precolonial past are still active, they are often regarded with a degree of ambivalence by the extant communities. Some locales allow preaching and missionizing from foreign sources, while the traditional leadership of others has repelled non-Christian preachers. All religious life in Kiribati has its greatest threat from the consequences of global warming, as a great many of the atolls in the nation rise a little over 13 feet above sea level, putting the people at risk from the rising seas.

John Soboslai

See also Missions and Missionaries; Pacific Islands/Oceania; Postcolonialism; Religion and State

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KOREA, DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF (NORTH KOREA)

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK, North Korea) is located between China and South Korea and is one of the last communist states in the world. The state is operated by one party, the Korean Workers' Party. The governing ideology of the state is *Juche-Sasang* (the idea of self-reliance developed by Kim Il Sung). Owing to its severe centralized political regime and the eradication of religion in its history, it is believed that no religious groups remain in North Korea. Since 1988, however, North Korea has changed its religious policy and allowed religious groups to

have their places and practices of worship. Even after this change of religious policy, there is no consensus of opinion on the existence of religion in North Korea: Some say the change is mere political propaganda to gain international economic support; others recognize the shift as an open door to a more fully actualized religious freedom in North Korea. This entry reviews the nation's establishment of religion and the changes in religious policy throughout its history; it also discusses the foundational national ideology, *Juche-Sasang*, that buttresses North Korean society, providing a worldview that includes the nation's view on religion.

Establishment of the Nation and the Change of Religious Policy

Even though Korea went through Japanese occupation from 1910 to 1945, it had been one nation until it was divided into North Korea and South Korea in 1945 at the Yalta Conference at the end of World War II. Under the agreement of the conference concerning the temporal trusteeship over Korea until a joint election of the northern and southern parts of Korea, North Korea was subject to the influence of the Soviet Union and South Korea to that of the United States. A joint election, however, did not take place, and North and South Korea established two different political regimes: North Korea established a communist regime called the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in 1948; South Korea founded a democratic regime named the Republic of Korea in the same year.

In the establishment and development of North Korea, religion played a politically significant role: There were times when religion or religious groups were used to help stabilize the regime; at other times, religion was the target of eradication efforts for the sake of the proletarian revolution in North Korea.

1945 to 1953

According to Chosun, the Central News Agency of North Korea, at the time of liberation from Japan, there were 1,500,000 followers of Cheondogyo, 375,000 Buddhists, 200,000 Protestants, and 57,000 Catholics in North Korea. Thus, almost 22% of the entire North Korean population

were religious adherents at that time. To establish and stabilize its political power, the communist group in North Korea had to have the support of religious groups. Therefore, the communist group initiated religious organizations within the major religions: (a) the Cheong-woo Party in Cheondogyo, (b) the Chosun Buddhist league and three other Buddhist organizations, and (c) the Chosun Christian league. While the communist regime received political support from these centralized organizations, the regime persecuted other groups of religious believers who wanted to have a north-south unified government and did not agree with the establishment of the communist regime in North Korea. Clerics and religious leaders were arrested and executed, and religious sanctuaries were closed. The land owned by religious groups was forfeited. Citizens were required to carry an identification card that states one's religion, and as a result, discrimination followed in the workplace.

1953 to 1972

After the Korean War (1950–1953), religious persecution continued and became more severe as the government gained power and began to build a communist society. People of religious faith were considered reactionaries and anticommunists. Religious leaders were executed, and all adherents who did not recant were held in concentration camps, where harsh labor and brainwashing were enforced. Religious sanctuaries were converted to nurseries or classrooms. Religious symbols in buildings were removed. There was reregistration of citizens from 1966 to 1967, which made it possible to classify citizens into 51 subcategories, giving each group a rank: a follower of Cheondogyo was ranked at 32, a Christian at 37, a Buddhist at 38, a Catholic at 39, and a Confucianist at 40. Even though religious freedom was ensured under the constitution of North Korea, religious practice in reality was banished through this harsh eradication process.

1972 to the Present

Until the early 1970s, Kim Il Sung and other North Korean leaders claimed that there were no religious adherents in North Korea. From 1972,

however, North Korea reactivated the centralized religious organizations that had been dormant for 20 years: (a) the Chosun Christian League, (b) the Chosun Buddhist league, and (c) the Chosun Cheondogyo Central Guidance Committee. Through these organizations, the North Koreans also sought to join international religious groups such as the World Council of Churches and the Christian Peace Conference. House churches were introduced and opened to international visitors and journalists. Religious scriptures and hymnals were published.

More changes in religious policies have come about since 1988. Under Article 68 of the 1992 constitution, which approves religious ceremonies and the construction of religious buildings, Bongsu Church and Jangchoong Cathedral were built in Pyongyang in 1988. Another Protestant Chilgol church and an Orthodox Jungbaik church were built in 1992 and 2006, respectively. Kim Il Sung University opened a religious department in 1989 for the first time in the nation's history. As these changes took place, the changing attitude toward religion was reflected in the way religion was described in both the *Chosunmal Daesajeon* (Unabridged Korean Dictionary) and the *Chosun Daebaekwasajeon* (Encyclopedia). Religion and superstition, which had been equated and criticized, were differentiated, and a neutral tone was adopted toward religion.

These enormous changes in religious policy do not necessarily mean that there is actual religious freedom in North Korea. Both the 1972 and 1992 constitutions contain specific clauses that can be used as a justification for the suppression of religious freedom: Antireligious propaganda was ensured in the 1972 constitution for guaranteeing the state's right to educate people about the negativity of religion; the 1992 constitution also clarifies that no one may use religion to attract foreign influences that would harm the social order. The religious freedom stated in the constitution is only about having religious buildings and ceremonies with the state's permission. Religious freedom can always be limited by the central authority to preserve the safety of the state, and religious practices in private are still prohibited. Testimonies of defectors from 2000 to 2008 support the contention that there is still no religious freedom in North Korea.

Juche-Sasang (The Idea of Self-Reliance) and Religion

Ever since Kim Il Sung promoted the idea of *Juche* (self-reliance) in a speech in 1955, *Juche-Sasang* has been established as the nation's governing ideology, emphasizing ideological and political independence, economic self-sustenance, and self-defense as a means of national defense. After 35 years of Japanese occupation and 3 years of the Korean War, the North Korean regime has held on to *Juche*—self-reliance in every aspect of the life of the nation and its people. For this reason, *Juche-Sasang* sustains North Korea's profound nationalism and is also deeply embedded in the nation's consciousness as the exclusive standard to scrutinize other ideologies and religions.

Juche-Sasang's views of religion have often been used as an instrument of foreign encroachment and as justification for capitalist exploitation. *Juche-Sasang* acrimoniously criticizes such religions as antirevolutionary and antinationalistic. Religion can only be condoned when it is used for a nationalistic goal such as the unification of Korea or for upholding state order.

There are several major religions in North Korea: (a) Cheondogyo, (b) Buddhism, (c) Christianity (Protestant and Catholic), (d) Confucianism, and (e) other indigenous religions. Shamanism is regarded as a superstition and is strictly prohibited. Among these religions, Christianity comes under the harshest criticism, since the government believes that it was used by Western imperialists to penetrate the Korean Peninsula. *Juche-Sasang* acknowledges the uncorrupt and populist nature of ancient Christianity and of Liberation Theology, which serves the needs of the people. However, it is against the belief in God and the afterlife, which weakens the communist goal of *Juche-Sasang*. Therefore, Christian evangelism in any form is strictly prohibited. Cheondogyo is an indigenous religion, meaning a "belief of the heavenly way." It asserts that God, the Lord of heaven, is in every person. Therefore, they cherish human rights and human equality. Due to the socialist and nationalist vision of Cheondogyo, *Juche-Sasang* positively assesses its religious values but does not exempt it from *Juche* criticism. Buddhism is also under criticism because it was used by the ruling classes during the feudal period. The artistic and architectural values of the Buddhist temples are more appreciated than the religion

itself. And the maintenance of these national treasures is regarded as the major role of the Buddhist monks. Confucianism is regarded as philosophy rather than religion. *Juche-Sasang* finds valuable essence in Confucian teachings such as *Samgangoryoon* (the three bonds and the five moral rules in human relations), even though it criticizes its use during the feudal periods by the ruling classes.

Juche-Sasang does not acknowledge the need of any deity or belief systems other than *Juche-Sasang* in the lives of North Koreans. *Juche-Sasang* is proclaimed to fulfill all the defects of the existing religions and enables the actualization of the paradise of communist society in North Korea. *Juche-Sasang* is the superior religion: Those religions that collaborate with *Juche-Sasang* are excused; those that oppose it are prohibited.

JuneHee Yoon

See also Communism; Confucianism; Indigenous Religions; Korea, Republic of (South Korea); Liberation Theology; Mahayana Buddhism; Shamanism

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KOREA, REPUBLIC OF (SOUTH KOREA)

The Republic of Korea is an East Asian country located in the southern part of the Korean

Peninsula. To the north is the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea), which has been separated from South Korea since 1945. Its west coast meets the Yellow Sea, across which lies China; its landmass extends out from the Asian continent into the East Sea, toward Japan.

Korea has a long history, beginning with the legendary founder, Dangun, dating back to 2333 BCE, and continuing over several dynasties such as the Gojoseon, the Goguryeo, the Baekje, the Shilla, the Goryeo, and the Joseon. The modern Republic of Korea was established after its liberation from Japanese colonial rule (1910–1945) and founded as a Western-style democratic government. It has been recognized as one of the fastest developing countries in the world since the late 20th century. Its economic development has resulted from advanced technological successes in the areas of semiconductor devices, mobile phones, steel production, automobile manufacturing, shipbuilding, and other industries.

This entry reviews the historical development of religion in Korea and the unique dynamics of contemporary Korean religious life.

Historical Development of Korean Religion and Its Characteristics

In Korea, there have been many religions such as indigenous shamanism (*Musok*), folk religions, Buddhism, Confucianism, Daoism, Christianity (Protestantism and Catholicism), and new religions. The historical development of such Korean religions is quite separate from the secular and political histories of the dynasties. The “age of native belief systems,” reflecting mainly shamanistic patterns, was the first framework of Korean religion. Then, new religious transformations emerged through two cultural contacts: The first of these occurred when the Asian religions of Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism were introduced with the influx of Chinese culture in about first century BCE, and this began “the age of traditional religions,” transforming the existing primordial religious symbolism. The second contact was derived when Western Christianity was introduced with the influx of Western culture in the 19th century, and this brought about “the age of multireligions.” In other words, archetypal Korean religion can be said to have

become cosmopolitan in a cross-cultural dimension that included religions of both the East and the West.

Although most Korean religious traditions have been imported from outside the Korean peninsula, it is important to note that these religions have included their own Korean peculiarities. For example, the phenomena of “possession” in Korean and Siberian shamanism are different. Siberian shamans generally use fire, undertaking “soul journeys,” but Korean shamans use bells and mirrors to cure illnesses and practice “stepping on sharp blades” (*jakdutagi*) to prove their spiritual powers. In the case of Confucianism, whereas the Confucian classics and rituals were imported from China, classical Confucian traditions such as “rituals in honor of Confucius’s birth” (*Seokjeonje*) are today better preserved in Korea than in China. Another example of Korean peculiarity is the symbol of “ten longevities” (*sipjangsaeng*) in Korean Daoism, which is not found in Chinese Daoism. Furthermore, the “Shrine of Mountain Gods” (*sansingak*) and the “Shrine of the Big Dipper” (*chilseonggak*) in Korean Buddhist temples, which uniquely demonstrate the syncretism between Buddhism and popular beliefs, are not found in China. Korean Catholicism has taken pride in its unparalleled history of mission that was first brought into Korea not by any Western missionary but by Koreans themselves from China. Also, Korean Protestantism has developed distinctive religious practices such as “dawn prayer meetings” (*saebyeokgidohoe*), “public scripture reading ritual” (*sagyeonghoe*), and “paying regular visits to members” (*simbang*).

However, it might be more important to understand that a Korean may hold multilayered religious beliefs simultaneously because “Korean religion” is essentially pluralistic, manifesting one’s inherent religiosity or religious mind through many different experiences. Confronted with life crises, for instance, a Korean may try to solve problems with concrete and practical methods (shamanistic approach), respect and follow a set of ideal virtues (the Confucian approach), or dismiss them as a mere illusion (Buddhist approach). Sometimes Koreans put up with the harsh realities of life by accepting them as temporary conditions of life with an eschatological vision (the Christian approach).

Today’s Religious Situation in Korea

According to the census carried out by the Korean National Statistical Office, in 2005, the population of the Republic of Korea was about 47 million and about 53% (almost 25 million) of the whole reported to have a religion. Considering the previous figures, the religious population has increased quite rapidly (31.4% during the 10 years from 1985, 10.5% during the 10 years from 1995) every 10 years. The distribution of the religious population is also worth noting: 10,726,463 (22.8%) were Buddhists, 8,616,438 (18.3%) were Protestants, 5,146,147 (10.9%) were Catholics, 129,907 were Won Buddhists, 104,575 (0.2%) were Confucians, and the other religious population was insignificantly small. Above all, the number of Christians (Protestants and Catholics) exceeded that of Buddhists. Similar tendencies have been noted in terms of religious organizations. According to a government report, there were 22,072 Buddhist temples, 60,785 Protestant churches, 2,386 Catholic cathedrals, 730 Confucian shrines, and 548 Won Buddhist temples. Alternatively, there were 41,362 Buddhist priests, 124,310 Protestant ministers, 13,704 Catholic priests, and 11,190 Won Buddhist priests in 2005.

The Korea World Mission Association reported that about 14,000 members of the Korean Protestant missionaries were delegated to more than 170 foreign countries in 2005. It was only 120 years ago that Protestantism was transmitted to Korea. Now, however, the Yoido Full Gospel Church, the biggest Pentecostal church in the world, with 800,000 members, is located in Seoul. Catholicism was transmitted to Korea about 220 years ago and was severely persecuted in earlier times; today, it is widely practiced, and the number of Catholics in Korea has increased by no less than 74% during the past decade (1995–2005). The pope visited Korea twice in 1984 and held a Mass to canonize 103 martyrs all at once. Korea has become one of the most influential countries in the world of Catholicism.

On the other hand, Buddhism remained limited in its effort to revive the religious life of lay Buddhists, ever since it was restricted to remote mountain temples during the Confucianism-dominated Joseon Dynasty. However, the chances of growth increased in the 1980s as Buddhist broadcasting stations became more numerous and

“urban Buddhist missionary centers” started to emerge. Although very few people identify themselves as Confucians, large numbers of people return home to visit their ancestral graves or hold Confucian memorial services for ancestors during folk holidays such as the Lunar New Year or the Full Moon Harvest Day. Arguably, Confucianism is still influential in the daily life of the Korean people. There are also many shamanistic shrines, where shamans worship images of the General Spirit and Child Spirit placed on both sides of the Buddha and use the Buddhist emblem as their insignia. Most daily newspapers have sections of fortune tellers’ predictions for the day, and fate consulting through the telephone or the Internet has become a big business. Some new religions such as the Unification Church or *Daesoonjinrihoe*, currently the representative order of *Jeungsangyo*, have become powerful in terms of the physical size of their headquarters and the numbers who participate in their religious activities. In addition, the real “felt effect” of new religions in Korea is greater when seen from the outside, because they are often reported through the media despite the small number of their members.

Because various religions are coexisting, inter-religious conflicts have been often reported in contemporary Korean society. There are Protestants who cut off the heads of traditional Korean “totem” poles (*Jangseung*), which have long been the symbols of tutelary deities of towns. There have been conflicts between new folk religions supporting the construction of sanctuaries dedicated to the legendary founder of Korea, Dangun, and Protestant groups objecting to it. There have also been cases of fanatical Protestants damaging statues of the Buddha with axes or drawing the sign of the cross on the foreheads of the statues.

In this context, it might be said that Korea, hidden away as a country of “morning calm,” has changed into a country of religious fervor since the beginning of the modern period. In particular, Koreans have come to experience a strong religious innovation unprecedented in any other country, as the country witnesses the clash of traditional religions with the completely alien, but powerful, Western Christianity.

Chongsuh Kim

See also China; Clash of Civilizations Thesis; Japan; Korea, Democratic People’s Republic of (North Korea); Pluralism; Religious Dialogue; Syncretism

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KOSOVO

Kosovo refers to the region in the central Balkans situated southwest of Serbia, north of Macedonia, and west of Albania. Kosovo declared independence from Serbia in 2008, where it was previously an autonomous province in the Serbian federation. It has been largely recognized internationally as an independent state, with Serbia and its ally Russia dissenting. Ethnically, Kosovo has traditionally been occupied by Albanians, Serbs, and Roma people, but in the past two centuries it has consisted of an overwhelming majority of Albanians.

The relationship between the Serbs and Albanians has been decidedly contentious over their respective histories. In 1999, Yugoslavian President Slobodan Milošević launched an assault to remove the threat of the Kosovo Liberation Army and to restore the Serbian “heartland” by cleansing the area of its non-Serbian residents. The Serbian police and military forces were resisted by the Kosovo Liberation Army, which equally sought to drive out Serbian citizens from the province’s borders (especially the recent Serbian immigrants from the Krajina region of Croatia). Atrocities were extensive, numbering around 11,000 by U.S. State Department estimates (10,000 by Serbs, 1,000 by

Albanians), with almost 4,000 persons missing by Red Cross estimates in the year 2000. NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) sought to end the violence by launching a bombing campaign on Serbian targets from March 24 through June 11, 1999. The bombing, coupled with Milošević's resurrected indictment at The Hague, effectively ended the conflict. The region was subsequently administered by the United Nations and NATO until 2008, when Kosovo declared independence.

In Kosovo, ethnic and religious identities have been forged in the fires of competition for power and legitimacy. Albanians in Kosovo are almost entirely Sunnī Muslim, and Serbs are almost entirely Serbian Orthodox. Serbians revere Kosovo for specifically religious reasons. Kosovo was the area of the founding of the Serbian Orthodox Church; many of the most important monasteries and shrines in the Serbian Orthodoxy are in Kosovo. For Albanians, the significance of Kosovo is strictly as a traditional place of habitation. Albanians are one of the most ancient ethnic groups on the Balkan Peninsula, tracing their heritage to the ancient Illyrians. Serbs revere Kosovo not only for its religious importance but also as the birthplace of the Serbian state. Serbs trace a majority presence in this city from the 9th century until the 14th century. Considerable amounts of money have been spent, and a floodtide of publications issued, in an effort to prove the residential legitimacy of both groups, usually in service to the deep ethnic mythology surrounding Kosovo. There are several things, however, that are generally agreed on by more neutral scholars. First, the basic ethnic makeup of Serbs and Albanians has been in place since the seventh century CE, when the arrival of the Slavs from the north established the structure we see now. Second, after the battle of Kosovo in 1389, many Serbs abandoned the area of Kosovo for refuge beyond the grasp of the encroaching Ottoman power. Third, the Ottomans encouraged immigration to Kosovo by Albanian Muslims to supplant the indigenous population as a reward for adherence to Islam. And finally, the nationalist revival of the 19th century reignited concern over the ethnic makeup of Kosovo, which led in turn to many of the conflicts of the 20th and 21st centuries.

Christopher M. B. Allison

See also Albania; Macedonia; Serbia; Yugoslavia

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KUMBHA MELA

The Hindu festival, *Kumbha Mela*, which occurs every 12 years primarily at the confluence of the Ganges and Jumna rivers in North India, attracts millions of pilgrims to the site, which is regarded as the largest regular gathering of humans for any reason anywhere in the world. Religious *melas*, or festivals, are a fundamental part of every major religious tradition, and arguably, no other religion celebrates more festivals than does Hinduism. From the small village *mela* to large national events, *melas* are an integral part of the lives of Hindus. Of all the *melas* that occur in India, the largest by far is the *Kumbha Mela*.

Origins

Hindu Puranic literature tells of a time when, early in the current cycle of ages, the demonic forces in the spirit world, known as *asuras*, had grown in might, while that of the spirits of good, known as *devatas*, had greatly waned. Vishnu, the preserving aspect of the Divine in Hinduism, informed the devatas that they could regain power and attain various precious treasures in the process by churning the divine ocean of milk. Most important of these treasures was *amrita*, the nectar of immortality. However, because of their weakened state, the devatas would need to secure the assistance of the asuras to accomplish the feat. This they did by promising the demons a share of the *amrita*, a promise they did not intend to keep. The great Mount Mandara was put into the ocean of milk to serve as a churning rod, while a giant serpent named Vasuki was wrapped around the mountain and used as the churning rope, with the devatas and the asuras each holding one end of the serpent. As the churning began, various items emerged from the ocean, including a wish-yielding cow, a sacred white elephant, jewels, *apsaras* (divine dancing girls), wisdom, and also deadly poison.

However, the one item that both groups sought the most to obtain was the *amrita*.

When the nectar finally came forth in a *kumbha*, or pitcher, an asura immediately grabbed it and was about to take a drink when Vishnu, disguised as an attractive young female, seduced the demon into giving up the container. As soon as he did so, one of the devatas, Jayanta, grabbed the pitcher and fled, with the demons in hot pursuit. During the chase through the three worlds, the nether realms, earth, and the heavens, Jayanta stopped at several places to rest, four of these on earth. Each time he set the *kumbha* down, a few drops of nectar spilled, thereby sanctifying four places: Prayag, Haridwar, Nasik, and Ujjain. Jayanta was pursued for 12 days before he was able to escape the asuras and give the devatas final possession of the nectar for themselves. Since it is the Hindu belief that 1 day of the devatas is equal to 1 human year, the *Kumbha Mela* takes place every 12 years to celebrate the spilling of the nectar on earth.

The Mela, Past and Present

The earliest historical account of the *Kumbha Mela* comes from Hiuen-Tsang, a Chinese Buddhist pilgrim who visited India in the seventh century. He describes a month-long event that occurred on a 5-year cycle that was attended and financed by King Harshavardhan. At that *mela*, an estimated half a million people participated, including countless ascetics and mendicants and people of other religious faiths. Over the centuries, participation by members of the various ascetic and monastic orders has become an integral and pivotal part of the festival. The presence of fighting mendicant orders is also mentioned in later medieval accounts, and their development may have been in reaction to Muslim rulers of the time and their harsh and often brutal treatment of Hindus. Periodic reference to the *mela* over the centuries suggests that it has continued throughout its history to be a consistently important gathering for Hindu commoners, ascetics, and religious teachers.

Although four locations are mentioned in the mythology of the *mela*, early historical accounts of its occurrence refer only to Prayag and Haridwar. Today, however, each of the four sites has its own version of the *Kumbha Mela* and its own 12-year

cycle. As a consequence, the festival rotates among the places every 3 years. All of the *melas* occur on the banks of sacred rivers, and the main ritual performed is bathing in the waters at those pilgrimage sites, for it is believed that at a certain astrologically determined moment during each *Kumbha Mela*, the nectar of immortality reappears in the waters. Because of the size and popularity of the festivals at Prayag and Haridwar, each of these also hosts a “half-*mela*” (*Ardha Kumbha Mela*) in the intervening 6th year. By far, the most popular of the four sites is Prayag. During the most recent *Kumbha Mela* there, held in 2001, an estimated 15–25 million people attended on or near the new moon, which is the main bathing day. Over the period of the entire month, festival officials estimated the overall attendance of more than 70 million people. By comparison, the 1998 festival at Haridwar attracted between 7 and 10 million, while the 2004 *mela* at Nasik was attended by no more than a few million. The one at Ujjain is even smaller.

Participants

Pilgrims from all over India attend the *Kumbha Mela*. The vast majority of participants come from two groups: ascetics and rural householders. At the larger festivals, there is also an increasing presence of pilgrims from neighboring countries such as Nepal, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka, as well as sightseers, photographers, and journalists from all over the world. The householders who attend may do so in the hope of having prayers fulfilled, as part of a religious vow that was taken, because of the desire to visit and bathe in the sacred Ganges (both Haridwar and Prayag are on her banks), to deposit the ashes of a deceased family member in the sacred waters, or with the goal of finding and receiving religious instructions from a guru. Their daily activities may include ritual baths and purifications, praying and chanting, performing a variety of other rituals, and wandering around the *mela* to get *darshan* (holy vision) of the various ascetics and religious teachers who have set up camps. Although the vast majority of pilgrims who visit the *melas* do so only for a few days during the month, several hundred thousand who attend the festival at Prayag take a vow to leave behind their worldly lives and homes and remain at the *mela*

for an entire month. They set up makeshift homes in tents, temporary sheds, lean-tos, or even under trees. Known as *kalpavasis*, such individuals are seen as the mainstay of the festival, and many of the ritual activities, talks, and other events that occur are for their benefit.

The *Kumbha Melas* are important to the lives of ascetics as well. Because many of them live relatively secluded or solitary lives, they often do not have much regular contact with householders or most other members of their own renunciant orders. Thus, festivals, especially the *Kumbha Melas*, are a time when many such orders come together, hold organizational meetings, make decisions regarding important issues that have arisen, and so forth. Ascetics also have the opportunity to interact with large numbers of householders who are interested in meeting and/or receiving teachings from renunciant gurus. Some of these may be householder disciples who only ever see their gurus at such festivals.

With the rapid increase of urbanization and Westernization that is occurring in India, many have suggested that religious belief and participation are waning. However, attendance at *melas* all over India is on the increase, and this is surely the case with respect to the *Kumbha Mela*. Many who attend feel that in the increasingly urbanized and secularized Indian society, festivals such as the *Kumbha* provide them a needed respite from the material world and an opportunity to focus on their religious lives and practices. Such *melas* also offer them the opportunity to participate in an ancient expression of their religious tradition and culture.

Ramdas Lamb

See also Hinduism; India; Pilgrimage

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KÜNG, HANS (B. 1928)

Hans Küng is a Swiss theologian and Roman Catholic priest and the author of numerous books on Christianity, world religions, and global ethics. He was a professor in the Catholic faculty at the University of Tübingen from 1960 until 1979, when his license to teach Catholic theology was rescinded by the Vatican. He continued as professor of Ecumenical Theology and director of the Institute for Ecumenical Research at the University of Tübingen until his retirement in 1996. He is currently the president of the Global Ethics Foundation, which seeks to contribute to global peace by encouraging the religions of the world to recognize and reflect on the ethical values that they share in common.

Küng received his licentiate in theology from the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, and he then completed his doctorate in theology at the *Institut Catholique* in Paris, where he was encouraged to write a dissertation on the theology of the Protestant theologian Karl Barth. The dissertation, published in English as *Justification: The Doctrine of Karl Barth and a Catholic Reflection*, set the direction of his career. Three theological themes, identified by Hermann Häring and repeated by Küng in his memoirs, emerged in this early work and continue to characterize his theology: (1) an interest in promoting dialogue, (2) breaking through barriers, and (3) effecting reconciliation and peace between confessions, religions, and believers and nonbelievers.

His early theological writings were framed with an eye toward healing the divisions between Catholics and Protestants. Appointed at Tübingen just prior to the Second Vatican Council, he published two works (*The Council and Reunion* [1960] and *Structures of the Church* [1962]) intended to encourage the Council toward greater

Christian unity. As a theological consultant (*peritus*) at the Second Vatican Council, Küng consistently advocated for great attention to historical critical scholarship, which he viewed as a means of breaking through long-standing barriers between confessions. His work on justification, published in 1957, laid the foundation for the Malta Report, issued in 1973 by the Lutheran World Federation and the Roman Catholic Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, which came to a common understanding of the doctrine of justification that had originally precipitated the 16th-century split between Protestants and Catholics.

His difficulties with the Vatican enlarged his horizons beyond Christian theology, leading to studies of other traditions (*Judaism* [1991], *Tracing the Way* [1999], *Islam* [2004]) alongside Christianity (*Christianity* [1994], *The Catholic Church* [2001]). In his pioneering work, *Global Responsibility* (1990), he argued that the religions of the world as well as those who profess no religion could make a contribution to the peace of humankind by building a consensus on common values and standards. His ideas led to the drafting of a “Declaration Toward a Global Ethic,” which was endorsed by the Parliament of the World’s Religions in Chicago in 1993, and the establishment of the Global Ethic Foundation. In 2001, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan appointed him to a committee of 20 “eminent persons” invited to speak to the UN General Assembly during the “International Year of the Dialogue Among Civilizations.”

Ann Taves

See also Ethics; Religious Dialogue; Roman Catholicism; Vatican Council, Second

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KURDISTAN

Kurdistan is literally the “land of the Kurds,” a territory without an official state that is usually described as being located in southeastern Turkey, northern Iraq, western Iran, and northeastern Syria, along with smaller swathes of territory in Azerbaijan and Armenia. The majority of the terrain is characterized by the steep plateaus and austere mountains of the Zagros and eastern Taurus Mountains. The actual territories that constitute Kurdistan have fluctuated over centuries, contracting and expanding in response to pressures from outside powers, including the Persians, the Arabs, and the Ottomans. The designation *Kurdistan* was first introduced by the Seljuks in the 12th century as a geographical term. Today, Kurdistan is the self-proclaimed nation-state of the Kurds, although not a recognized sovereign entity.

The Kurds are the descendants of various Indo-European tribes that migrated to the region as early as the second millennium BCE and eventually mixed with nomadic Semitic, Arab, Turkic, Persian, and native tribes. Their language belongs to the Iranian branch of the Indo-European language family. There is no single, unified Kurdish dialect, with Kurmanji generally spoken in northern Kurdistan and Sorani spoken in southern Kurdistan. Within the two dialects, there is further subdivision into various, lesser spoken Kurdish dialects.

Current Kurdish population estimates vary due to state attempts at suppressing Kurdish nationalism and possible exaggeration of such numbers by nationalist-leaning intellectuals. A common estimate, however, is that there are approximately 25 million Kurds in the Middle East, with approximately 13 million in Turkey, 7 million in Iraq, 6 million in Iran, and 2 million in Syria. There is also a sizable Kurdish diaspora in the West.

The Kurdish people are divided along numerous clan and tribal lines, though most adhere to a common religion—that of Sunnī Islam. A small percentage are Shi’ite, while an even smaller number are members of other faiths, including Christianity.

The introduction of Islam into tribal Kurdish society in the 13th century further diversified and complicated tribal relations while also merging

with the common practices of the time to produce a hybrid society based on tribalism and Islam.

Sufism, a form of Sunnī mystical Islam, was first introduced into Kurdistan in the 14th century in the form of the *Qadiri* order. Sufism denied materialism and was against the complex, rigid religious teachings of the time. Followers of the Qadiri order stressed piety and demonstrated the power of religion through self-mutilation and ecstatic trances. Another order of Sufism, that of the Naqshbandiya order, began to enjoy increasing popularity beginning around 1811, though it had already by that time established a presence in the region. Followers of the Naqshbandiya order believed in piety as best expressed through social activity and meditation.

Coinciding with the decline of the Ottoman Empire, Sufism as expressed by the Naqshbandiya order began to play a vital role in the proliferation of nationalist ideas, but it was the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire that provided the conditions for religion to be the primary means of early nationalist expressions among Kurds. It was this movement that evolved into the contemporary Kurdish nationalist movement, which has counted among its leaders notable figures such as Mullah Mustafa Barzani and Jalal Talibani.

Christopher Marsh

See also Azerbaijan; Iraq; Politics and Religion; Turkey

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KUWAIT

Kuwait is a small Arab country located in the northeastern part of the Arabian Peninsula, between Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and the Persian Gulf. It is a constitutional monarchy and one of the richest countries in the world, due to its huge oil reserves.

The overwhelming majority of the population—roughly 1 million citizens—is Muslim. The majority

of them are Sunnī, while 15%–30% of the population are Shi'a.

Beside the local citizens, Kuwait hosts an important community of immigrants—around 2.4 million, which is to say more than twice the indigenous population! The large majority of them come from Asia—Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Philippines—while many Arab and European expatriates also work there. Most of these immigrants are Muslims, though the Christians—among the Europeans and the Philippine workers, for instance—are numerous too. Hindus and adherents of other religions—Baha'is, Buddhists, Sikhs, and others—are also present among the Asian immigrants. In theory, non-Muslims enjoy freedom of belief, and they can practice their own religions; the country hosts several Christian churches, a Roman Catholic cathedral, and other places of worship. In practice, some cases of religious discrimination have been reported by external observers, including against the indigenous Shi'a minority, who, for instance, have encountered problems in the construction of new mosques.

Specific initiatives have been undertaken for Muslim immigrants as well as for non-Muslims who would like to convert to Islam: for instance, the use of various target languages such as English, Urdu, Tamil, Tagalog, Malayalam, or Telugu in religious books, courses, and even Friday sermons.

Though Kuwait has a parliamentary system, religion plays an important role in the political life of the country. The constitution states that the religion of the state is Islam and that the Shari'a, the Islamic law, is the main source of legislation. Many political parties are related to religious opinions: The Islamic Constitutional movement and the Islamic Salafi Alliance target the Sunnī citizens, while the national Islamic Alliance and the Justice and Peace Alliance are considered to be Shi'a parties.

Islam also plays an important role in the economy, since business, banking, and insurance must be practiced according to the Shari'a, which prohibits, for instance, the charging of interest on money lent.

Along with Saudi Arabia and Libya, Kuwait is a major actor in Islamic proselytism (*da'wah*) all over the world, through institutions and Islamic nongovernmental organizations such as the African Muslim Agency (AMA), by funding various development projects and by the building and restoration of

mosques, by the distribution of Ramadan meals, and so on.

Xavier Luffin

See also Iraq; Islam; Saudi Arabia; Shi'a Islam; Sunnī Islam

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KYRGYZSTAN

Kyrgyzstan is a predominantly mountainous central Asian country bordered by Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and China. Two thirds of the 5.5 million population are ethnic Kyrgyz, with Uzbeks and Russians constituting the largest ethnic minorities; more than three quarters of the population identify with Sunnī Islam of the Hanafi school. After independence was declared in 1991, much of the sizable Russian population emigrated; the remaining Russians concentrate in the cities and identify with Russian Orthodox Christianity. Uzbeks constitute the largest ethnic minority and live primarily in the southern part of the country, along the Uzbek border in the fertile Fergana Valley.

The Kyrgyz are associated with a nomadic past—where seasonal migrations link sacred places (*mazars*) with ancestors and Islam—that remains an active part of the contemporary imagination. While Kyrgyz traders and merchants have interacted with the Islamic world since the 10th century, conversions to Islam continued until the 18th century. Despite identification with Islam, cultural customs remained more influential in regulating social behavior than Shari'a.

Annexed to Russia in 1876, Kyrgyzstan became a Soviet Socialist Republic in 1936. The Soviet experience significantly affected Kyrgyz culture through forced collectivization, mandatory education, and the creation of a new Kyrgyz political elite. Religion was institutionalized, regulated, and

discouraged, and in turn, it became increasingly privatized and relegated to tradition. Religious expression became associated more with traditional life cycle rituals rather than with religion itself. Nonetheless, Islam continued to be a relevant aspect of Kyrgyz life, increasingly used as an aspect of culture that distinguished central Asians from Russians and other non-central Asian ethnic groups.

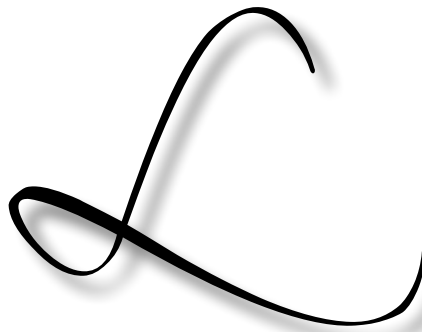
Since Kyrgyzstan gained its independence, Islam has been promoted as an aspect of Kyrgyz national identity, and in some instances, this has been contested by differing visions of what constitutes proper Islamic practice. With Islamic groups from abroad—such as Tablighi Jama'at, Hizb ut-Tahrir al-Islami, and followers of M. Fettulah Güllen—encouraging different paths for the religious life, there has arisen both a revitalized traditionalist movement advocating a more orthopraxic understanding of Islam, which has a knowledge base centered on the Arabian peninsula, and a smaller, re-culturalist movement privileging Kyrgyz culture and the role of ancestors and mazars, which fosters a locally relevant interpretation of Islam. Also, since independence, there has been a rise of Protestant missionary activity, resulting in not only an increase of religious diversity but also creating tensions and bringing together the Russian Orthodox and the Kyrgyz Muslims who see these missionaries as threats to the unwritten agreement that Russians belong to Orthodoxy and central Asians belong to Islam. These dynamics of religious diversity and multiple interpretations of religious practice challenge the emergence of religion in the public sphere.

David W. Montgomery

See also China; Islam; Kazakhstan; Russian Federation; Tajikistan; Uzbekistan

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LA LUZ DEL MUNDO CHURCH

La Luz del Mundo Church (The Light of the World Church) does not belong to any mainstream Christian church; instead, it is a minority religious movement that has become a global church that claims to be “the restoration of the primitive Christian church of Jesus Christ” in modern times. Its international headquarters are located in the city of Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico, which means it is to be found at the very heart of the most traditional Catholic region of the country. Catholicism has acted as a powerful political force within the region since colonial times, until quite recently.

A large number of studies done on Mexican migration and religion at the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century have been based on rural communities where most of the inhabitants practice popular Catholicism. For instance, the return of immigrants who attend the *fiesta del Santo Patrono* every year in their communities of origin has been widely explored. Most people probably still associate Mexican immigrants with Catholicism. However, from the 1980s onward, even in Mexico, the religious scenario has been transformed. Though Catholics are still the largest contingent of believers, accounting for 89% of the total population, they are not distributed evenly across the country. In the southern states, about 30% of the people claim to belong to a Christian religion other than Catholicism, and some northern states follow a

similar pattern, whereas in the western and central regions of the country, most states have the lowest percentages of non-Catholics (less than 2%). Therefore, today, the religious map of the country portrays a mosaic of beliefs and practices, which can travel fast and freely across the Mexican-U.S. border just as the flow of capital and consumer goods.

Origin and Doctrine of La Luz del Mundo

One of the Christian faiths shaping the new sacred mosaic in Mexico is La Luz del Mundo Church. At present, it is the second largest religious body after the Roman Catholic Church, with approximately 1.5 million adherents. It has grown worldwide, accounting for at least 5 million believers. Its international headquarters is in the Hermosa Provincia (Beautiful Province), situated in the far east of the city of Guadalajara. Members from Latin American countries and mostly from the United States return every August to attend the *Santa Cena* (Holy Supper) at Hermosa Provincia, in the same way as thousands of Catholics return to their towns to attend the rituals of their *Santo Patron* (patron saint).

Aaron Joaquin Gonzalez, a man of peasant origin, founded the church in the late 1920s. After the Revolution (1910–1920), and during the Great Depression, many poor Mexican migrants left the United States and returned to Mexico. Gonzalez recruited his first followers from among such poor displaced people. The rise of the Luz del Mundo movement also coincided with the revival of

Pentecostalism in the United States (1920s–1930s), which in turn was exported to Mexico via the returning migrants. Gonzalez died in 1964, and his son, Samuel Joaquin Flores, succeeded him as head of the church.

The Luz del Mundo doctrine is a combination of Pentecostal theology and regional Catholic culture. The church has also appropriated some symbols from the Jewish tradition; members see themselves as the “chosen people,” and outsiders are called Gentiles. According to the Luz del Mundo theology, God elected the apostles Aaron Gonzalez and Samuel Flores to keep His church alive in the modern world. Followers believe that Jesus was a prophet and savior, but they do not consider him God. The highest authority of the religious community is embedded in the dual nature of Samuel Flores: Within the sacred sphere, he is called The Apostle, and in the secular sphere, the International President of the Luz del Mundo Church. Women are excluded from priesthood, which is composed of bishops, pastors, deacons, and *encargados* (persons in charge of congregations), all of whom are anointed in a special ceremony. While the subordination of women in the church does not differ greatly from the position that the system of male domination has assigned them in Latin American societies as a whole, the doctrine of La Luz del Mundo Church provides a religious framework that legitimizes subordination. Even so, many educated women in the Luz del Mundo have become the main cultural brokers between their church and “the world.”

La Luz del Mundo in the United States

The founder, Aaron Gonzalez, initiated missionary work beyond Mexico’s borders around the mid-1950s, when he visited Los Angeles. In the early 1960s, he also traveled to San Antonio, Texas, to evangelize. The geographical proximity between Jalisco and Texas can only partly explain this choice; we must also remember that migration of Mexicans from the western states to the United States had been a traditional pattern since the 19th century. Religion followed the stream of migrants.

To spread the doctrine to foreign countries, the church takes advantage of members living outside Mexico, and automatically those believers become missionaries wherever they are, as has happened

not only in the United States but also in countries such as Great Britain, Spain, France, Italy, Australia, and many others. Today, La Luz del Mundo Church has open congregations and missions in at least 19 states and in Washington, D.C. The states of California and Texas not only have the highest rate of Mexican immigrants but also the highest number of Luz del Mundo believers. California has at least 30 congregations plus their missions, whereas Texas has 19 congregations plus their corresponding missions. According to official sources, there are around 75 established congregations as well as some 150 missions. Altogether, these numbers give us a conservative estimate of almost 50,000 believers in the United States.

In the U.S. context, this community functions as an “ethnic church” since it is composed of mainly Mexican mestizos, émigrés, and a very small percentage of Central American people (from El Salvador). It plays the role of an ethnic enclave as it encourages the believers to speak, read, and sing in their native language, Spanish, thus reinforcing national and transnational cultural ties. Through its multiple activities, such as the daily religious services, gatherings, and above all the annual *Santa Cena* (Holy Supper) at Hermosa Provincia, the church provides the ideal social space for second-generation migrants to both maintain and improve their native language. This is possible to some extent thanks to the ministers or spiritual leaders, all of whom are of Mexican or at least of Latin American origin.

A Mexican Diaspora

The discourse of diaspora has become the voice of “displaced peoples who feel (maintain, revive, invent) a connection with a prior home” (Clifford, 1994, p. 310). Luz del Mundo migrant believers claim the right to return to a “mythical homeland,” represented by Hermosa Provincia. They share a history of dispersal and can be alienated as well from the social and economic advantages in the receiving country. The church gives them the opportunity to construct an identity group that transcends national or regional identities; it provides its followers a discourse of a shared history, memory, longing, dreams, and meaningful narratives, and a place to return, a place where everybody can feel at home. The U.S. congregations are

connected at multiple levels as well as with other congregations located in Mexico, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Colombia, Spain, and many more. Luz del Mundo migrant believers are loyal to and identify with not only members in their sending country but also members located in these other countries. With its utopian discourse, the Luz del Mundo religion succeeds in unifying dispersed populations and social minorities from diverse parts of the world into one religious community, whose members see themselves as the “chosen people” who have been redeemed in modern times through their two apostles.

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See also Evangelical Movements; Mexico; Pentecostal Movements

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LAICIZATION

Laicization is a recent term practically unknown in the English language and commonly used in Latin countries roughly as a synonym of the concept of “secularization.” However, even though its semantic contents and history are diverse, it can be said that both the terms are related in many ways. While secularization has to do with social differentiation, worldliness, privatization of religion, and reconfiguration of beliefs, laicization

concerns the process of separation of religion from public affairs to protect freedom of conscience beyond everyone’s particular beliefs. In short, it could be said that laicization is the secularization of the state and, in certain ways, of cultural, scientific, and educational institutions insofar as the state extends to those realms.

The term *laicization* comes from the word *lay* originating in the Greek *laikós*, which means “of the people.” It was originally used in reference to the common faithful Christians, not members of the clergy. It was not until the second part of the 19th century that the term *lay* (*laïque* in French, *laico* in Spanish) began to describe the person, sphere, or activity different, detached, or autonomous from the religious. Until that moment, even in Latin countries such as France, Italy, and Spain, the word used for that purpose was *secularization*. For example, the secularization of the cemeteries removed the control of burials from the church and placed it in the hands of civil government.

The use of the word *lay* and its derived words (*laicity*, *laicization*), in the sense of the secularization of political institutions, took place in the context of the Latin continental European countries and in other latitudes such as Canada, Latin America, and the Caribbean. Due to the hegemonic presence of the Catholic Church in those countries and its reluctance in the 19th century to accept the principle of separation and the loss of influence in public affairs, the laicization of the state became a political combat of anticlerical content. This was called *laicism*. Although this conflict decreased in intensity in the past century, due to different stances concerning the role of the churches in the shaping of legislation and public affairs, the question still has an impact on the political debate as well as on the understanding and definition of the concepts of *lay*, *laicity*, *laicism*, and *laicization*.

The process of laicization of the state, which began with the religious wars of the 16th century, intensified in the second part of the 19th century with the establishment of the free, public, and nonreligious school. In France, the *école laïque* developed in the Third Republic. In 1871, after a decision concerning the establishment of nonreligious or confessional public education, the French created the neologism *laicity* (*laïcité*), which began to be used as a synonym of secularity—for example, the laicity of education, meaning the establishment

of a public school without religious instruction, or the laicity of the state, meaning the creation of legislation and public policies based on secular arguments, not on religious bases.

In sum, it can be said that the term *laicization* is mainly used in the context of Latin countries and applied mainly to the domain of the state, although it was extended to other areas, such as education or medicine, that were previously controlled or were in the hands of religious institutions and, being institutionalized under the influence of the state, became a sphere autonomous from religion. For the same reason, the experience of laicization of the public sphere goes beyond Latin countries and can be applied to other cultural areas.

In the past few years, several scholars have tried to define laicity detached from its Western or Christian origins and from its French definition or use in other Latin countries, where the hegemonic presence of the Catholic Church and its continuous political influence has marked recent public debates. Laicity, from this perspective, has three central elements:

1. Respect for the freedom of conscience
2. Autonomy of politics before religion
3. Nondiscrimination and equality for all

In fact, it can be said that the laicization process of the state began when the need to protect the individual conscience against any intrusion coming from either religious or civil institutions became clear. The so-called privatization of religion, often related to the secularization process, became the mechanism used to protect the individual conscience, formally “separating” the private and the public, confining religion to the individual conscience, where nobody could interfere, and leaving politics for the public interest, beyond personal beliefs. Although absolute separation does not exist in reality, a formal distinction of politics and religion, of public and private, and of the state from the church became then a way to protect freedom of conscience (and other freedoms, including religious freedom) and a key value of liberalism. It was not until the 20th century that the social role of religion was enhanced, questioning, although not eliminating, the former distinction that secluded religion to the individual sphere.

The expression of the “autonomy of politics before religion” allows scholars to go beyond the idea of separation as a key element of laicity and a measure for laicization. Because the term *laicity* was coined by the Third Republic, for many years, the French experience was taken as the model and even as a singular example of this social phenomenon. But this broad definition, which focuses on the autonomy of the state more than on its formal separation from religion, leads to the understanding that there are many forms of laicity (and therefore laicization) beyond the formal relation between religion and state. We can find a process of laicization—that is, of increasing autonomy of the state before churches or religions—in countries where there is no formal separation, such as England, Norway, Denmark, or even Japan or Morocco. For the same reason, the form of government adopted is not crucial. The laicization process can take place not only in a republic but also in a monarchy, as in the above-mentioned countries.

The third element of laicity has evolved alongside the modern constitutional state, to protect not only the rights of the individual and the majority but also those of communities and minorities. The convergence between the new legal institutional framework and the laicization process lies in the fact that the lay state must ensure the freedom of conscience of all and the actions deriving from it. Therefore, laws and public policies must conform to the general idea of the public moral and ethical concerns of the population. In consequence, pluralism of religions and of philosophical doctrines forces the state to design an equitable and nondiscriminatory set of rules for everyone, beyond particular religions or philosophical stands. That is the reason for the importance of the lay state in many contemporary debates, concerning issues such as abortion, the use of embryonic stem cells, euthanasia, gay rights, religious and sexual education, contraceptive methods, and many other crucial matters. The laicization of the state becomes the guarantee of equal rights for all, assuring everyone, democratically and in the respect of freedoms, the opportunity to live according to their conscience and beliefs.

The lay state is then a political-judicial instrument used to ensure liberties in a society that recognizes itself as plural and diverse. *Laicity* can be

defined then as a social regime of coexistence whose political institutions are mainly legitimated by the peoples' sovereignty and no longer by sacred or religious elements. This definition allows us to understand that laicity is a changing phenomenon that evolves as a process (laicization) consisting of the transition in the sources of legitimacy of political authority. The transition is never complete because, in the same way that democratization is never absolute, the lay state also tends to sacralize itself, and in every country of the world there are remnants of the public presence of religion. Moreover, because this definition allows us to understand that "laicity" is different from "separation," we can also recognize the complexity of the process of laicization in many countries, particularly those where the Catholic Church and some evangelical churches are still politically influential. This is true for many other countries whose regimes either ignore the idea of separation between religion and politics or disdain the concept of the autonomy of the state ahead of a particular religion or philosophical doctrine.

In any case, due to the increasing centrality of human rights, the broadening of democratic institutions, and the social recognition of plurality and diversity, it is very likely that in the near future we will see the appearance of laicity and laicization as crucial elements in expanded social and political debates in many developed countries in the world.

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See also Pluralism; Politics and Religion; Public and Private Religion; Religion and State; Religious Freedom; Secularization; Tolerance

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LAOS

The nation of Laos is located in the northern part of the Indo-Chinese peninsula in mainland Southeast Asia. The majority of people (6,677,534, July 2008 estimate) in the Lao People's Democratic Republic are Theravada Buddhists. They constitute 65% of the population, and about 33% practice animism. But there is no clear-cut demarcation, since Buddhism has been blended with elements of indigenous religious practices, Hinduism, and traditions from neighboring countries. About 2% of Laotian people profess Christianity, Islam, and other religions. According to tradition, Buddhism was introduced in Laos during the reign of the Indian Emperor Asoka (ca. 273–226 BCE). A Buddhist *that* or *wat* (shrine) was built. Buddhism in Laos has been influenced by neighboring countries such as Myanmar, Cambodia, and Thailand as well as Sri Lanka. Interaction with the Khmers, Thais, Sri Lankans, and Indians has enriched the indigenous culture and religion of Laos. Hinduism has also exerted a strong impact on daily life, ritual, custom, and public ceremony. Names of Hindu gods are invoked in daily prayer to Buddha. The Lao version of the *Ramayana*, the *Phra Lak Pha Lam*, dominates the religious and cultural life of Laos. Along with Theravada Buddhism, the cult of *phi* (spirit) worship is prevalent among all segments of population, indigenous as well as ethnic. Lao religious life is also marked by belief in wandering spirits and the souls of departed ones. In the corner of some Buddhist *wats*, there is a small enclosure set aside for spirits. Certain monks are venerated for their special power of exorcising evil spirits.

The people of Laos celebrate important festivals connected with religion. The *Boun Pimai* marks the Lao New Year and is observed for several days in April. In Luang Prabang, *Boun Pimai* celebrations include ablutions of Buddhist icons. The festival of *Boun Bang Fai* inaugurates the rainy season in May. Giant homemade bamboo rockets are

launched skyward to summon the rains. The August festival of *Haw Khao Padap Din* is observed to pay homage to the dead. The month of November is marked by a festival at the temple of That Luang in Vientiane. The small minorities of Laotian Christians and Muslims celebrate their own respective festivals. For most Laotians, religious life revolves round the *wats*—places of worship as well as festivities. Luang Prabang boasts of superb Buddhist monuments. That Luang of Vientiane is an architectural marvel; the Buddhist and Hindu icons of Laos have a uniqueness of their own.

With the triumph of communism in 1975, doctrinaire Marxism prevailed for several decades in Laos. Within the framework of a socialist government, Buddhism was relegated to the background; reports emerged of persecution of Buddhist monks and Christian missionaries. The advent of a market economy in the 1990s witnessed the subsequent dilution of Marxism, and once again Buddhism predominates in daily life; the government's tolerance and encouragement of Buddhist religious life also confers legitimacy on the government itself, which now manages the famous That Luang festival. In the religious crucible of Laos, where there is a blending of different religious traditions, Marxian ideals are amalgamated with Buddhist rituals.

Patit Paban Mishra

See also Marxism; Southeast Asia; Theravada Buddhism

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LATIN AMERICA

Latin America covers approximately 21 million square kilometers, has a population of more than 570 million people, and consists of more than 30 countries and assorted territorial units. It is also home to some of the fastest growing and most innovative religious movements of modern times. An inheritance of Iberian conquest, Latin America's main languages are Spanish and Portuguese, while the presence of French, English, and Dutch likewise has colonial origins. The most widely spoken of the continent's numerous pre-conquest languages and dialects are Aymara, Guaraní, and Quechua. A relative mixture of colonial, indigenous, and African ingredients, Creole languages serve various inhabitants of the Latin Caribbean. As is to be expected from a continent born of social-cultural miscegenation, mixed-race inhabitants form the largest racial constituency, with almost half of the total population. Black Latin Americans represent the smallest racial unit (5.4%), with assorted indigenous groups (10%) and the remaining White population (35%) completing the picture. The racial topography of Latin America is, of course, by no means even. Whereas the population of Argentina is almost completely White (90%), that of Haiti is virtually all Black (94%), that of Brazil is nearly all mixed race (92%), and that of Bolivia is predominantly indigenous (65%). Allowing for national variations, the pattern of wealth distribution across the continent is of a more uniform character. The overwhelming majority of Latin America's wealth is held by a small minority of its population. As a result, the gap between rich and poor is a stark one, and social-economic security is a scarce and precarious phenomenon for those not among the affluent elite.

In contrast to its geographic, linguistic, and ethnic diversity, Latin America's religious profile appears relatively homogeneous. With more than 92% of the continent's population acknowledging some form of adherence, Christianity is by far the largest religion in the region. Indeed, the next biggest quantitative unit of religious adherence is the 3.3% of the population who are either nonreligious (2.8%) or atheist (0.5%). Of the remaining categories, Spiritism enjoys 2.7% adherence, traditional

non-Christian religions (i.e., Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, and Judaism) amount to no more than 0.8%, indigenous religiosity records 0.6% of religious adherents, new religious phenomena total less than 0.5%, and other religions (e.g., African derived) constitute 0.2%. Although, as aggregated statistics, these figures mask a degree of both national and regional variation, their overall profile is fairly representative of conditions on the ground. What they do not show, however, is that cities tend to have higher rates of nonreligiosity than rural areas. In some of the most urbanized parts of Brazil, for example, census returns of non-religious (*sem religião*) have been recorded at more than 25%. At the same time, the historical association of Catholicism with national identity, traditional stigmatization of non-Christian religious expression, and refusal by some to identify with the established category of “religion” combine to influence statistical representations of religious adherence. As a result, the numbers of those engaged in religious activity beyond traditional mainstream arenas tend to be underrepresented, while the figures for Christian adherence (especially for Catholicism) are grossly overrepresentative of those who actually participate in formal ritual practices.

The sheer size and diversity of Latin America means that a short essay as this will inevitably be quite general. Consequently, here we engage in broad brushstrokes. It is hoped, however, that what follows does justice to both the religions it describes and the particular contexts in which they are lived. To this end, our treatment of religion in Latin America is organized into four substantive sections, the first of which deals with Christianity in its Catholic and Protestant forms. The second section provides a schematic overview of contemporary indigenous religiosity, while the third treats African-derived religions. The fourth section looks at both home-grown and imported modern religious traditions.

Christianity

An integral part of the European colonial project, Christianity arrived in Latin America in the last decade of the 15th century and spread initially through coerced proselytization and enforced baptism of indigenous peoples and imported African

slaves. Diplomatic arrangements between a weakened papacy and powerful Iberian monarchs subjected religious functionaries to direct political control and made the Christian religion an ideological extension of nascent Latin American political structures. Despite the sporadic and short-lived existence of Protestant settlements (e.g., German Lutherans in Venezuela between 1529 and 1546 and Dutch Calvinists in Brazil from 1624 to 1654), Catholicism enjoyed a virtual religious monopoly on the Latin American mainland for more than 300 years. This monopoly ended in the 19th century as a result of continent-wide political and demographic change.

Wresting control from Spain and Portugal, the forces of national independence viewed with suspicion an ecclesiastical institution that had been such a bulwark of the colonial enterprise. No longer integral to political aspirations, and thereby released from wholesale state control, the Catholic Church was progressively “Romanized” as it came increasingly under the sway of its European “Mother Church.” As a result, traditional Catholicism was modernized through the eradication of what were considered superstitious excesses (e.g., thaumaturgy, possession, and exorcism), the integration of once semiautonomous lay movements within formal parish and diocesan structures, and the imposition of clerical and institutional authority underwritten by a priest-centered and sacramentally oriented piety. At the same time, successive waves of north European, non-Catholic immigrants added to the continent’s religious mix. No longer legally inferior to Roman Catholicism, and buoyed by increasing numbers of non-Catholic immigrants, traditional Protestantism made steady inroads within Latin America. In Chile, for example, the Anglican (1836), Lutheran (1846), Presbyterian (1872), Methodist (1877), and Baptist (1908) Protestant denominations established themselves successfully. The two world wars of the past century did much to reconfigure the internal and external influences shaping the Latin American continent. Postwar rebuilding programs in Europe afforded opportunities for Latin American industrial development. At first incipient, Latin American industrialization soon escalated, giving rise to large-scale urbanization, population growth, and regional migration (not the least from rural to urban contexts). In breaking old allegiances and established

behavioral patterns, the social and cultural flux engendered by this rapid demographic change prepared the way for new ideas and practices to take root. Finding most success among the urban lower middle classes, traditional Protestantism today represents approximately 3% of the Latin American population.

Although established for more than 100 years, the nature of the Protestant presence in Latin America began to change substantially from the 1950s. Encouraged by North and Latin American political authorities alike, and empowered by southern U.S. missionary funding and training, indigenous Pentecostal denominations increasingly made their evangelistic presence felt in the burgeoning Latin American conurbations. Latin American Pentecostalism had emerged in the first decades of the 20th century from transcontinental spiritual revival movements within traditional Protestant denominations. It was at this time, for example, that Latin America's two largest national Pentecostal churches (the Assemblies of God and the Christian Congregation in Brazil) were founded in Brazil. Initially bearing fruit in Argentina, Brazil, and Chile, Pentecostalism soon spread throughout the continent. Originally finding most success among the poorer sectors of Latin America, Pentecostal discourse and practice is now establishing a foothold among the continent's professional classes. Today, Pentecostalism represents approximately 75% of Protestants in Latin America and is the fastest growing sector of Christianity across the whole of the continent. Although it remains a relatively small movement in some Latin American countries (e.g., Colombia, Mexico, Peru, and Venezuela), Pentecostalism continues to expand in a growing number of others (e.g., Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Haiti, and Nicaragua).

Like its European and North American cousins, Latin American Pentecostalism is conservative in matters of biblical interpretation and theological reflection. Articulating a Spirit-based discipleship founded on the charismatic gifts (e.g., speaking in tongues, prophecy, the casting out of unclean spirits), Latin American Pentecostalism worships a miracle-working, demon-exorcising Christ, who, along with the Holy Spirit, supports believers in their daily battles with the "principalities and powers of darkness." Emphasis on the pragmatic

consequences of faith, especially that of divine healing through deliverance and the material benefits of spiritual practice, is particularly pronounced within the more recent and fastest growing neo-Pentecostal churches, such as Brazil's God Is Love Pentecostal Church and the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God, traditionally reticent in matters political. Protestant Christians are increasingly being mobilized through a variety of national parties (e.g., Venezuela's Authentic Renewal Organization and the Independent Christian movement of Argentina), collective forums (e.g., the Brazilian Evangelical Association and Evangelical Progressive movement of Brazil), and high-profile political successes through the elections of Protestant presidents such as Alberto Fujimori (Peru) and Jorge Serrano Elias (Guatemala). While programmatic participation in the formal political arena has in the past predominantly been undertaken by members of Latin America's traditional Protestant denominations, there is increasing Pentecostal engagement in both national and localized political campaigns.

Protestant representation on the Latin American continent is not the only sector of the Christian community to have undergone dramatic change. The results of the rapid demographic shift, escalating Protestant growth, a growing shortage of priests, and the findings of religious-sociological surveys alerted the Catholic hierarchy to the radically altered nature of its once central position as one of the three pillars (along with the land-owning oligarchies and the military) of traditional Latin American society. The growing realization that things had to change was further complemented by emerging theological emphases on the status of the laity and their ecclesial rights to a fuller participation in the formal liturgical arena and decision-making processes of church life. Embracing each of these challenges in the reformist spirit of the Second Vatican Council (Rome, 1962–1965), Roman Catholic authorities in Latin America set about implementing a wide-ranging program of institutional renewal and pastoral innovation.

The most influential pastoral phenomenon to emerge from this period of Roman Catholic renewal is the "base ecclesial community." Varied in kind, base ecclesial communities constitute anything between 15 and 40 committed members and

exist mainly among the poorest sectors of the continent. Although centered on the worshipping life of the local parish, base communities serve principally as arenas of support throughout the whole week, providing opportunity for Bible study, catechesis, leadership training, and other means of Christian celebration. Offering physical space, material support, personal commitment, and spiritual encouragement, base ecclesial communities are often involved in food and clothing cooperatives, workers' unions, youth groups, parent associations, and local campaigns in pursuit of health clinics, sanitation facilities, educational ventures, and public transport provision. Although not as numerous as they were in the early 1980s, base ecclesial communities continue to represent an important means of religious expression and mobilizing for many Latin American Catholics.

Emerging under similar conditions as the base ecclesial community, and maturing through the prolonged periods of military rule in many Latin American countries, liberation theology flourished in one of the most influential expressions of late-20th-century theological reflection in the global Christian community. Central to liberation theology's approach is an understanding of Jesus as the self-proclaimed herald of the Kingdom of God, who believed that there is no individual righteousness in the absence of meaningful and just relations with one's neighbors. Among the many contributions made by liberation theology are the theoretical justifications offered in support of Christian engagement with social, economic, and political affairs. Antithetical to the reign of justice preached by Jesus, it is argued, social structures perpetuating marginalization, economic mechanisms generating poverty, and political processes limiting participation should be subjected to concerted critique and transformation.

Perhaps the most prominent form of contemporary Catholic Christianity in Latin America is the Catholic Charismatic Renewal (CCR) movement. Although actual figures are likely to be lower than the estimates, which posit as many as 73 million Latin Americans active in the CCR, the movement is certainly gaining strength and today represents the principal component of the Catholic Church's evangelistic strategy for Latin America. Emerging in late-1960s North America, the CCR was adopted by the ecclesiastical hierarchy of Latin

America as a key means of halting Catholic decline and combating Pentecostal growth. At the same time, the CCR model was adapted through the combination of insights gained from the base community experience and strategies appropriated from Pentecostalism. In effect, the CCR model offers an expressive environment in which the gifts of the Holy Spirit can be both nurtured and celebrated and shown to be relevant for dealing with the daily challenges (not the least, health, happiness, and material success) of contemporary life.

The state-sponsored growth of health, education, and social infrastructures, in addition to the post-1970s development of independent networks of civil society, has resulted in a diminishing institutional presence of Roman Catholicism within the everyday lives of successive generations of Latin Americans. The historical association of national identity with Catholicism (and atheism with sedition) has traditionally been reflected in census returns of "Catholic" well in excess of 95%. Processes unleashed by the rapid urban industrialization of the mid-20th century, along with the creeping pluralization of Latin American society, however, have progressively affected Catholic returns, with the continental average now dropping below 85%. Indeed, the number of those actively involved with Catholicism on a regular basis is, in reality, unlikely to exceed 20% of the current Latin American population. Allowing for the consequences of increasing pluralization, the growth of Pentecostalism, and the rise in those self-designating as "without religion," the number of those either declaring themselves "Catholic" or participating in Catholic rituals is likely to decline much further still.

Indigenous Religiosity

The vast majority of the indigenous peoples who make up 10% of Latin America's population reside in regions that were part of the Aztec, Inca, and Maya pre-conquest civilizations, for example, Bolivia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, and Peru. Of these approximately 57 million indigenes, more than 53 million are classified or self-designate as Christian. Particularly in the Aymara- and Quechua-speaking parts of the northern Andes and the Maya-speaking rural regions of the Central American isthmus, indigenous peoples practice

forms of Catholic Christianity shaped by their mixing with vestigial elements of preconquest religions. Here, the popular Catholic pantheon of Jesus, Mary, and the saints is worshipped alongside, if not identified with, assorted pre-Christian divinities. Celestial deities (e.g., the Andean Earth Mother, Pachamama; the sun god, Inti; and the Mayan moon goddess), climatic forces (e.g., gods of rain and lightning), and topological features (e.g., deities of the mountains, rivers, and valleys) are regularly venerated. It is, however, the gods and spirits who regulate the seasons governing livestock and agricultural production (e.g., the Mayan maize god) that receive the most ritual attention by way of maintaining levels of fertility and encouraging favorable harvests. Although animal sacrifice plays a small part in some festivals and rituals, the majority of cultic activity revolves around making offerings and libations of cultivated goods.

The remaining 3.5 million members of the indigenous Latin American population are scattered throughout the continent among otherwise disparate communities with their own distinctive languages and dialects and religious-cultural worldviews. The remainder of this section deals with those communities whose tribal practices and geographical remoteness have until relatively recently helped preserve much of a cultural heritage that predates European conquest by a substantial margin. Allowing for the linguistic and cultural diversity of these indigenous communities, what follows can only be formal in nature, offering little more than a structural overview interspersed with specific examples from particular contexts.

Indigenous worldviews commonly situate the earth between the heavenly realm of the gods above and the subterranean world below. For the Baniwa of Brazil, the heavenly realm is composed of the lower "Other World," immediately adjacent to the earth, and the higher, more distant, "Other Sky." The underworld can also be layered, as with the Peruvian Campa's partition of it into two subterranean tiers. Although any particular stratum may be divided laterally, the earthly tier is most commonly subjected to such treatment, with prominent environmental features (e.g., mountains, lakes, and particularly dense parts of the forest) and mythical places (e.g., the Paraguayan Avá-Chiripá's "land without evil") accorded extra-special status.

Inhabiting the higher strata are (for some tribes) uncreated/preexistent deities, such as Kóoch of the Argentinean Tehuelche and Ñanderuvusú of the Guaraní peoples, who straddle the Argentine-Brazil border. Often remote from everyday human activity, these divine beings are accompanied by a pantheon of lesser deities whose origins and characteristics are usually connected with celestial (e.g., the Bolivian Ayoreo moon goddess, Gidosíde), climatic (e.g., the Tehuelche god of thunder, Karuten), totemic (e.g., the black monkey of the Surinamese Arawak), and otherwise routine (e.g., Pel'ek, "Owner of the Night," of the Paraguayan Toba) phenomena.

Although indigenous deities involve themselves in the general ordering of human affairs and are at times difficult to differentiate from the more numerous category of "spirits," it is the latter who most directly influence the day-to-day lives of indigenous peoples. More commonly occupying the lower strata of the indigenous cosmos, the spirits of animals, plants, and elementals (e.g., of water), along with those of deceased human beings, are regarded as the primary causal forces potentially influencing every facet of personal well-being, interpersonal relations, and social reproduction. While benevolent and malevolent forms exist, within the indigenous mind-set, spirits are, by and large, morally ambivalent in their dealings with humans.

The prevalence of widespread supernatural causality demands constant and careful handling, and it is to ritualized activity managed by the local shaman that most indigenous peoples turn to help limit and coordinate the impact of the spiritual on the material. Whether induced at the behest of other (usually shamanic) human beings or resulting from the breaking of any number of food, hygiene, and social taboos, for example, an attack by spirits can only be properly dealt with through recourse to one trained in the arts of the supernatural spheres. In addition to the almost daily routine of preventing, diagnosing, or curing serious illness, the shaman is a focal point of communal festivals (e.g., the harvest festival), *rites de passage* (e.g., female menarche and male coming of age), social-economic reproduction (e.g., successful hunting), and political processes (e.g., assuaging internal discord or intertribal dispute).

The shaman executes his responsibilities by drawing on a vast range of practical knowledge

(not the least, plant lore, diagnostic skills, and curative techniques) acquired through initiation and apprenticeship. In addition to memorizing the structures of the numerous cosmic realms of the indigenous worldview, the shaman must also master the techniques of ecstasy, dream, and vision, through which he visits other worlds and engages the services of their supernatural inhabitants. The supernatural alliances forged by the shaman with spiritual forces from other worlds are central to his success. Generally occupying the higher strata of the indigenous cosmos, "guardian spirits" serve as powerful allies to the shaman, offering protection from supernatural assault and information as to the probable causes of individual malady and social disturbance. Shamans visit their guardian spirits by way of transporting their souls through the media of naturally occurring, ritually induced, and narcotically stimulated dreams, trances, and visions. Often complementing the overarching support of a particular shaman's set of guardian spirits are any number of "auxiliary spirits" (principally of animals and plants). Resident within the shaman himself, auxiliary spirits also play a diagnostic role but come into their own as active agents in the curative techniques called on in shamanic practice. The principal relationship between a shaman and his auxiliary spirits is one of mutually beneficial exchange. In return for their aid in resolving the problems with which the shaman is faced, resident spirits get to enjoy the trappings of material existence as mediated through their host. Integral to the indigenous worldview, shamanic practice exemplifies indigenous existence as a nodal point through which a multiple configuration of mythico-religious forces write themselves on human space-time.

In combination, the secularization of state institutions, weakening of Catholic influence, and post-1980s rise of indigenous identity politics (e.g., Maya movement and Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador) have done much to encourage the appropriation and assertion of preconquest themes and practices as legitimate components of a contemporary, non-Christian religious worldview. Although indigenous populations are subject to intense Pentecostal missionary activity, pockets of Andean and Mesoamerican religiosity inspired by preconquest religious-cultural themes are now relatively well established and a source of

intense pride for their practitioners. For the many tribal communities scattered about the continent, however, there is less cause for celebration. Together, the ravages of Western diseases; economic encroachment through logging, mining, and farming; missionary activity; and pressures toward social-political integration continue to erode practical-symbolic means of reproduction long established among indigenous cultures.

African-Derived Religions

The decimation of the indigenous population wrought by the Iberian conquest resulted in the forced transportation of millions of African slaves to provide the manual labor central to the economic success of the colonial, plantation-based enterprise. Snatched predominantly from western and central Africa (e.g., modern-day Nigeria, Ghana, Benin, Togo, and Congo), those enslaved brought with them their religious beliefs and practices. Although outlawed by colonial authorities and disrupted by ethnic disaggregation, these beliefs and practices survived in clandestine form and were, over time, reformulated and mixed with indigenous and Catholic components. Today, found in many parts of Latin America, the most vibrant African-derived religions are those of Haitian Vodou (known also as *sèvis lwa*), Cuban Santería (known also as *Regla de Ocha/Lukumí*), and Brazilian Candomblé (whose regional variations are *Xangô*, *Tambor de Mina*, and *Batuque*). Although each of these religions differs relative to its originative African ethnicity, respective indigenous ingredients, and degree of Catholic influence, sufficient formal similarity exists to allow their collective representation.

Cosmologically speaking, African-derived religions believe the physical terrain of the earth to be surrounded by a spiritual realm whose outermost region is inhabited by a remote Creator deity (often associated with the Christian God). Other regions are populated by foundational spiritual agents, many of whom are respectively associated with Jesus, Mary, and assorted Catholic saints. The souls of the dead are likewise dispersed throughout the spiritual realm, with their place in the cosmological hierarchy determined relative to their spiritual development when alive on earth. As

the supernatural spheres nearest the earth share a similar level of cosmic energy with it, the spiritual entities inhabiting them are able to pass to the physical realm. Passage to the material sphere is enacted by way of ritualized possession of trained mediums whose physical mediation allows the possessing entities to enjoy temporarily the trappings of earthly existence. These trappings come chiefly in the form of food (including sacrificed animals), song and dance, decorative clothing and jewelry, and adoration relative to the possessing agent's status and individual tastes. The most important supernatural agents have designated days and festivals, and a range of powers that corresponds with particular domains (e.g., forest, sea, and land), natural elements (e.g., sunshine, rain, and thunder), and life-course events (e.g., relationships, health, and employment). Complemented by an assortment of divinatory and curative techniques mastered by their mediums, possessing entities both radiate cosmic energy to those in need and provide material benefits and emotional support to supplicants in exchange for stipulated offerings.

The relatively recent liberalization of traditional sanctions and restrictions regulating nonmainstream religious practice across Latin America has influenced African-derived religiosity in a number of ways. Historically, religions of poor Black communities, the likes of Vodou, Santería, and Candomblé, are finding increasing favor among the White urban middle classes. In the same vein, the growing professionalization of mediumistic practices is leading to both the increased availability of written sources (where only oral traditions once existed) and the spread of market dynamics. On both counts, secret teachings and restricted practices formerly reserved for the initiated are becoming readily available to the general public. At the same time, the collective pursuit of newfound rights and the desire to offer an orchestrated response to ongoing attacks by unsympathetic Christian organizations has resulted in the creeping federalization of once fiercely independent and mutually suspicious "houses" and "temples." Along with every other sector of Latin America's religious landscape, African-derived religions are subject to the transformative dynamics of global modernity. Large-scale economic migration has encouraged the international spread of African-derived religions beyond their traditional

geographical homelands and ethnic-linguistic strongholds. The relative ease of travel and exchange of information have likewise combined with late-20th-century identity politics to encourage growing numbers to pursue the progressive Africanization of their religions by way of their cleansing of purportedly syncretic tendencies and Catholic influences. Others, however, are moving in a different direction, as the appropriation of New Age practices and Asian beliefs results in ever more hybrid religious repertoires.

Modern Religions

After Christianity, Spiritism is the most prominent feature of the Latin American religious landscape. Although approximately 14 million adherents are registered by official databases (e.g., www.thearda.com), Spiritism enjoys a much wider following in its popular hybrid forms and diffuse, extra-institutional manifestations. Institutionally, Spiritism is most practiced in Latin America by followers of the tradition established in mid-19th-century France by Allan Kardec (1804–1869). Initially adopted in Latin America by the upper middle classes, Spiritism (also known as Kardecism) soon gained popularity among the poorer sections of society. The centerpiece of Spiritist practice is spirit mediumship through which interaction with disembodied spirits is enabled. Among middle-class Spiritist communities, mediumship tends to concentrate on the communication of morally uplifting and spiritually edifying messages from the supernatural realm. Here, emphasis rests on individual morality, which is underwritten by beliefs in reincarnation and karma. While not eschewing morally oriented discourse, poorer Spiritist communities tend to emphasize the practical-therapeutic elements of spirit mediumship. As a result, Spiritist rituals among the poor revolve around possession as a site of contestation with "inferior" spirits responsible for the likes of ill health, unemployment, and relationship breakdown. In its extra-institutional and diffuse manifestations, Spiritism mixes with elements inherited from both popular Catholic and indigenous worldviews and appropriated from African-derived religiosity. Present in virtually every Latin American country, popular Spiritism represents a pragmatic, magical-religious worldview that engages the

supernatural realm with a thorough practical-therapeutic intent.

Imported by way of inward migration, international missionary endeavor, or the cultural exchange networks of globalized modernity, neo-Christian traditions (e.g., Mormons, Seventh-Day Adventists, and Jehovah's Witnesses), New Age spiritualities (e.g., Krishna Consciousness, Scientology, and the Baha'i Faith), and Japanese new religions (e.g., Church of World Messianity and Perfect Liberty) contribute to the ongoing pluralization of Latin America's religious landscape. At the same time, the emergence and spread of modern homegrown movements such as *Umbanda*, Christian Gnosticism, and the *ayahuasca* religions of Brazil (i.e., *Barquinha*, Vegetable Union, and *Santo Daime*) indicate a contemporary autochthonous vibrancy that stands to complement both long-established traditions and newly arrived religious repertoires. As with so many new religious phenomena taking root in Latin America, these homegrown religions are typically hybrid in character. Whereas Umbanda unites Spiritism, indigenous, and African-derived elements, for example, Christian Gnosticism fuses European esoteric (e.g., Theosophy) with Spiritist, Catholic, and Oriental (e.g., Tibetan Buddhism) components. In the same vein, and perhaps par excellence, *Santo Daime* combines indigenous, popular Catholic, Afro-Brazilian, Spiritist, esoteric, and miscellaneous New Age ingredients.

The continued strength of Pentecostalism and activism of CCR movements, combined with the inertial weight of historical association, mean that Christianity will remain Latin America's dominant religious force for some time to come. If the past 30 years are anything to go by, however, this dominance will be progressively challenged and vigorously so. For example, the pattern of Christianity's decline in successive surveys across the continent is paralleled by the rising profile of those quantified as nonreligious or atheist. In some pockets of the most urbanized parts of Latin America, nonparticipation in the religious sphere readily exceeds the numbers of those engaged in religious practice. At the same time, the progressive liberalization of traditional legal-economic restrictions is allowing previously marginalized and oppressed sectors of the nonmainstream religious arena to assert their presence and make increasingly effective use of resources previously

denied to them. Energized by the confluence of newfound freedoms and newly available materials mediated through global exchange networks, indigenous movements, African-derived religions, and modern spiritualities from home and abroad are contributing to the ongoing diversification of Latin America's religious landscape.

Andrew Dawson

See also Autochthonous Christians in Latin America; Base Communities in Latin America; Islam in Latin America; Japanese Religions in Latin America; Mesoamerican Religions; Native Latin American Religion; New Religions in South America

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LATVIA

Despite being a captive nation under the rule of the officially atheistic Soviet regime for nearly half of the 20th century, the northern European Baltic country of Latvia (population 2.2 million) has historically been a multiconfessional and largely Christian nation. Since the 16th century, the regions that comprise modern Latvia were largely under Lutheran religious influence. Lutheranism, however, cannot be considered a national church in Latvia, as the faith, like Catholicism beginning in the 13th century, was introduced by the German minority, who dominated the region from the late Middle Ages to the early decades of the past century. Polish influence also played a significant role in Latvia's religious history; as a result of Polish clerical efforts, much of eastern Latvia (Latgale) today is Roman Catholic.

Perhaps the most significant force shaping religious life in Latvia today is the experience of Soviet rule. For half a century, religious life in Latvia was harshly suppressed by the Soviet regime, which authorized the arrest, exile, and outright murder of many priests and pastors. During World War II, many clerics, including more than half of Latvia's pastors, fled the Baltic states to continue their religious mission abroad. Partly as a result of the Soviet regime's harsh policies, church membership declined in the Baltic states. Despite a brief surge in popular interest in religion that coincided with Latvia's realization of independence in the early 1990s, most Latvians today demonstrate little interest in organized religion.

The trend toward secularization among the population has had the greatest impact on the once dominant Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia (ELCL): Its population today is about 20%, down from the 55% who professed Lutheranism in the 1930s. The difficulties faced by the ELCL have been exacerbated by fragmentation within the church. In recent years, several congregations have split off from the main church, including eight congregations of the Augsburg Confession, whose members criticize the ELCL for what it claims is the latter's equivocal attitude toward the Holy Scripture.

Catholicism, benefiting from institutional contacts abroad and being less compromised than the Lutheran Church during the period of Soviet rule, appears to have better weathered the communist experience. Today, an estimated 22% of the Latvian population belong to the Catholic Church, whose popular allegiance now challenges (if not surpasses) that of the Lutheran Church.

After Lutheranism and Catholicism, the next largest religious confession in Latvia is Orthodoxy, the principal faith of the country's nearly 800,000 Russian speakers. While the ancestors of some of Latvia's Russians first settled in the Baltic provinces when the region was under tsarist rule beginning in the 18th century, the Russification of Latvia (and neighboring Estonia) sharply accelerated during the Soviet era. Since most Russian speakers are concentrated in the cities, this makes Orthodoxy the main religion of Latvia's urban population, while Catholicism is the principal faith of the rural populations of the east.

Jews once constituted the fourth major religious group in Latvia (there were 93,479 Jews residing in Latvia according to the 1935 census). Most, however, were killed in the Holocaust of the 1940s; thus, only a few hundred Jews remain in the country today. Other sizable religious minorities include Old Believers, Baptists, Pentecostals, Seventh-Day Adventists, Muslims, and Mormons. While the Latvian constitution provides for freedom of religion and the state generally respects religious practices, some minority religious groups—in particular newer, “nontraditional” religious groups—have occasionally faced discrimination.

Kevin O'Connor

See also Baltic Countries; Communism; Europe; Protestant Christianity; Roman Catholicism; Russian Federation

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LEBANON

A country of 10,452 square kilometers, located on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea, bordered by Syria on the north and east and Israel on the south, Lebanon has 18 religious confessions officially recognized by the Lebanese constitution. Some of these religious groups joined the indigenous people of Lebanon in their endeavor to find a refuge in its mountainous terrain away from persecution, where they could freely practice their political and religious beliefs. They preferred a harsh life in the mountains to the comfort of city life so as to be able to preserve and defend their religious beliefs and their cherished freedom. Over the years, due to the religious freedom that distinguished the country, Lebanon became a “mosaic of religions.” But, as is well known, a mosaic is fragile by definition.

Accordingly, confessional diversity and different ways of worshipping God have long been the main features of the Lebanese scene. While traveling through Lebanon in the 14th century, Ibn Battuta remarked on the exceptionally large number of people devoted to worshipping God. He was struck by their faith and their piety. Christianity and Islam, from the first appearance of the latter (i.e., in the seventh century), have been at home together in Lebanon.

The Ottoman Empire (1516–1917) respected the existing confessional distribution of the population and accorded Mount Lebanon, inhabited mostly by Christians, a certain level of autonomy. It was the Maronite Patriarch, Elias Hoyek (1843–1931), who

represented the various Lebanese religious confessions in 1919 at the Paris Peace Conference in Versailles and articulated their aspiration for a free and independent Lebanon.

In the Lebanese religio-political system, the top posts of government are distributed along confessional lines. This distribution has existed since 1943, when after abolition of the French Mandate, independence was attained and the National Pact was concluded between leaders of the religious groups. It became formally part of the written constitution by the Ta'ef Agreement in 1989. This pact is based on confessional power sharing. It has also been the basis of efforts to establish a consensual confessional democracy in a permanent and final Lebanese nation-state with a special mission: freedom of religion and coexistence among religious groups.

So far, it has not been a practical proposition for the Lebanese political state to abolish the confessional system. In fact, it has become an essential part of the fabric of the “modern” state. To this day, the Lebanese president is a Maronite Christian (Lebanon is the only Arab country with a Christian president), the House speaker is a Shi'ite Muslim, and the prime minister is a Sunnī Muslim. Most other posts in parliament, government, and public service, and even in the syndicates and other such bodies, are distributed on a confessional basis. In some cases, religious groups are licensed as political parties, which means that Lebanese politics are also subject to the mosaic of these different Lebanese communities.

While Arabic is the official language of the Republic of Lebanon, many Lebanese are fluent in French and English as well. Syriac, Armenian, and Kurdish are also languages spoken by some of the communities that make up the Lebanese mosaic.

Due to political sensitivity over the ratio of confessional distribution, no official census has been taken since 1932. According to that census, the population was 52% Christian and 48% Muslim. However, unofficial estimates published by the Lebanese newspaper *An-Nahar* on November 13, 2006, claimed that Muslims constitute 64% and Christians 35%. The remainder includes numerous small minorities, for example, the Jews. Non-Muslim minority groups are experiencing extensive migration outflow.

According to the Lebanese Emigration Research Center at Notre Dame University, Lebanon,

between 4 and 6 million people of Lebanese descent are spread around the world, especially in Brazil, the United States, Australia, Europe, and Africa. The 1975 to 1976 war on Lebanese soil, with various outside military interferences, drove many thousands of Lebanese, especially Christians, to emigrate with the intention of finding a home and making a living in some peaceful place abroad.

It is almost impossible to find a Lebanese family that has not been affected by emigration, and there is hardly a country in the world where Lebanese emigrants and their descendants are not to be found. While from a certain point of view this is a drawback for Lebanon, it is also of certain economic advantage. During the major crises that Lebanon has endured, the country's economy would have folded up had it not been for the remittances sent by Lebanese abroad to their families or relatives. In fact, Lebanon was already participating in the global village experience long before the term was coined and long before it was embraced by the rest of the world. In this respect, the Lebanese appear to be following in the footsteps of their ancient sea-faring ancestors, the Phoenicians.

Ziad Fahed

See also Christianity; Islam; Israel; Ottoman Empire; Syrian Arab Republic

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LEFT BEHIND SERIES

The *Left Behind* series came to national prominence in the United States in the late 1990s. A sequence of 12 books written by Timothy LaHaye and Jerry Jenkins, two popular evangelical writers, it traces the events of the biblical “end times” as they have been interpreted by certain Protestant groups in the United States and England. The story begins with the “rapture,” an event in which Jesus secretly takes all true believers to heaven. For those left behind, the world quickly falls into chaos, and the novels trace the 7 years of a period of suffering, called the “tribulation,” ending with an apocalyptic battle between Satan and Jesus. None of this story is original to LaHaye and Jenkins but instead stems from an approximately 100-year-old tradition of biblical interpretation.

Over the 9 years of the series' publication, it sold 60 million copies, including audiobooks, graphic novels, and a distinct children's series. Its presence on the *New York Times* bestseller list and its extensive sales in mainstream retail outlets such as Barnes & Noble, Wal-Mart, and Costco made the series remarkable. While the series was experiencing success in the United States, it was also being translated into several other languages. The first language was Afrikaans, the second Spanish. The series has sold best in Spanish and Chinese. At present, the first book in the series has been translated into 12 languages, with another 16 languages in some stage of preparation. Tyndale House reports sales of more than 1 million copies internationally.

For many evangelical Christians, the international spread of the series is an encouraging sign of church growth. For some critics, it is a cause for concern. The first reason is that the series is accused of American chauvinism. Although converts to Christianity in the series come from every corner of the globe, their leaders are always Americans. Characters from everywhere speak in an American idiom, and the authors have low sensitivity for cultural difference. The other cause for concern is the image of global violence. The series becomes increasingly bloody as it reaches the battle at Armageddon, and the authors have been dismissive of concerns, arguing that the images they are working with are biblical. The question is

whether the series has the capacity to incite violence. Some critics have said that reading about global conflict between Christians and all others resonates in one way in Iowa, but it resonates quite differently in international conflict zones between Christians and Muslims.

As Christianity experiences what many scholars have called a global revival, particularly in its charismatic and Pentecostal forms, it will be interesting to see what role, if any, the *Left Behind* series will play. The rapture is not particularly important in the prosperity gospel theology, but as popular religion, the rapture and tribulation have proven resilient and adaptable.

Amy Frykholm

See also Evangelical Movements; North America; Pentecostal Movements

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LESOTHO

Lesotho, officially the “Kingdom of Lesotho,” is a small country of 2 million inhabitants totally surrounded by the Republic of South Africa. The reception of Christian missionaries by King Moshoeshoe of the BaSotho in the mid-1800s gave Sotho religious practices a global dimension they have never lost. Moshoeshoe welcomed evangelical missionaries from Paris in the hope that they would help him protect his kingdom. He had good reason to fear. Not long thereafter, the kingdom lost much of its arable land to Afrikaners from the adjacent Orange Free State.

Although Moshoeshoe never officially became a Christian, much of his elite entourage did. The missionaries’ purveyance of literacy, ploughs, stone houses, and wagons bolstered his authority. Under missionary influence, he reformed burial rites, abolished youths’ initiation rituals, divorced two of his wives who had converted to Christianity, condemned witchcraft killings, and banned alcohol, although he never abjured polygyny or the practice of appropriating the children of his debtors after their deaths. His reforms caused popular dissent, exacerbated by the missionaries’ calls for pacifism in the face of enemy attacks. As a result, Moshoeshoe and his retinue temporarily returned to their previous practices. But after the French Catholics and Anglicans arrived, Moshoeshoe took a renewed interest in Christianity, claiming to be a Christian before his death but dying before he could be baptized. Gradually, Sotho Christians acquired equal control over the Paris Evangelical Mission as the *Kereke ea Lesotho*, and in 1964, they initiated the independent Lesotho Evangelical Church.

Ironically, the very wave of global influence that brought Christianity and threatened Sotho rituals also challenged Christian ideas about marriage and gender and gave Sotho rites a new meaning. When migrations to South African mines began in the early 1870s—and continued into the 20th century to urban areas in South Africa and Lesotho—men moved in as laborers and women as providers of illicit beer, food, and sex for cash. Many wives who stayed at home took lovers, and Basotho girls’ initiation rites featured songs describing how to keep adultery a secret. In the 1940s and 1950s, as Sotho chiefs feared being marginalized by British colonial administrative changes and possible incorporation into racist South Africa, they altered the nature of the protective medicines (*diretlo*) prepared by *ngaka* ritualists to include the body parts of clan members as opposed to those of clan strangers, prompting the terror of the so-called medicine murders. Among the chiefs implicated were Catholics and Protestants. But today, BaSotho make pilgrimages to ancestral shrines in the South African lands that Afrikaners stole more than two centuries ago, reclaiming through the synthesis of Christianity and Sotho ritual what they lost through colonial conquest.

Joseph R. Hellweg

See also Africa; Postcolonial Theology; Postcolonialism; South Africa

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LÉVI-STRAUSS, CLAUDE (1908–2009)

Claude Lévi-Strauss, an anthropologist and ethnologist, was one of the most important social scientists of the 20th century. His concept of structuralism continues to exert a widespread influence not only in anthropology but also in fields as diverse as philosophy, history, sociology, and literary theory.

Lévi-Strauss studied law and philosophy at the Paris-Sorbonne University. He accepted a position as a professor of anthropology at the University of Sao Paulo, Brazil, for 5 years (1934–1939). During his stay in this South American country, he conducted fieldwork in the Amazonian region, where he studied the native tribes: the Bororo, Guaycuru, Tupi-Kawahib, and Nambikwara. At the New School for Social Research (United States), he became interested in structural linguistics—a field he was introduced to by the phonologist Roman Jakobson. The influence of American anthropologists was also important to his work. In 1950, he was named chair of comparative religions at the École Pratique des Hautes Etudes in Paris. He held the chair of social anthropology at the Collège de France from 1959 to 1982.

His book *The Elementary Structures of Kinship* (1947) introduced the concept of “structure” in ethnology. He understood kinship as systems whose nomenclature allows determining a circle of relatives. These structures are systems that prescribe marriage with a certain type of relative: those of the social groups who are possible spouses and those who are taboo. Lévi-Strauss described the distinction between nature and culture in relation to the taboo of incest. The prohibition of marriage to certain types of relatives—the problem of incest—is the foundation of human society, indeed, constitutive of society itself. He considered the prohibition of incest as universal: All human societies have a certain type of this proscription. In *Structural Anthropology* (1958), he established that the object of social anthropology has a symbolic nature. He considered that its field belonged to the study of the life of signs in the bosom of society: mythical languages, oral and gestural signs that are part of ritual, marriage rules, kinship systems, consuetudinary law, and certain types of economic interchange.

Gabriela Irrazábal

See also Brazil; Douglas, Mary; Dumont, Louis

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LI

Li is a key concept in Confucian thought and is variously translated as “ritual,” “rites,” “custom,” or “propriety.” It refers at the collective level to the time-honored code of ritual conduct that was to govern all social interaction in the ideal Confucian society. As an individual virtue, *li* is the ability to follow that code and to enter into each and every human relationship with a full awareness of one’s position, rights, and duties toward the others involved and with a full recognition and acceptance of them as moral beings. Mastery of *li* was part and parcel of the formation of the noble person (*junzi*) and key to the full realization of his humanity—a humanity that could only be practiced and perfected in social interactions with others, as the Confucian tradition regards the human being as fundamentally social in nature. Thus, ritualized relationships served to learn and exercise virtue and to transmit it to others, as all parties in any relationship will be affected by the moral power emanating from authentically performed ritual. The noble person’s leadership and authority thus acted upon others by ritual, a form of social interaction that does not enforce compliance but inspires allegiance by moral example.

The Confucian Classics contain three canonical works with a focus on ritual codes and discourses on *li*: the *Record of Rites (Liji)*, the *Ceremonies and Rites (Yili)*, and the *Rites of Zhou (Zhouli)*. As part of the text corpus whose mastery was required for the civil service examinations in Imperial

China, their notions of *li* deeply influenced the Chinese ruling elite throughout much of recorded Chinese history.

Contemporary philosophers have rediscovered *li* as central to an alternative philosophical approach to human rights. Instead of basing human rights on the individual’s intrinsic entitlement, it has been proposed that we need to pay more attention to the social nature of humanity. Viewed from this perspective, an oppositional definition of the relationship of the group and the individual and of human rights as needing to be protected and enforced against the group does not adequately take into account that the individual can only realize his or her humanity within the group. *Li* as moral and humanizing social interaction provides an alternative basis for human rights as basic elements of human dignity that are recognized and respected as such by all members of a moral community. As humanity can only be realized socially, human rights can also only be construed within human connectedness, for which *li* in turn provides the standard. Combining Confucian and communitarian approaches, this perspective seeks to remedy what it regards as an overemphasis on individual rights in contemporary discourse.

Philip Clart

See also Confucianism; Ethics; Human Rights

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LIBERAL ISLAM

According to liberal Muslims, there is no clash between Islam and liberalism: individual freedom, democracy, cultural and religious pluralism, human rights, and gender equality are all sharable

values. They legitimize the “reopening” of the gates of *ijtihad* (which means “effort to reason independently”), to interpret sacred scriptures in modern ways. Today, their main challenge is to extend their thoughts to popular audiences.

The expression *liberal Islam* has different interpretations, but it is possible to distinguish two main meanings related to its adjective. The first one refers to the value of *liberty*, and it is generally characterized by an academic approach and a full appreciation of Western liberalism. The second one refers to the process of *liberation* from symbolic and material oppressions, and it is characterized by a more militant approach and a double criticism, with respect to both “Islamic tradition” and “Western modernity.” Today, there are intellectuals following this second interpretation who define themselves as *progressive Muslims*.

Actually, liberal Islam is about not only reformed religious discourses but also political struggle.

Liberal Islam Today

Liberal Islam is not a new phenomenon because within Islamic history we can find intellectual traditions that can be considered liberal, such as the Mu'tazilah movement (eighth century). Contemporary liberal voices use the tools of modern social sciences and study Qur'an through historical and literary analysis. These intellectuals are emerging in every part of the Muslim world, but a significant number of them are experiencing exile in Western countries. They shift boundaries of “us versus them,” both in Muslim and Western societies, often claiming to be “at home” everywhere, as global citizens. Examples include Mohamed Talbi (Tunisia), Abu Zayd Nasr (Egypt/Netherlands), Abdullai An-Na'im (Sudan/United States), AbdolKarim Soroush (Iran/United States), Leila Ahmed (Egypt/United States), Farid Esack (South Africa/Pakistan/United Kingdom/Germany), and Chandra Muzaffar (Malaysia), among others. In the following sections, we will consider some of their main ideas.

Ijtihad as a Right

In liberal Islam, religious knowledge is no longer a monopoly of ulema, the experts in theology and

jurisprudence. Every Muslim has the right to read the Qur'an within a dynamic and context-driven approach. Literalist reading is refused; liberal Muslims call for an interpretation of the spirit of the text. The Qur'an speaks personally to every Muslim.

Shari'a as a Human Interpretation of the Voice of Allah

Muslims are required to believe that the Qur'an is divine and the words of the Prophet Mohammed are inspired by Allah, but the Shari'a is a normative code, which is the product of human interpretations. This human translation of the voice of God should change according to new historical, political, and social contexts, and it should not be imposed at an institutional level. The coercive enforcement of Shari'a by the state betrays the Qur'an's insistence on voluntary acceptance of Islam. Just as the state should be secure from the misuse of religious authority, Shari'a should be freed from the control of the state. The idea of an “Islamic state” is based on European ideas of state and law and not on Islamic tradition.

Human Rights Can Also Have a Religious Foundation

There is nothing in the language of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that precludes religious as well as secular foundations of the legitimacy of human rights. To develop a genuine universality and a sustainability of human rights, it is necessary to use multiple, local, and indigenous perspectives. Why can't Muslims quote Ibn Rushd instead of Kant to defend freedom of thought? Human rights are not Western; they are not confined to any specific people, culture, or religion. The conflict is not between Islam and human rights, but the real problem is related to specific historical understandings of Shari'a, for example, regarding the rights of women.

Gender Equality Within Islam

This issue is very often marked by stereotypes, essentialist discourses, and orientalism. For instance, as a part of her critical re-reading of Islamic history from a gender perspective, Leila Ahmed (Egypt/United States) shows that both the narrative

of the veil as oppression and the counternarrative of the veil as resistance are misperceptions grounded on and reinforcing the basis of Western, colonial discourse. Through a reinterpretation of Islamic traditions, historical interpretations based on patriarchal societies are challenged. According to those scholars who are emerging at a global level, feminism and Islam are not contradictory terms. Qur'an, if properly understood and interpreted with a context-driven approach, is highly liberating, for both women and men.

Progressive Muslims

Social Justice

Social justice lies at the heart of Islamic social ethics. Progressive Muslims engage this strong tradition within Islam to translate it in modern times. Connecting discourses and practices, scholars/activists as Farid Esack (South Africa/Pakistan/United Kingdom/Germany) and Chandra Muzaffar (Malaysia) strive toward a humanism based on the Qur'an and stand behind the *mustad'afun* (the oppressed), whoever and everywhere they are. In this way, Islam becomes a type of "liberation theology."

Pluralism Inside and Outside the Umma

Secularism is the guarantee for pluralism, but it must be understood in a dynamic and deeply contextual sense for each society, rather than as preconceived notions to be "exported." Moreover, the engagement with democracy implies not only the recognition of the freedom of belief and faith but also the struggle to develop Islamic interpretations in order to create rooms for intrafaith and interfaith dialogues. Anyway, the goal is not only "to understand the Other," but above all to build solidarity networks that can cross cultural and religious borders.

Regarding the link between religion and politics, progressive Muslims state that Islamic tradition is an important inspirational source that clearly influences their private *and* public lives. But it is not the only source.

Liberal and progressive Islam are contested categories. The main criticism is related to their difficulty in enlarging their audience (going outside academic circles) and engaging in dialogue with

people "inside the mosques." The challenge for the future is how to translate these democratic interpretations of Islam in order to integrate them into popular consciousness.

Annalisa Frisina

See also Gender; Human Rights; Islam; Modernism; Pluralism; Religious Freedom; Social Justice

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LIBERAL PROTESTANTISM

Liberal Protestantism refers to a modern movement that seeks to formulate a form of Christianity contoured to the critical demands of modernity—one that works in consonance with, rather than in opposition to, Enlightenment philosophy, science,

historical research, and culture as a whole. In regard to social issues, liberal Protestantism, or mainline Protestantism as it is sometimes referred to in distinction from evangelicalism, developed a “Social Gospel” that understands social responsibility and democratic ideals to stand at the forefront of religious life. If the Reformation shifted the emphasis of religious life from the church to the individual, liberal Protestantism seeks to shift the emphasis from the individual to society. Furthermore, liberal Protestantism came of age in Europe and the North America during the 19th century, when Western interest in the history of religions was born. Due to its liberal theological method and emphasis on cultural engagement, liberal Protestantism represents Christianity’s most significant attempt to recognize and appreciate non-Christian religious traditions. While the liberal Protestant tradition is Christocentric through and through, it is the foremost example of a form of Christianity that has actively engaged the academic study of religions. Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768–1834) is the father of liberal Protestantism’s theological method. Schleiermacher constructed his understanding of religion and theological framework in response to the criticisms leveled at Christianity by German Romanticism, the critical epistemology of Immanuel Kant, and the pantheism of Baruch (Benedict) de Spinoza. Schleiermacher is thoroughly Protestant in that his theology is not founded on the authority of church tradition or teaching. He is thoroughly modern in that for him theology’s primary data come from the experience of the individual rather than from the Bible. For example, in *The Christian Faith (1820–1821)*, Schleiermacher reinterprets the Christian notion of sin as the resistance of God consciousness or dependence on the infinite. Jesus exhibited perfect absolute dependence and thus enables the rest of humanity to be reconciled into such a God-conscious state. Thus, Schleiermacher did not discard the traditional doctrines of Christian theology; he instead argued that they must not be understood literally as metaphysical statements regarding existence but as linguistic expressions of Christian religious experience. Finally, Schleiermacher’s emphasis on experience over dogma resulted in an appreciative, rather than critical or exclusive, tone with regard to other religious traditions.

Despite appropriations of Schleiermacher’s work by Hegelians such as F. C. Baur (1792–1860), the

most influential 19th-century heir of Schleiermacher was Baur’s temporary disciple Albrecht Ritschl (1822–1889). Ritschl agreed with Schleiermacher that Christian theology should begin with experience rather than dogma. However, Ritschl argued that objective historical data should be the fulcrum guiding Christian experience, rather than subjective feeling of the individual, as posited by Schleiermacher. For Ritschl, the goal was to discover the original and unique aspects of the historical founding of Christianity—that new aspect of religious consciousness created by the redeeming work of the historical Jesus. Furthermore, Ritschl understood ethics and social responsibility to stand at the helm of religious life. It is in Ritschl’s influential work that liberal Protestant theological method began to be translated into an optimistic form of social critique and progression.

Near the turn of the century, Adolph Harnack (1851–1930) and Ernst Troeltsch (1865–1923) took Ritschl’s method a step further. In *What Is Christianity?* Harnack (1990) set out to clear away the external authority of church dogma in order to pinpoint the original kernel of Christianity. He saw no worth in retaining the arbitrary teaching of the churches if it meant Christianity’s excommunication from culture as a whole. Troeltsch wanted to apply the historical method to Christian doctrine completely, thereby dissolving Christian dogma into the discipline of the history of religion. For Troeltsch, it is in the study of religion that we might be able to discern a common spiritual goal related to the absolute value of human existence.

Troeltsch’s view of Christianity’s place in the history of religions is an exemplary case of how the liberal Protestant tradition’s engagement with non-Christian religions evolved over time. In his early writings, Troeltsch asserted that Christianity was the highest form of human religious life and that it must be determined as such by an absolute value judgment—a theoretical framework, based on historical data, that would make such a claim evident. Over time, Troeltsch’s position changed. In his later work, Troeltsch is clear that he understands other religious traditions as capable of leading humanity to its objective spiritual goal. Christianity is not true in that sense that it is exclusively superior to other religions. But it must remain the centerpiece of Western life and thus true from the perspective of the Western mind. Its social

and ethical impetus must remain at the core of Western life.

This social mission was carried out in the United States by Troeltsch's contemporary Walter Rauschenbusch, who combined a strong commitment to the spiritual dimension of human existence with a vision for radical social change. His *Christianity and the Social Crisis* (1907), *Christianizing the Social Order* (1912), and *Theology and the Social Gospel* (1915) spoke of the Kingdom of God as the social ideal of Christianity and turned to progressive politics to inaugurate such an ideal. In the 1920s and 1930s, Harry Emerson Fosdick (1878–1969) contributed to the vision of the Social Gospel by spreading the liberal Protestant message of social equality through the pulpit, eventually becoming the first pastor of New York City's Riverside Church in 1931. Fosdick consistently preached a message that posited the church as the community through which social change could and would take place. He criticized William Jennings Bryan's opposition to evolutionary theory at the Scopes monkey trial as a misuse of Scripture, converted to pacifism after World War I, and called Christians to remain loyal to the revolutionary social vision of Jesus' Kingdom of God rather than the corrupt economic system of society.

During the interwar and World War II periods, liberal Protestantism's theological method took an existential turn through the work of figures such as Rudolph Bultmann (1884–1976) in Germany and Paul Tillich (1886–1965; a German war immigrant) in the United States. In the correlationist spirit of Schleiermacher, Tillich attempted to translate the traditional theological language of Christian doctrine into terms used by existential philosophy. In terms of the Social Gospel during this period, Reinhold Niebuhr (1892–1971) was a frequent critic of what he understood to be liberal Protestantism's naive approach to social ethics (including pacifism). Niebuhr called for a "Christian realism" that employed a more critical and realistic approach to social ethics but one that continued to emphasize liberal Protestantism's overarching emphasis on social responsibility. Both Rauschenbusch and Niebuhr were theological influences on the young Martin Luther King Jr.'s (1929–1968) understanding of the social vision of Christianity during his time at Crozer

Seminary and Boston University. King was raised in the tradition of the Social Gospel and later became an acquaintance of Reinhold Niebuhr, who admired King as a religious leader.

However, despite the loud reverberations of the Social Gospel in the civil rights movement led by King, liberal Protestantism's theological and social prominence had already begun to decline after World War I. In terms of theological method, the correlationist impulses of liberal Protestantism were forcefully opposed in the 1920s and 1930s by the dialectical theology of Karl Barth and other neo-orthodox theologians. In terms of Christianity's social vision, liberal Protestantism was slowly overshadowed by the rise of a fundamentalist neo-evangelical movement with Billy Graham as its most visible public figure. In the contemporary political context, the so-called Religious Right has taken center stage in terms of Christianity's political influence and social agenda in the United States. During the last half of the 20th century, liberal Protestant denominations experienced widespread decline in church membership. Yet liberal Protestantism continues to develop across the globe through the work of myriad figures, such as the New Testament scholar John Dominic Crossan, the minister and professor Peter J. Gomes, the scholarly and popular works of Marcus Borg, the theology and social vision of Professor Gary Dorrien and Episcopal Bishop John Shelby Spong, and the work of the philosopher John Hick. Contrary to widespread belief, some would argue that liberal Protestantism is experiencing a nearly unnoticed theological renaissance and even a resurgence in church growth.

Bradley Binn Onishi

See also Christianity; King, Martin Luther, Jr.; Niebuhr, Reinhold; Protestant Christianity; Schleiermacher, Friedrich; Tillich, Paul

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LIBERATION THEOLOGY

Liberation theology (LT) is a philosophical and theological movement that originated at the end of the 1960s and reached the height of activity in Latin America during the following two decades. It has had a huge influence in galvanizing liberationist movements generally, such as Black liberation theology and radical feminist theology, although here attention is given to its earlier and more formative phase in the Latin American context. In Latin America, the movement was principally confined to the Catholic Church, although it included a Protestant minority. The most important representatives include the Peruvian Gustavo Gutierrez, the Uruguayan Juan Luis Segundo, the Brazilians Hugo Assmann and Leonardo Boff, the Argentinean Enrique Dussel, the Chilean Pablo Richard, and the Spanish missionary from San Salvador, Jon Sobrino. These theologians believed that in the Latin American context of poverty and social injustice, Christianity should accept a political commitment in favor of social change. They claim to have thereby rediscovered the fundamentally political meaning of liberation in the biblical tradition, a tradition, they recall, that does not separate the eschatological promise of eternal salvation from the historical process of liberation of oppressed peoples. From this perspective, they defended the convergence of the Marxist philosophy of history and original Christianity's prophetic vocation of social criticism.

The Religious Context

LT emerged from a context distinguished by contemporary Christian renovation—the political-ideological effects of Latin American Cold War bipolarization and the global ferment of a generational culture of emancipation. Within Catholicism, the renovation movement culminated in Vatican

Council II (1962–1965) and, in Latin America, the Second Latin American Episcopal Conference in Medellín, Colombia (1968). The Council invited Catholics to read the “signs of the times” and proposed a modernization or *aggiornamento* of the Catholic Church in the sense of the rationalization of doctrine and its greater compatibility with the modern world. The axis of renovation consisted of incorporating into the Catholic doctrine the modern values of progress and liberty, the challenges of social justice, and the latest developments of the human sciences. Nevertheless, this movement did not renounce placing the spiritual and communitarian principles of their ideal Christian society in opposition to the materialism and individualism of modern rationalism. On the Protestant side, in addition to the dynamism of theological thought, the renovation was characterized by the creation of the international ecumenical movement as institutionalized by the World Council of Churches (WCC) in 1948. The Catholic renovation movement worked closely with the WCC to promote the progress of developing nations within the framework of a more just international order, which was considered a necessary condition for world peace. The most important document of the Catholic developing-nation policy was the encyclical *Populorum Progresio*, published in 1967 by Pope Paul VI, which was inspired by Louis Lebert, the French Dominican founder of the Economy and Humanism movement, influential in South America.

The Sociopolitical Context

LT was mostly a product of the aforementioned Catholic renovation but was opposed to developmental reform. For LT's authors, except the “populist” faction in Argentina (Juan Carlos Scannone and Lucio Gera), the sociopolitical challenges of Latin America left no choice but to opt for revolutionary socialism. At that time, the Latin American context was characterized by the crises of development projects aimed at modernization and national integration as well as the multiplication of insurgencies and revolutionary movements inspired by the Cuban Revolution of 1959. The national-populist governments, often supported by the Catholic Church and reformist Catholic parties (e.g., Christian Democrats [CD]), had promoted

the search for a third path to development as an alternative to both capitalist and socialist industrialization. The goal was to forge an alliance between social classes by invoking the defense of the national culture against the imposition of external models of modernization. The revolutionary radicalization process sought to develop, from a Marxist-Leninist perspective, the struggle against imperialism and class capitalism. The socialist option did not exclude nationalist ambitions of promoting a Latin American alternative to development in opposition to Western models of modernity; in fact, the intention was to deepen and establish the two paths of social progress and national identity in Latin American nations. From this perspective, the decisive influence of dependency theory in the social sciences exercised on LT during its formative years must be highlighted. Dependency theory did not analyze Latin America's underdevelopment as a lack of modernization but, rather, as a product of a dependent type of capitalism whose attempts at modernization fostered the very underdevelopment it was supposed to alleviate. LT's radical elements defended the path of revolutionary socialism, presenting it as the way to overcome the illusory attempts to reconcile the defense of national culture with self-sustaining capitalist modernization, condemned as accomplices to the imperialism of foreign capital and the conservative social order, respectively.

Liberation Theology and Social Change in Latin America

LT integrated antirationalist Catholic renovation with Marxist-inspired Latin American anticapitalism. In Europe, Catholicism had converted to modernity, seeking to better adapt it to its Christian ideal of society, thereby preserving the ideology of a "third path" qualitatively superior to liberalism and communism. Accordingly, the CD defended a societal project founded on Christian values but with an apparently nonconfessional perspective, which assumed the separation of religion and politics. LT identified with the revolutionary path to socialism from a Latin American perspective, in opposition to the models of Western modernity and the Catholic power structure's defense of faith as well as the attempt to combine the two. Hence, LT could retain the ideological elements of the

Catholic opposition to modern rationalism, albeit integrated with revolutionary socialism, thereby diverging from the ideology of the "third way." The singularity of Latin American socialism justified the integration of the singularity of its religious and theological viewpoint with the historical project of socialism. Consequently, LT rejected the separation of politics and religion, proposing the imperative that the Catholic Church politically commit to social change. From LT's Latin American perspective, rejection of the principle of separation of politics and religion acquired a sense of "modernity" irreducible to the Western model of secularization. The Catholic religion, still decisive in the context of scant secularization in Latin America, became an agent of transformation and social progress in contrast to its traditional role of preserving the social order. Nevertheless, LT also rejected the reciprocal reduction of its revolutionary commitment and its religious vision. The movement was not defined as the expression of a Christian-inspired political movement but, rather, as the expression of the politicization of Christian sectors that combined to form a plurality of secular movements. Similarly, from the perspective of LT, individual Christians should assess the specific consequences of their political commitments in relation to their faith as well as consider the extent of religious contributions to revolutionary movements. During the Popular Unity (PU) Chilean government of Salvador Allende (1970–1973), the Christians for Socialism movement defended the compatibility of evangelical and socialist values and sought to involve the Catholic Church in the Chilean "transition to socialism" process. Members were active in different political areas of the PU without losing sight of the unity of their Christian identity or of the reciprocal implications of that identity and their revolutionary commitment.

LT was self-defined from the "Latin American perspective" that articulated Marxist language with its theological-religious axis of reflection. Gustavo Gutierrez (1971) affirmed that he did not offer a new subject for theological reflection but, rather a "new way of doing theology" as "critical reflection on historical *praxis*" (p. 33). He defined LT as a theology and, more amply, as an expression of Latin American Christian sociopolitical and pastoral experiences preceding the theological texts. The notions of a popular and progressive

church underlined LT's concrete and dialectical option for the poor against oppressive structures, an option that was qualified as "preferential" after the intense debates at the 1979 Latin American Episcopal Conference in Puebla, Mexico. In this sense, a new ecclesial model was proposed and erected from local bases, in opposition to the centralized and vertical power structure of the Catholic Church. The basic ecclesial communities (BECs), conceived as local Bible study and popular "conscientization" groups, were presented as the principal concretization of the new model. Through the BECs, LT gave testimony to the mission and the fundamental significance of Christianity from the singular context of social violence.

Ambivalences of Liberation Theology

Of course, LT was not in any way a homogeneous movement. Its thought was conditioned by the diversity of national contexts and political movements in Latin America in addition to the diversity of social experience and the intellectual background of its exponents. Therefore, political positions and visions of politics were noticeably varied at both the ideological and practical levels. Nevertheless, affinity with Marxism was fundamental and constituted the framework for LT thought, although there was never a strict identification between the two. On this point, as with the relation between faith and politics, their positions oscillated but always remained within the established framework. At first, the founding texts appeared to identify with a Marxist vision of history without renouncing the originality of the Christian point of view. Later, when faced with negative reactions from the Catholic world, a philosophical distinction was made between Christianity's ethical option in favor of liberation and Marxism's scientific approach to "understand the causes of social injustice" without eliminating the convergence of the two. Even within its Latin American perspective, LT did not escape the contradictions between its theological-religious position and its philosophical-political option.

LT's contradictions are symptomatic of the ambivalence of its social dynamics. The liberation theologians correctly affirmed that their thinking was inseparable from those dynamics, but their observation also required a distancing from their

discourse of justification. While LT integrated the social sciences into their theological thought, the theological-religious axis of that thinking extended beyond the field of theology toward other disciplines such as philosophy (Enrique Dussel and Ignacio Ellacuria), political economics (Franz Hinkelammert), pedagogy (Paulo Freire), psychology (Ignacio Martin Baro), and history through the work of the Latin American Commission on Studies of Church History. The social space of their thought also extended beyond academia, developing in parallel intellectual spaces of pastoral training and social activism. These were first located in the Latin American Episcopal Conference, national episcopal conferences, religious orders, international lay movements, and missionary dynamics of Latin American developing-world Catholicism, oscillating between the center and the periphery of the Catholic Church. A sector of the episcopate supported LT, which constituted a transversal minority school of thought within the institution. On the Protestant side, LT emerged more specifically from the Church and Society in Latin America movement, started in 1961, which was supported by the WCC with Rubem Alves, José Miguez Bonino, and Julio de Santa Ana. Subsequently, the proponents of LT moved to ecumenical and civic organizations in response to their increasing marginalization from official spaces within the Catholic Church. However, they were able to maintain positions in some national episcopal conferences, especially in Brazil; in religious organizations, particularly the Jesuits; and even in some dioceses, with support from the local bishop. LT, despite its ecumenism, was dominated by the Catholic worldview.

Based on these observations, and despite the scope of their social networks, LT should be specifically related to a transnational theological elite belonging to the Catholic clergy and the middle-class sectors of Latin American societies. These elites opposed the strict regulations of the academic and religious fields without ceasing to be conditioned by them. Their social commitment produced certain practical effects, although limited, in popular mobilization and legitimized the interests of their intellectual activism, which were ideologically involved with revolutionary radicalization. The heterodoxy of these elites should not obscure the fact that their members were agents of

the ecclesial power structure. Their militant dynamics situated them in contradiction with the established status quo, but they never broke away from it, obligating these dynamics, beginning with the BECs, to comply with regulations. Finally, LT's Latin American dimension should not be analyzed in the simplistic framework of a binary opposition between the oppressed periphery and the Western center; their ideas circulated within transnational networks encompassing Latin America, North America, and Europe, which permitted these elites to benefit from important external support. LT was presented as a populist, progressive, and Latin American theology of social and religious dissent in the context of social poverty; in reality, LT represented more ambivalent social interests, which was precisely reflected in its sociopolitical impact. Although critical of the Catholic Church's traditional role, LT's exponents nonetheless depended on its social control structures, a constitutive part of the order they were attempting to transform. In this sense, the preservation of the faith's political positions in the context of limited, yet growing, secularization conflicted with the proclaimed modernity of their revolutionary commitment.

The Sociopolitical Impact of Liberation Theology

The sociopolitical impact of LT was important in the revolutionary movements and the guerilla wars of Central America, particularly in Nicaragua, where three priests (Ernesto Cardenal, Fernando Cardenal, and Miguel d'Escoto) held the office of minister in the Sandinista government of 1979. In many other countries of the region, Christian political participation tended to be less direct, principally due to the installation of military dictatorships, the intensification of political repression of leftists in South America during the 1970s, and the reaction LT's ideas provoked in the Catholic Church. The 1980s in particular were marked by the polemic between the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, which published two instructions on the subject in 1984 and 1986, and the principal liberation theologians, such as Gustavo Gutierrez and Leonardo Boff, who were condemned by the Congregation. Facing resistance on two fronts, LT sought to contribute to the formation of social and populist movements

without losing sight of the political dimensions of the struggle, a stance that had a significant impact in Brazil.

Liberation Theology Today

Today, LT appears to have disappeared from contemporary Latin American affairs; the end of the Cold War and the historical crisis of the Marxist left, the progressive marginalization from official spaces within the Catholic Church, and the erosion of Catholic hegemony in Latin American societies explain the decline. Nonetheless, LT's legacy is still visible in Latin American Christianity, and its ideas continue to have a notable impact on social movements and in several sectors of civil society throughout the region, such as the Landless Workers' movement in Brazil and the Zapatista Army of National Liberation in Mexico. Current intellectual activity is marked by a process of pluralization of thought toward new areas of concern such as culture, ecology, and gender. The cause of pluralization is the crisis of the notion of a unifying subject of collective liberation expounded in exclusively socioeconomic terms, such as the *people* or the *poor*. Nevertheless, LT has never lost sight of the unity of the social struggle proclaimed against a common capitalist and imperialist adversary assimilated today under the rubric of neoliberalism.

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See also Christianity; Human Rights; Marxism; Postcolonial Theology

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LIBERIA

The Republic of Liberia adjoins the Atlantic Ocean on the west coast of Africa and shares borders with Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Cote d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast). Liberia was founded in 1841 by freed American slaves as a refuge from the racism and discrimination they faced in the United States, and in 2005, the country elected an American-educated woman as the first female African head of state. Since the first American Christians arrived in 1822, the history of this country has been shaped by American influences.

The slaves who immigrated to Liberia were primarily born and raised in the culture of the antebellum American South. As such, they brought with them Christianity as well as the belief that anything natively African was necessarily primitive and inferior to what the West had to offer. This disposition would lead to recurring tensions between the Americo-Liberian settlers and the native African population, some of which still exist. Despite their minority status (2%–3% of the population), the former slaves who immigrated to Liberia became that society's elite, and their descendants held all the highest government posts until 1980. The churches

they started are some of the most prestigious in the nation, none more so than the Providence Baptist Church, dubbed "The Cornerstone of the Nation." Located in the capital city of Monrovia, it was established in 1822 by free Blacks sent as missionaries by the Richmond African Baptist Missionary Society of Richmond, Virginia. The signing of the declaration of independence and the meeting of the first legislative assembly for the new nation of Liberia were held inside the church. This and other settler churches continue to have strong ties with the United States through cross-cultural partnerships and pastor exchanges.

According to the 2008 national census, 85.5% of Liberians self-identify as Christians. However, there is some controversy among Christian groups as to whether the percentage is that high since some of the more conservative groups do not consider the syncretic incorporation of African traditional religion or secret societies (such as the Freemasons) into Christian practices to be legitimate forms of Christianity. In terms of non-Christian religions, the census reported that 0.5% of Liberians practice indigenous religions, 1.5% have no religion, and very small percentages (0.1%) practice other religions such as Baha'i, Hinduism, and Buddhism.

Practicing Muslims compose 12.2% of the population, most of whom are a part of the Vai and Mandingo ethnic groups. The 22nd president of Liberia, Charles Taylor, was an ally of Muammar Gaddafi, had trained in Libya, and was favorably disposed toward Muslims during his term. However, recently some Muslims have expressed frustration that the government does not officially recognize Muslim holy days in the same way that it does Christian ones. They are petitioning the current president, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, to make the end of Ramadan a national holiday.

Kimberly Eberhardt Casteline

See also Africa; Christianity; Indigenous Religions

LIBYA

Libya is the fourth largest country in Africa and the 17th largest in the world. Its area is 694,983 square miles (1 mile = 1.609344 kilometers), all but 10% of which is desert.

An overwhelming number of Libyans are Sunnī Muslims. Overall, 97% are Muslims of one type or the other. Other religions are represented, including Christianity, Judaism, and Buddhism. Christians are present from many other countries, although the majority of are Coptic Christians from Egypt (about 60,000 people). About 40,000 Roman Catholics bring with them a European background. There is a small population of Buddhists in Libya. There are about 38,000 Jews left, a number greatly reduced from the pre-1945 numbers. From 1945 until 1948, there was a concentrated attempt to kill the Jews or drive them out. Thus, what was once a large, perhaps the largest, population of Jews in North Africa was greatly reduced.

Islam came to Libya in the seventh century and was firmly established in urban centers in the next century. It took another few hundred years for it to become established in the rural areas, largely through the efforts of Arab and Syrian Bedouins. There is no official policy of religious freedom, but the dictatorship generally does not harass people because of their religious beliefs. It is not tolerant, however, of any religious movement it deems to be a political threat, which means radical or fundamental Islam.

In 644, Uqba ibn Nafi conquered the territory that constitutes present-day Libya, and in 655, the region became part of the Ummayyad Caliphate. In 750, it became part of the Abbasid area and was subsequently governed as part of the Ottoman Empire. As a result of its victory in a war against Turkey in the early 20th century, Italy ruled the three North African areas of Cyrenaica, Tripolitania, and Fezzan, uniting them in 1934 as Libya. Italian rule was harsh, and an estimated one third of indigenous Bedouins died in concentration camps. After World War II, the United Nations moved to free Libya and make it independent; a resolution was signed on November 21, 1949, that Libya should be independent before 1952. On Christmas Eve in 1951, Libya declared its independence. King Idris, who had led the resistance to Italian rule, became the sovereign.

The discovery in 1959 of enormous oil reserves in Libya changed its history; almost overnight, Libya transformed from one of the poorer nations into one of the richer ones. Despite his heroic status, Idris later lost favor with the people because of

his failure to share oil revenues with them in a manner they deemed equitable. In 1969, Muammar Gaddafi, a Bedouin, led a military coup, which led to his assumption of power and a change in the Libyan government and in its official name to The Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, a name coined by Gaddafi in keeping with his claim to have combined socialism and Islam into a Third International Theory. After years of foreign rule and monarchy, Libya was declared a people's republic.

Disillusioned by government corruption and the exploitation of the people, Gaddafi, then 27 years old, led the September 1, 1969, military coup that overthrew Idris. Shortly after, all vestiges of monarchy ended. Gaddafi, as "Brother, Leader, and Guide of the Revolution," has had a long career during which he has gone from being considered a terrorist in the West to attempting to change his image and having economic sanctions lifted against him. In 2011, protests against Gaddafi's power led to civil war and UN authorization of international military intervention to protect civilian lives.

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See also Middle East; Muslim Brotherhood; North Africa; Religion and State

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LIECHTENSTEIN

The principality of Liechtenstein, a small, landlocked country in central Europe located between Switzerland and Austria, was founded in 1342. By 1434, the territory of the principality had reached its current boundaries. The Holy Roman Emperor

Charles VI granted the counties of Vanduz and Schellenberg, which constitute the present-day Liechtenstein, the status of a principality in 1719. Under the constitution adopted in 1921, the people of the principality were granted sovereign political rights.

The majority of the population of Liechtenstein is of ethnic Germanic origin, while resident aliens, such as Turks, Iranians, and others, constitute one third of the country's population. The official language of the principality is German; however, approximately 87.5% of the Liechtenstein nationals speak Alemannish, which is a south German dialect.

According to official statistics in 2000, the religious spectrum of the principality is composed as follows: Roman Catholic 78.4%, Protestant 8.3%, Muslim 4.8%, Christian Orthodox 1.1%, Jewish 0.1%, and other religions 0.4%. No formal religious affiliation was declared by 2.8% of the population; also for 4.1% of the population, indication of religious affiliation was not available.

In 2007, a representative survey was conducted, which demonstrated that a vast majority (two thirds) of the Liechtenstein population considered themselves very religious. Although the answers varied by different religious groups, more Muslims tended to consider themselves very religious (30%) than Catholics (15%). Also, according to the survey results, one in three respondents believed in God and in the existence of heaven.

Freedom of religion is endorsed by the Constitution of Liechtenstein and is generally respected by the government. Even though according to the constitution, the Roman Catholic Church is the national church of Liechtenstein and is fully protected by the state, the government undertakes necessary measures to protect the right to freedom of religion. The government funds the operations of religious institutions according to their membership size determined in a census count. Smaller religious groups can also apply for grants.

Since 1997, the government of Liechtenstein has started a process of disentangling religion and the state. In 2007, Prime Minister Otmar Hasler introduced a proposal on separation of church and state, which requires amendments to the constitution and the Religious Act, as well as revision of funding models for religious communities. According to the 2007 survey, a majority of the

population of Liechtenstein supported the idea of respecting other religions and opposed the privileged position of the Roman Catholic Church by calling on the government to treat all religions equally. The survey respondents were very open toward Islam and the Muslim population of Liechtenstein. More than half the Christian respondents (53% Catholics and 54% other Christians) supported the idea of constructing a mosque.

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See also Austria; Germany; Roman Catholicism; Switzerland

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LITHUANIA

Lithuania, one of the Baltic states of northern Europe, has a religious life today marked by both a revival of traditional religious practices and increased secularization. At one time the last pagan country of Europe, Lithuania became an important center for Catholic and Jewish life in the region. Religiously motivated resistance to 20th-century Nazi and Soviet occupations helped galvanize Lithuanian national identity, even while that same foreign rule had devastating effects on Lithuania's religious life. The recent movement from Soviet rule to independence, and finally to incorporation into the European Union, has allowed Lithuanians to worship freely and at the same time has facilitated the marginalization of religion.

Religion has long played a significant role in Lithuanian cultural and national identity. The paganism of Lithuanians in the late Middle Ages was a uniting factor against the political advances of Christian Europe, and a 19th-century cultural rediscovery of Lithuania's pagan folklore was integral to the solidification of Lithuanian national identity. After Lithuania's incorporation into the Latin Church, Catholicism defined Lithuania against its Orthodox and Protestant neighbors and helped identify Lithuania with Poland and western Europe. In the 20th century, the Catholic Church was at the forefront of Lithuanian nationalism and the movement for independence from the Soviet Union.

The religious life of Lithuania since the mid-20th century has been marked by significant upheaval. Vilnius, Lithuania's political and cultural capital, was home to a vibrant Jewish community of more than 200,000 people, who were almost completely annihilated in the Holocaust. Furthermore, the Catholic Church was severely persecuted during Soviet rule, so that Lithuania's once vibrant Catholic culture moved underground and lost much of its influence. Independence from the Soviet Union brought new religious freedom, yet the religious infrastructure had to be revitalized and retooled for the challenges of independence.

In 2004, Lithuania entered the European Union, furthering its break with Russia and solidifying its Western orientation. Unlike much of Europe, however, Lithuania and Lithuanian religious life have been relatively unaffected by immigration. Nearly 80% of Lithuanians continue to identify as Roman Catholics, while the rest are Russian Orthodox, Protestant, or not affiliated with any religion. The Muslim population of Lithuania continues to be very small. Internal factors, however, point toward significant changes to Lithuania's religious life in the near future. Today's young Lithuanians never experienced the religious culture and religious persecution of their grandparents and parents, and so they tend not to associate religious practices with national identity. Furthermore, Soviet occupation left behind a very private and muted religious life, so that young people are less likely to be raised in communities centered on religious practices. As a result, there is good reason to think that Lithuania will see an increase in secularization in the coming years.

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See also Baltic Countries; Communism; European Union; Roman Catholicism; Russian Federation

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LOCAL RELIGION

In popular usage, the term *local religion* denotes a religious belief or practice unique to a particular region, geographic location, or specific community. The concept of local religion, however, is commonly confused with folk religion—that is, religious beliefs and/or practices of regular or common people that are usually at odds with the “official” or regulated belief systems in a given area. In most instances, the “folk” in folk religion refers to uneducated peasants and superstitious villagers who go on pilgrimages, maintain certain superstitions, and are fascinated with rituals or the externals of religion. Sometimes *folk religion* is used interchangeably with the term *vernacular religion*. At least as it pertains to western Europe, vernacular means a language spoken in a particular region by both elites and nonelites, though the elites may privilege a “universal” language such as Latin. As an academic concept, local religion does not distinguish between those who practice a religion and those who officially regulate the religion in a particular region.

In the Philippines, many indigenous religious practices such as ancestor veneration and puberty ceremonies exist despite the people's acceptance of one form of Christianity or another. These beliefs and rituals vary from village to village, making one village's religious beliefs and practices different from others. Historically, although in the pre-Hispanic era, the Tagalogs had no religious hierarchy such as the priesthood in Roman Catholicism, there were medicine women who mediated between the temporal and the spirit worlds. They supervised and conducted rituals and performed sacrifices. These women were usually elderly and considered

wise because of their experience. As elders, these women were transmitters of culture, language, and sacred knowledge. They functioned as healers, ceremonial experts, and prophets within their respective communities. If one of these medicine women were to enter another village, for example, her status and office would be respected but the new community would not be obligated, religiously or otherwise, to obey her commands. Some of these medicine women exist today but with Christian titles. This, however, is not unique to the Philippines. Recent research has shown that there have been similar interactions between Christianity and indigenous religious traditions throughout the world. Local religion and indigenous practices in general, even in western Europe, tend to be closely related. Many indigenous religious traditions are decentralized, without a single governing body to shape or form beliefs or practices; they are, in fact, governed by traditions—traditions that are subject to interpretation by community religious leaders and elders, which inevitably result in religious variations. The lack of a centralized authority whose function it is to regulate the beliefs and practices of a religion enables religious diversity to flourish more rapidly and with greater ease than if a governing body or a rigid hierarchical structure were present.

Religious variation can also be found in Protestantism. To be sure, many Protestant denominations are decentralized as well, which, as with indigenous religions, leads to a diversity of beliefs and practices. Although most Protestant denominations do have a governing structure of sorts, they are loosely united and maintain that scripture is the final authority on certain core issues. Since many Protestants believe that each individual's interpretation of scripture is as authoritative as that of any other Protestant, inevitably there arise theological and legal disputes. If these disputes are not resolved, in many cases, as a result, churches will branch off, with the new congregation modifying its practices based on the culture, language, and tradition of law of the surrounding community. The manifestations of these diverse beliefs and practices are examples of local religion.

As an academic concept, local religion does not necessarily denote a conflict between those who practice a religion in a particular region and those who officially regulate the religion. In *Local*

Religion in Sixteenth Century Spain, the historian William Christian Jr. gives the best scholarly account of local religion. For him, as an expert on early modern religion in Spain, there is no folk religion/official religion dichotomy. Rather, there is local and translocal religion. At times, the local dominates a given religious tradition in a particular location; at other times, the translocal dominates; and sometimes, though rarely, local and translocal are in harmony or act in concert. Local and translocal become similar, mirroring each other. As it pertains to the Catholic Church, the translocal consists of the overall aims and goals of the religious organization. The local, on the other hand, consists of the various aims and goals of small organizations or communities—that is, villages, prayer groups, and/or confraternities within the larger organization, which is the Catholic Church. Although the Bishop of Rome (the pope) and his advisors, for instance, may promulgate a law that decrees that all Catholic marriages must take place in a church, it may be the prerogative of an individual community to determine what in fact constitutes a church. The former is translocal religion, and the latter is local religion.

For William Christian, those responsible for producing, implementing, and regulating the official views of the Catholic Church were themselves products of communities that maintained their own traditions and practices, which may or may not have been in keeping with the Church's official system. Given the existence and acceptance of micropatriotism or hometown pride in early-modern Spain, Church officials were reluctant to formally condemn all the traditional beliefs and practices of a given community. Local religion was not always identified as a threat but was, in most cases, seen as a common occurrence in any religious community. In some ways, this also explains the diversity of beliefs and practices within the Catholic Church. Historians and scholars of religion are now examining the manifestations of local religion in colonial and modern Latin America. Indeed, some scholars are even researching local religion within the United States, although the focus of these studies has been immigrant and ethnic/racial minority religious communities.

Although the translocal/local religion distinction is one that is relatively easy to make, the designation of who belongs to what religion is more

difficult for scholars of religion to make. As for what is meant by a Christian or a Catholic community, it is safest to make things simple: A Catholic community is one that identifies itself as such. The Manobos of the southern Philippines, for example, although they have combined the theological and ritual aspects of Catholicism with their animist beliefs, do not, nor have ever, defined themselves as Catholic. However, the Tagalogs of the central Philippines have defined themselves as Catholics and have done so since the late 16th century, although they have persistently resisted European colonialism. Indeed, in the late 16th century, Catholic religious movements in indigenous communities in the Philippines and the Americas became commonplace.

Many of these religious movements are usually dismissed by scholars as being “fanatical” disruptions, merely focusing on the externals of religion such as rituals, rather than manifestations of local religion. Although it may be problematic for some scholars, the proposed definition allows a group to define itself. This way of determining who is a member of what religion is less problematic than having someone foreign to a tradition determine who is of what religious persuasion. From a historical-theological perspective, one could argue that Protestants are not Christians because they do not acknowledge the authority of the Bishop of Rome. It works in the other direction as well. One could argue, as Martin Luther did, that Catholics are not truly Christians because they do not acknowledge the authority of Rome, which is not based on scriptural authority. Although the local religion concept helps scholars little in determining religious identity, it does enable scholars to identify and explain regional variance or diversity within a given religion without creating a false division between the beliefs and practices of the common people and those of the elites within the same community. Even more, scholars can find one form or another of local religion in indigenous religious traditions, Christianity, and other global religions.

Robert L. Green Jr.

See also Folk Saints in Latin America; Indigenous Religions; Liberal Protestantism; Postcolonial Theology; Roman Catholicism

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LONDON

See Global Cities; United Kingdom

LONG, CHARLES H. (B. 1926)

Through more than 40 years of teaching, lectures, and writings, Charles H. Long has influenced hundreds if not thousands of scholars in religious studies, African American studies, sociology, and related disciplines. In the field of history of religions, he is arguably the preeminent African American scholar. His career began at the University of Chicago as a professor of history of religions, where he served as chair of the field as well as chair of the Committee on African Studies. His seminal volume, *Significations: Signs, Symbols, and Images in the Interpretation of Religion*, is widely recognized as an insightful articulation of how religion and the field of religious

studies are to be understood within the hegemonic structures of western European culture, particularly in the Americas.

Charles H. Long's studies of religion interrogate a wide range of human activities—cultural, political, and global developments—as well as activities formally designated as religious. Religion, he contends, is the fundamental work of human beings; it constitutes sets of values that have evolved from human interactions and exchanges. From such a perspective, Long has described and illuminated religious activities and expression in economic domains such as the U.S. stock market. This exemplifies how religious studies can contribute to general discussions of human life.

For Long, religion is far from notions about the superiority of one group over another, as such superiority is not inherent to religion but a product of the values that evolve from human interaction. Superiority of ideas, processes, and proposed solutions is something that diverse groups achieve when engaged in significant exchanges. It is only through the critique embedded in interactional exchange that the truth of a person or group is recognized and valued. Truth is not inherent or self-evident.

Born in Little Rock, Arkansas, Long attended that city's public school system through Dunbar Junior College; during World War II, he volunteered for the U.S. Air Force. His first interest was mathematics, and he considered the profession of engineering but began to understand and acknowledge the integrity, validity, and truth of his experiences as an African American in a White racist and segregated society. This knowledge undergirded his experiences at Moody Bible College and as he progressed in the field of religious studies. He matriculated at the University of Chicago in 1949, where he received the bachelor of divinity degree and later the PhD. His established sense of self and self-worth refused to succumb to racism or racial segregation as he pursued his education. At the University of Chicago, Long studied with Professor Joachim Wach, a pioneer in the history of religions as an academic discipline in the United States. With other colleagues, he inaugurated the first curriculum for the study of religion at the University of Chicago undergraduate college and, together with Professors Mircea Eliade and Joseph Kitagawa, two other trailblazers in religious studies, Long

established the international journal *History of Religions*.

His first book was *Alpha: The Myths of Creation*, published in 1963, and with his colleague Joseph Kitagawa, he edited *The History of Religions: Essays on the Problem of Understanding* in 1967. He was a founding member of the American Society for the Study of Religion and the Society of Black Religious Studies. He served as president of the American Academy of Religion. He is a member of the International Association of Historians of Religion, the National Humanities Faculty, and the American Society for the Study of Religion. He was chosen as the University of Chicago's Divinity School's Distinguished Alumnus of the Year in 1984 and received the Professional Achievement Citation of the University of Chicago Alumni Association in 1991. He was a senior editor of the second edition of *The Encyclopedia of Religion*.

Charles H. Long has served on faculties at major universities in and outside the United States; has taught in Australia, Japan, South Africa, and elsewhere; and has lectured on most major U.S. campuses, including historically Black colleges and universities. His intellectual legacy has influenced generations, and his work remains highly influential in religious studies and other related fields.

Jualynne E. Dodson

See also Christianity

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L'ORDRE DU TEMPLE SOLAIRE

See Solar Temple Order

LOS ANGELES

The effects of globalization have endowed several geographical locations with economic, political, social, and cultural significance. Los Angeles, California, is the second largest city in the United States, and although it is not considered to be one of the urban sociologist Saskia Sassen's three "global cities"—referring to New York, London, and Tokyo—it is regarded as a major contributor to several cultural aspects of California and the larger United States. As the county seat, the city of Los Angeles is surrounded by 88 other cities, incorporating more than 10 million residents.

From its very inception in the mid-18th century, the city of Los Angeles has been associated with religion and has contributed widely to the diversity of faith-based communities. The current distribution of religious congregations and centers attests to the transnational history and culture of religion within a global context.

The name *Los Angeles* originates from a Spanish-Franciscan missionary expedition that took place in 1769. On August 2 of that year, the Franciscan priest Father Juan Crespi named the Los Angeles River after *Nuestra Señora de los Ángeles de Porciúncula* (Our Lady of the Angels of the Small Portion). Adhering to the Franciscan calendar, Crespi's choice of names referred to the celebration of the Feast of Perdono, which takes place at the chapel of St. Francis de Assisi. As this chapel is particularly small, its name was accompanied by the Italian word *porziuncola*, or "small parcel of land." Crespi gave the river its name in honor of the chapel and the calendar date when the river was found by the expedition.

In 1781, the Spanish governor Felipe de Neve founded the city of Los Angeles, naming it El Pueblo de Nuestra Señora la Reina de los Ángeles de Porciúncula (The Town of Our Lady, the Queen of the Angels of the Small Portion). Forty years later, following Mexico's independence from Spain, Los Angeles became part of Mexico, only to be ceded to the United States of America according to the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo of 1848.

Since the time of Father Crespi's visit to the banks of the Los Angeles River, the "City of

Angels," as it is popularly known, has grown to become a cultural hub for more than 3.5 million residents, making Los Angeles well known for its international diversity. According to the U.S. Census Bureau data for the year 2000, of these 3.5 million Angelenos within Los Angeles proper, roughly 50% are listed as Latin American, another 30% are listed as White, while African and Asian Americans make up some 10%. The remainder are a mix of various ethnic and national identities, largely immigrants from other countries, or do not identify themselves in these terms.

Along with this racial and ethnic diversity comes a variety of religious communities scattered throughout the city's nearly 500 square miles (1 mile = 1.609344 kilometers). The religious fabric of Los Angeles is largely composed of five major religious traditions, including Catholicism, Protestantism, Judaism, and Islam. There are also significant, though considerably smaller, representative populations from Buddhism, Hinduism, Sikhism, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, and the Jehovah's Witnesses faiths.

Despite the Catholic predominance established by the tradition of the Franciscan missionary expeditions during the late 18th and early 19th centuries, Catholicism faced an encroaching Protestant immigration from the Midwest during the late 19th century. From the 1960s onward, however, Catholicism has managed to increase and maintain the largest membership in Los Angeles County—an estimated 4 million members. Cardinal Roger Michael Mahony has overseen the Archdiocese of Los Angeles since 1985, presiding over the building of the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels, completed in September 2002.

Along with the Catholic Archdiocese, the spectrum of Christianity in Los Angeles encompasses a variety of Protestant traditions. The First Congregational Church is the oldest active Protestant denomination in the city of Los Angeles. The congregational lineage of the First Church can be traced to the original Pilgrim Separatists of the early 17th century, and it was founded in 1867 by holding meetings in the Los Angeles home of the church member Amanda Scott. Today, the church continues to serve thousands of Angelenos.

In addition to the presence of the First Congregational Church, a significant event in Protestantism took place in Los Angeles at the turn of the 20th

century. In 1906, a Pentecostal gathering known as the “Azusa Street Revival” took place at the Stevens African Methodist Episcopal Church in downtown Los Angeles. Led by the preacher William J. Seymour, the Pentecostal revival continued for the next 9 years, until 1915. Although the revival led to the rise of several ethnic-oriented missionary sects, the original Azusa Street event is popularly referred to as the birthplace of the Pentecostal movement.

With nearly 500,000 Jewish residents, the second largest population of Jews in the United States, Los Angeles County is home to the Conservative, Orthodox, Reconstructionist, and Reform branches of Judaism. In addition to the religiously oriented enterprises, several Jewish community organizations geared toward social, cultural, and educational well-being exist throughout Los Angeles proper, including the Jewish Federation, the Simon Wiesenthal Center, and the Museum of Tolerance.

Islam accounts for another major portion of religious practitioners in Los Angeles County. More than 90,000 Muslims practice in an estimated 50 mosques or centers. Like the Jews, Muslims in Los Angeles have a number of Islamic centers of worship and resource venues, including the Masjid Omar ibn Al-Khattab and Islamic Center of Los Angeles.

Salvador Jiménez Murguía

See also Global Cities; Missions and Missionaries; North America; Roman Catholicism

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LOTUS

The lotus plant and its flower have long been symbols of purity and nonattachment in the myriad religious traditions of diverse cultures spanning Asia, from Afghanistan and India to Indonesia and Japan, although worldwide the lotus is perhaps most commonly identified with Hinduism and Buddhism. Due to the natural characteristics of the plant, the lotus has persisted as a symbol of a variety of spiritual virtues for thousands of years. Moreover, the seeds, roots, young leaves, and flowers of the lotus plant are all edible and are common features of the Asian diet as well as being used in traditional medicine. Both India and Vietnam have honored the plant as symbols of their nations, naming the lotus as their national flower.

The roots of the lotus plant draw their sustenance from the mucky bottoms of waterways, rivers, lakes, and ponds, and from these depths, the plant's stalk grows until it reaches the water's surface, where the lotus leaves unfold like a lily pad. The leaves of the lotus plant are water resistant, with any rain or water poured on them simply running off into the river or pond. It is these features of the plant that have allowed for it to become such a lasting symbol of the nonattachment to worldly desires that is so highly sought after in many Asian religious movements. Indeed, the Bhagavad Gita at one point likens those who act in the world without attachment to the world to the leaves of the lotus, which are unaffected by the water's touch. For Buddhists, the fact that the lotus has its roots in the mud while its leaves and flowers float untouched above the water demonstrates the ultimate nondistinction between *samsara* and *nirvana*.

The lotus flower, which can range in color from pink to yellow to white, displays a beauty that has long been a feature of the iconography of Indian religions, including Buddhism as it spread to the east. Vishnu, Lakshmi, and other deities of Hindu traditions, as well as various Buddhas and bodhisattvas, are commonly depicted sitting on, adorned with, and/or holding up lotus flowers. The lotus is referenced in India's religious literature such as the Puranas and the Vedas and has lent its name to one of the most important Buddhist scriptures of East Asia, the Lotus Sutra.

The lotus position is the name given to what is arguably the most famous body position to be found in the tradition of hatha yoga. This pose, in which one sits with the legs folded so that the soles of one's feet face upward from one's lap, is also one of the most common forms of seated meditation in Buddhism.

Ryan J. T. Adams

See also Hinduism; Mahayana Buddhism

LOURDES

Lourdes, located in the Hautes-Pyrénées area in France, is among the world's most important places of Catholic pilgrimage. Each year, Lourdes welcomes nearly 6 million visitors.

The religious significance of Lourdes originated in the events of February 11, 1858, when young Bernadette Soubirous, a 14-year-old girl from a modest family and in poor health, claimed to have seen a "young lady" who appeared to her in Massabielle's grotto, close to the village of Lourdes. According to Bernadette's account, she was the chosen witness of 18 apparitions, during which she was given the task of messenger. Afterward, a water spring was discovered thanks to the "young lady's" indications and was soon credited with having miraculous properties, which has contributed notably to the increase in the thaumaturgic fame of the locale. Father Peyramale, the village abbot, pressed Bernadette to identify the apparition's nature, while some local residents already speculated that it could be the Virgin Mary. During the 16th apparition, Bernadette claimed that she received, in local dialect, the following answer: "I am the Immaculate Conception." This claim echoed the dogma of the Immaculate Conception that had been proclaimed by the Vatican 4 years previously. From this date on, ecclesiastical authorities have stood up for the authenticity of Bernadette's apparitions, and the little village of Lourdes has attracted more and more people.

On January 18, 1862, after 3 years of investigation, the Bishop of Tarbes, his lordship Laurence, declared acknowledgment of the authenticity of the apparitions, based on evaluation of Bernadette's

mental health, on seven cases of healing officially recognized as miraculous, and on the impressive religiosity that had characterized the locale since the events. Since then, the Church has erected large sanctuaries and developed a whole infrastructure necessary to receive thousands of pilgrims. Bernadette Soubirous, determined to become a nun in the *Congrégation des sœurs de la Charité de Nevers*, left Lourdes in 1864 and did not return. To the present day, pilgrims flock to this little village of the Hautes-Pyrénées, which fate has irrevocably changed.

After the apparitions of the "rue du Bac" (Paris, 1830), of La Salette (1848), of Lourdes (1858), and of Pontmain (1871), Marian pilgrimages have experienced an important renewal; in consequence, ecclesial institutions have been willing to control and to organize them. During the 19th century, places of Marian apparition posed a double challenge for the Church: On the one hand, the stimulation of Marian religious faith resulted in the questioning of ecclesiastic authorities, and on the other, the miraculous healings, which were necessary for the Church to authenticate the apparitions, generated exchanges of polemics between Church authorities and members of the medical science community during that positivist century. With the medical commission of 1959, the *Bureau des Constatations Médicales* in 1883, and then the International Medical Committee of Lourdes in 1947, Lourdes has become the pioneer of implementation procedures that aim to appeal to medical judgment for authenticating miraculous healings.

As the primary site of contemporary Catholic pilgrimage, Lourdes continues to welcome great numbers of pilgrims. At the same time, the nature of the pilgrimage itself underwent a change during the latter 20th century. Related perhaps to broader changes in religious observance in Western societies, the devotion to "Notre Dame de Lourdes" lost its character of religious *duty* and focused more on issues of inner healing. If pilgrims formerly came to Lourdes in the hope of healing their own physical ailment or that of a close relative, today pilgrims are more inclined to see Lourdes as a suitable place to express their pain and to acquire a new vision of the meaning of their own life.

Laurent Amiotte Suchet

See also Pilgrimage; Virgin Mary

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LUCKMANN, THOMAS (B. 1927)

Thomas Luckmann was born in Slovenia and was educated at the universities of Vienna and Innsbruck in Austria and at the New School for Social Research in the United States. A professor of sociology, he has taught in the Graduate Faculty of the New School for Social Research (New York) and at the University of Constance, Germany (among other institutions). His work focuses mainly on social theory with significant implications for the sociology of religion and also for philosophy and sociology in general.

Luckmann is widely viewed as an interesting figure in the historical trajectory of secularization theory, not the least for his markedly open-ended, functional definition of religion. In his *The Invisible Religion* (1967; originally published in 1963 in German as *Das problem der Religion*), Luckmann defines religion as a “transcendence of biological nature by the human organism” (p. 49), the process by which humans create a meaningful world for themselves. The breadth of the definition renders secularism more or less impossible, but Luckmann distinguishes between religion as a human constant, on the one hand, and organized, social forms of institution-related religion, on the other, allowing for the serious decline of the latter in modern societies. Luckmann’s definition of religion has exposed him to a string of criticisms. These include the assessment that the definition leads to excessive conceptual confusion, which cannot be resolved through empirical study, and that it bears relevance for individualistic forms of religion but is unable to account for more collective forms of religion and is thus of limited applicability beyond certain parts of the West.

At the same time, Luckmann is lauded by some scholars for firmly embedding the study of religion in wider social theory by locating religion centrally in the debate on the position of the self in modern

society. The trend is continued with *The Social Construction of Reality*, cowritten with Peter Berger, where religion appears as one element of the construction of reality (the book was published directly in English in 1966 and is thus often mistaken to have preceded Luckmann’s thinking in *The Invisible Religion*). According to its authors, *The Social Construction of Reality* was intended as a systematic, theoretical treatise in the sociology of knowledge. The book was critical as a move away from the sociology of the 1950s and 1960s, which saw religion and religious values as central to the social order in place. *The Social Construction of Reality* proclaimed that the social order is not “in place” but is constructed by individuals, or groups of individuals, as part of their own constructions (and maintenance) of their definitions of reality; religion enters the process here.

Luckmann delved further in-depth with these themes in *The Structures of the Life World*, co-authored with the phenomenologist Alfred Schütz, under whom he had studied at the New School of Social Research (1973; a second volume appeared in English in 1989, and both were published posthumously for Schütz). Here, the elementary structures of everyday life were examined as the underpinnings of social experience, language, and social action and, by extension, of the history of humankind. Some of Luckmann’s other influential texts are listed in the Further Readings.

Effie Fokas

See also Berger, Peter; Local Religion

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LUXEMBOURG

Luxembourg, a small western European country bordered by Belgium, France, and Germany,

counted around 500,000 inhabitants in 2010, of whom 43% are foreigners. Most of the migrants have come from European Union (EU) nations, chiefly from Portugal but also from Italy, France, and Belgium, and therefore are mostly of Roman Catholic origin.

According to the European Values Study (EVS) of 2008, 75% of the populace declare themselves as belonging to a religion: 69% Catholic, around 2% Protestant, 2% other Christian religions, and around 2.5% non-Christian religions. One out of four inhabitants declares not belonging to any religion.

Relationships between the state and religions are organized by bilateral agreements signed between the state and official representatives of most of the religious bodies. This model of relationship is issued from the “Concordat” of 1802 with the Catholic Church. Five criteria must be fulfilled to be eligible to sign a convention with the state: The religion must (1) have international recognition, (2) be recognized in at least one EU country, and (3) be ready to submit itself to law and order in Luxembourg and (4) to be established in the country (5) in sufficient members. This convention gives a legal status to the designated church and affects the number of its clergy. The state is allowed to intervene in their nomination and takes charge of their salaries and pensions as they are assimilated to the civil service.

The last convention signed with the Catholic Church (represented by the Archbishop) was in 1997. Conventions exist also with the Protestant Church of Luxembourg, the Jewish communities, the Hellenic Orthodox Church of Luxembourg, and the Anglican Church. During the Balkan war, the influx of refugees increased and modified the religious landscape so that conventions were also signed with the Rumanian Orthodox Church of

Luxembourg, the Serbian Orthodox Church of Luxembourg, and the Assembly of Muslim Worship in Luxembourg.

During the past decade, a certain distance can be observed regarding religious institutions. While the percentage of people who declared affiliation with a religion remained stable, religious attendance shows deep changes. The proportion of those who observe regular religious practices decreased dramatically, reaching 13% in 2008 (21% in 1999); 53% do not attend religious services (48% in 1999). But at the same time, the proportion of those considering religion important in life remains stable (around 43%), and religious identity is still shared by more than 55% of the population, who consider themselves religious.

In a 2008 survey in Luxembourg, one’s particular religion was not seen as the only possibility of a true religion as 60% of people declared that all great world religions contain some basic truths. Almost half of those who belong to a religion share this opinion, as do almost half of those who declare that they do not belong to any religion.

Monique Borsenberger

See also Belgium; France; Roman Catholicism

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*To the Memory of Ninian Smart,
Pioneer in the Study of Global Religion*

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MACAU

Macau (Macao, Aomen), like its neighbor Hong Kong, is a special administrative region of the People's Republic of China in the southern Guangdong province; it is heavily Buddhist, even though it was once an important locale for Christian missionaries. Although founded by the Portuguese as a colony in 1557, only around 3% of its population is currently Portuguese, with ethnic Chinese accounting for approximately 95% of its residents by the end of the 20th century. Due to the colonial Portuguese administration, Macau was heavily Catholic in the past, but now Buddhism claims more than 79% of the devoted and Catholicism retains about 5%; the remainder is divided between Protestants, Baha'is, Muslims, and a small Falun Gong community. Although Protestant Christianity does not account for a large portion of the populace, many different denominations are active, including the Anglican, Baptist, and Lutheran congregations. The Union of Christian Evangelical Churches in Macau was founded in 1990, which has resulted in greater cooperation between the faiths, something that was lacking in the past. A temple to the Chinese deity A-ma was active when the Portuguese first anchored in Macau and has remained operational till date.

Claimed by Portugal as an overseas territory until the end of 1999, Macau is one of only two Chinese special administrative regions (Hong Kong being the other) and has historically served as

Christianity's foothold in Asia. The Italian Jesuit Mateo Ricci first brought Catholicism from Beijing to Macau in the 16th century, and missionary activity has long been launched from Macau into China, Japan, and the islands of Southeast Asia. The Catholic identity furnished by the Portuguese kept Macau's populace connected with the colonizing country even in times of discontent, and the Diocese of Macau historically retained jurisdiction over ecclesiastical territories in China, Japan, Vietnam, and Malaysia. However, due to its positive stance on Chinese immigration and settlement, Buddhism has reigned as the most popular religion for years and is still the fastest growing religion of the region. Confucianism has also played a role in Macauan culture since the early 10th century, with the Basic Law of Macau, the constitution by which freedom of religious practice is guaranteed, being heavily based on Confucian teachings.

Macau's willingness to be multicultural has fostered an environment conducive to the free practice of religion, and in 1998 the Religious Freedom Ordinance was put into effect to lend the power of law to what has traditionally been respected. This part of Macau's Basic Law furnishes freedom of conscience; freedom of religious belief, assembly, and education; and the right to hold religious processions. This ordinance may help explain the Macauan Catholic bishops' reluctance to enter into the political arena, something their brethren in Hong Kong have been more willing to do. To enjoy the status of religion, and thereby be protected under the Religious Freedom Ordinance, groups must register with the Identification Services

Bureau of Macau. This requirement essentially enables the administration to define what is and is not religion. Groups such as the Falun Gong pose a problem in this realm, as they neither fit neatly into what is generally considered a religion nor universally agree on their coherent religious status. Their lack of registration with the Identification Services Bureau, compounded by their not registering under the Societies Ordinance (to which all nongovernmental groups are required to register), has led sometimes to violent confrontations with the police during Falun Gong activities in public parks.

John Soboslai

See also China; Confucianism; Falun Gong; Hong Kong; Mahayana Buddhism; Missions and Missionaries; Portugal; Postcolonialism

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MACEDONIA

By virtue of its geographical position, located in the Balkan peninsula of southeastern Europe adjacent to the countries of Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, and Serbia, the region of Macedonia has been continually exposed to the influence of several world religions and has thus been the locus for their strong competition. The earliest arrival of Christianity in Macedonia occurred around the middle of the first century. (St. Paul's letter to the

Thessalonians was written in approximately 52 CE, after Timothy had returned from the region, which then incorporated the territories of Epirus, Vetus, Thessaly, and parts of Illyria and Thrace.) The arrival of Islam in Macedonia happened as early as the 11th century CE.

Following World War II, the territory of what is today the Republic of Macedonia was constituted in 1946 as the People's Republic of Macedonia and incorporated as a constituent republic in the former Yugoslav Federation. After the breakup of Yugoslavia, Macedonia was admitted to the United Nations on April 8, 1993, as the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) pending an agreement with Greece, which claimed that some of the articles of the new Macedonian constitution made territorial claims on the Greek province of Macedonia. The issue regarding Macedonia's name has still not been resolved; thus, FYROM and Republic of Macedonia are commonly used as synonyms.

The present-day religious composition of the Republic of Macedonia is predominantly Eastern Orthodox, represented by the Eastern Orthodox Church (Macedonian Orthodox Church) to which approximately 60% of the population belong. About 30% of the population are members of the Islamic religious community. The remaining 10% belong to all other religious communities, including members of the Catholic Church, the Jewish community, Protestants, Evangelicals, and so on.

The first church officials in Macedonia were Archbishop St. Clement of Ohrid and St. Naum, both disciples of the brothers Saints Cyril and Methodius, who were the founders of the Slavonic literacy and the Glagolitic alphabet, on which the Cyrillic alphabet was based. St. Clement was the first Archbishop in what is now Macedonia, in Ohrid in 893 CE. However, the tradition goes back even earlier than this. Parigorius—the first Metropolitan of Skopje (the present-day capital of the Republic of Macedonia)—took part in the Second Synod in Serdica, in 343 CE, thus supporting Orthodoxy. At that time, there were two Metropolitan dioceses in the region: Thessaloniki and Skopje.

The Ohrid archdiocese was established in 893 CE under the jurisdiction of Prince Boris of Bulgaria. By the end of the 10th century (996 CE), Tsar Samuil, without the approval of the

Ecumenical Patriarch in Constantinople, proclaimed its autocephalous (self-governing) status, with five eparchies (dioceses): Voden, Meglen, Serres, Ohrid, and Skopje. The aim of this action was to proclaim ecclesiastic authority independent of Byzantium and to make it closer to the secular authority of Tsar Samuil. Its center was on the small island of Achilles in the Prespa Lake. Two years later, the center was moved to Ohrid. In 1018, after the defeat of Tsar Samuil in the battle of Belasica, the Ohrid archdiocese lost its autocephalous status but did not cease to exist, being legally strengthened and included in the Byzantine ecclesiastic institutional system.

In 1346, the Serbian Tsar Stefan Dušan established the archdiocese in Peć (Kosovo) and took control over the Ohrid archdiocese, giving both an equal status. Because this action was carried out without the approval of the central Orthodox institutions in Constantinople, the expulsion of the Serbian Church from the ecumenical body followed; the archbishop of the Ohrid archdiocese, as well as the circles around him, then systematically engaged in a process of reconciliation of the Serbian Orthodox Church with the Ecumenical Patriarchy, which resulted in its return to the Orthodox community.

On the arrival of the Ottomans, the Ohrid archdiocese was again institutionally given autonomy, and its rights were strengthened. After 1453—the overtaking of Constantinople by the Ottomans—both the Ohrid and Peć archdioceses came under the ecumenical jurisdiction of Constantinople. In 1767, under the strong influence of the Thessalonian archbishop, the Ohrid archdiocese lost its autonomous status. This was a grievous blow to the centuries-old ecclesiastic and cultural autonomy of the local population.

During World War II, on October 21, 1943, the First Assembly of Macedonian clergy was held in the village of Izdeglavje, Ohrid, with the aim of making the Macedonian church autocephalous. Finally, at the Third Church-and-People Assembly in Ohrid in July 1967, the autocephalous status of the Macedonian Orthodox Church was officially proclaimed.

Today, the Macedonian Orthodox Church (*Makedonska Pravoslavna Crkva*; MPC) has its eparchies at Skopje; Prespa and Bitola; Debar and Kičevo; Bregalnica; Polog, and Kumanovo; Vardar;

and Strumica; there are also the American and the Canadian eparchies as well as the Australian eparchy; the European Macedonian eparchy is still in the process of foundation.

There are about 1,200 churches and approximately 800 mosques in the Republic of Macedonia today. There is also a Catholic church in Skopje, and a Jewish synagogue is under construction. In addition, there are several Protestant and evangelical churches, as well as five active Dervish communities. The dispute, however, with the Serbian Orthodox Church (*Srpska Pravoslavna Crkva*, SPC) remains unresolved, owing to the SPC's refusal to accept the autocephalous status of the MPC.

Islam has a relatively long tradition in Macedonia, one of the earliest regions in which Islam took permanent root. Sporadic cases—warrior groups of Tatars, Seldüks, čerkes, and Kumans, engaged by local feudal lords, as well as early traders and missionaries, have been present as early as the late 11th century. However, by the end of 14th century, Islam became the second largest religious group in Macedonia and has remained so until the present days. The adherents are predominantly from the following ethnic groups: Albanians, Turks, “Goranci” (Torbeši, Pomaks, or Macedonian Muslims), Bosnians, and Roma (Gypsies).

Maja Mubic

See also Albania; Bulgaria; Eastern Orthodox Christianity; Greece; Serbia; Yugoslavia

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MADAGASCAR

The Republic of Madagascar, formerly known as the Malagasy Republic, is located off the southeastern coast of Africa on the fourth largest island in the world. It has a diverse population of 20,654,000, chiefly of mixed Afro-Malaysian and Indonesian descent; there are 18 distinct ethnic groups in the country. Its official languages are French and Malagasy. Most residents follow traditional African religious practices.

The first settlers of Madagascar were the Indonesians. Later, refugees from the wars that followed the death of the prophet Muhammad, in the seventh century CE, arrived from Arabia and the surrounding lands, bringing the religion of Islam with them. Over time, slave traders settled along the west coast; other Arabs from East African settlements came to the island and settled in the northwest. Although outnumbered by Bantu and Indonesian settlers, they had a great impact on the area; many beliefs and practices are directly traced to the Arabs, including the practice of circumcision, as well as various greetings and many words, including those for days and months. Their family and clan systems, based on patriarchal principles, also prevailed over other, matriarchal systems.

The vast majority of people in Madagascar are non-Muslims; fewer than 10% adhere to Islam. However, there is clear evidence that Islam is growing rapidly in the area. There is a great concentration of Muslims in Mahajanga and Antsiranaana on the west coast. Additionally, with the aid of young university graduates who have attended Islamic universities in other countries, the Muslim community has begun to build medical facilities and schools and to provide recreational services. National radio and television are also aiding in the spread and knowledge of Islam.

It is important to note that the majority of people in Madagascar are followers of the traditional religion; indeed 55% of the population are traditionalists. Forty percent are Christians, Protestants, and Catholics, and the rest are Muslims. The traditional religions of Madagascar's people vary, but there are certain basic elements found in common. There is a belief in a chief divinity, a creator god named Andrianahary or Zanahary, and subordinate ones. There is also reverence toward great ancestors,

including certain rulers and the original settlers of Madagascar. Inhabitants make pilgrimages to sites of special importance in the lives of these people and perform sacred rites at these places because they believe that there are close ties between the dead ancestors and themselves. The important values of their culture come from these ancestors.

Dead ancestors are termed *gods on earth* and serve as intermediaries with the creator god. They can also influence daily fortunes, for good or ill. Accordingly, people are careful to perform the rituals and show due respect. Great care is taken to construct tombs for the dead, which are costly and often better arranged than the home of the living. It is as if the people have dual existences—one in their everyday surroundings and a spiritual one in the tombs, which may be quite far from their everyday lives.

Followers of the traditional religion also believe that a person has different souls depending on the different stages of life and death. Moreover, there is a strong belief in fate. However, there are ways of avoiding aspects of fate through the use of divination and amulets of Arabic origin. There are also many taboos that regulate daily life. Thus, particular foods are forbidden at certain times. These taboos vary among the different ethnic groups in Madagascar.

Of the two main ethnic groups, Betsileo and Merina, the Betsileo people are Roman Catholics and the Merina people are Protestants. After persecution at the hands of traditionalists, especially at the urging of their rulers, Christianity gained strength, particularly with the backing of French colonialism.

The French established colonial rule in Madagascar at the end of a long chain of events. From the 17th- through the 18th-century scramble for Africa, the British and the French were in competition for influence on the island. In 1885, the French gained control and made Madagascar a colony in 1890. Madagascar gained its independence in 1960. In return for recognition of French rule in Madagascar, the French accepted British control of Zanzibar. The movement into Madagascar was one seeking to end piracy and competition in the area. French rule led to a government based on French principles, the spread of Christianity, and major changes in education over a foundation of traditional African culture.

The current government of Madagascar guarantees religious freedom. The government is basically a democratic republic in which the prime minister is the head of government. Many political parties are represented in the legislative branch, and there is an independent judicial system. The period since independence in 1960 has been marked by episodes of struggle and violence, including riots, disputed elections, and coups d'état. Interestingly, none have been particularly religious in nature; most have been over economic issues and the vast poverty of Madagascar, which grew worse with the global economic downturn in 2009.

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See also Africa; Indigenous Religions; Indonesia; Islam

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MADRID

From a historical perspective, the city of Madrid has been the site of Spain's greatest religious pluralism, because, as the capital city, Madrid has attracted many immigrants from around the world, with different religions and cultures. About 83.8% of the inhabitants are Spaniards, while people of other origins, including immigrants from Latin America, Europe, Asia, North Africa,

and West Africa, represented 16.2% of the population in 2007. Furthermore, the majority of Spanish religious communities have established their representative bodies in Madrid.

Religious Statistics

Considerable statistical evidence indicates that the number of minority religions in Madrid is increasing. This growth is taking place within a general framework of legal freedom that possesses both a domestic and a European side. Roman Catholicism is the major religion in Madrid, with Islam the second largest faith. A large Jewish community is also found in Madrid, but it was only after the 19th century that Jews were permitted to enter the country. Madrid hosts the largest number of religious confessions, according to government officials. The most recent government census, taken in 2009, indicated that the largest communities of immigrants from predominantly Islamic countries were located in the autonomous communities of Catalonia, Andalucía, Madrid, Valencia, and Murcia. Madrid also hosts a number of foreign missionaries of evangelical Christian, Mormon, Orthodox, Buddhist, and Islamic faiths.

The democratic political system established by the Spanish constitution of 1978 promoted the religious pluralism that currently characterizes Spain in general and the city of Madrid in particular. The legal regulation applicable to Madrid in religion, as in the rest of Spain, protects religious freedom and prohibits discrimination for religious reasons. Consequently, today Madrid civil society is defined by multiculturalism, religious pluralism, and one of the highest European levels of religious freedom. Apart from the Catholic community, which constitutes the great majority of religious adherents, the major religious communities established in Madrid are the Evangelicals, Muslims, Jews, Orthodox Christians, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, Jehovah's Witnesses, Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs, Baha'is, Unification Church, and Church of Scientology.

Religious History

The religious culture of Madrid is based on a variety of influences. The Visigothic kingdom left a sense of a united Christian Hispania that would

later be consolidated in the Reconquista period following centuries of Muslim rule. The first settlements of Muslims and Jews occurred in the ninth century, when the city of Madrid was founded. Protestant minorities were settled in Madrid in the first half of the 19th century. However, intolerance against religious minorities in the period 1492 to 1609 defined Madrid until the 19th century as a Catholic city.

The Spanish Constitution of the Second Republic (1931) recognized religious freedom and supported the establishment of several religious minorities in Madrid, but following the Civil War (1936–1939), religious freedom and religious pluralism did not exist under the military dictatorship of General Francisco Franco, until his death in 1975 and the restoration of the monarchy. During the military dictatorship, Roman Catholicism was the only religion with a legal status; other worship services could not be advertised, and only the Roman Catholic Church could own property and exercise rights. This close cooperation was formalized in a Concordat with the Vatican in 1953, which granted the Church an extraordinary set of privileges: mandatory canonical marriages for all Catholics; exemption from government taxation and payment of priests' salaries and the establishment of a budget for the Church; subsidies for new building construction and the reconstruction of church buildings damaged by the war; censorship of materials the Church considered offensive; the right to establish universities, to operate radio stations, and to publish newspapers and magazines; protection from police intrusion into Church property; mandatory Catholic religious instruction, even in public schools; and exemption of the clergy from military service. Franco secured in return the right to name Roman Catholic bishops in Spain as well as veto power over appointments of clergy down to the parish priest level.

Religion and the Law

The 1978 constitution recognized the historical role of the Catholic Church and opened the doors for a relationship of independence and cooperation between the state and the religious groups. Under the constitution, all religious groups are able to practice their religion freely, with no impediment on the rights of individuals to live and develop their personality according to their faith.

The main consequence of the new constitutional framework has been the beginning of a new era of religious freedom, but in practice a clear distinction exists between the Catholic Church, religious minorities (Jews, Evangelists, and Muslims), and other religious groups. All of them have the right to free exercise of religion, but the relations and privileges of the religious groups depend on their respective agreements with the state.

Relations between Madrid's religious communities and the local government are very fluent, especially in the case of Catholic, Islamic, Jewish, and Evangelical communities, due to the existence of legal agreements of cooperation between the state and the religious communities.

National cooperation agreements between the state and the various religious groups have been developed at the municipal level, through agreements between the religious communities and the regional and municipal governments. In 1995, three committees were created to devise a local plan to promote religious freedom in Madrid. The purpose of the agreements between the religious communities and the city of Madrid is to promote religious culture, preserve the historic and artistic heritage of the Jewish and Muslim communities, and promote tolerance toward religious minorities.

Some examples of Madrid's public policies in this area are the following:

- As per the Madrid historic landmark regulation, the special needs of all religious communities regarding their buildings dedicated to religious worship should be respected.
- By law, Madrid's public broadcasting stations have to give adequate space for religious programs.
- Religious organizations are free from regional taxes on the income they receive to develop their religious objectives, they can enjoy regional tax exemptions, and donations to them can be deducted from the donors' income tax.

Religious Architecture

Given the centrality of the Catholic Church in the history of Spain, there are many religious buildings in important cities, especially in Madrid, and each church is a museum in itself. Some of the city's architecture shows a Moorish influence, but

because the Muslim invasions did not reach Madrid itself, there are no historical Muslim buildings in the city. The best examples of Catholic architecture located in Madrid are the monastery of El Escorial, monastery of Las Descalzas Reales, Royal Monastery of La Encarnación, and Royal Monastery of Santa Isabel; there are numerous hermitages and convents and hundreds of beautiful churches, some of them centuries old, distributed throughout the city. In fact, one could say that the city of Madrid is, on the whole, an authentic Catholic museum.

Religious Cemeteries

In accordance with the Christian practice of burial, based on the principle that human beings come from the earth and must therefore return to it, there are many cemeteries in Madrid. Martyrs or saints were buried in churches, usually under the altar, because, for a mass to be celebrated, it is traditional that a relic from a saint be placed within the altar. In the 13th century, church grounds began to be used for burial, but in the 16th century, King Carlos III forbade the practice owing to concerns of sanitation and prevention of pestilence. In 1804, King Carlos IV tried again to reverse this policy, and two cemeteries were built; but few wished to be buried there. In the 16th century, Pope Julius III had created the sacramental brotherhoods; they were dedicated to worship the Holy Sacrament and established themselves in different parishes in Madrid. Their members did not want to be buried in cemeteries belonging to other churches, so they created their own.

From the legal point of view, religious cemeteries and places of worship in Madrid included in the National Registry of Religious Entities enjoy immunity under the terms laid down by law. In the event of expropriation of land, the hierarchy of the Catholic Church, the Federation of Evangelical Entities of Spain, the Federation of Israelite Communities of Spain, or the Islamic Commission of Spain must first be heard, and the properties may not be demolished unless first divested of their sacred nature, except where otherwise provided by law in the event of emergency or hazard. With respect to Muslim burials, there are plots reserved in Madrid's municipal cemeteries; in addition, local regulations allow the Muslim community to own private cemeteries; and in accordance with

regional regulations, all due measures shall be adopted to observe traditional Islamic rules regarding interments, graves, and funeral rites, which shall be conducted by the local Islamic community.

Religion and Food Products

According to their respective religious laws and traditions, neither Muslims nor observant Jews are permitted to consume certain food products. To protect Muslim religious freedom, Madrid's regional regulation establishes that the denomination category *halal* serves to distinguish food products prepared in accordance with the requirements of Islamic law; the slaughtering of animals in accordance with Islamic laws must abide by the health standards in force; and in public centers or establishments and military premises as well as in public and publicly subsidized private educational institutions, Islamic religious precepts relating to food products and mealtimes during the month of Ramadan should be respected. In the case of the Jewish minority, the Madrid regional regulations establish that the denominations *kosher*, *casher*, *kasher*, and *kashrut* serve to distinguish food products prepared in accordance with Jewish dietary laws. The humane slaughtering of animals in accordance with Jewish law must also abide by the public health standards in force.

Religious Festivities and Labor Law

Most festivals in Madrid have a Christian meaning and significance. Religious holidays include Epiphany (January 6), Holy Thursday and Good Friday, Assumption (August 15), All Saints' Day (November 1), the Feast of the Immaculate Conception (December 8), and Christmas (December 25).

Madrid's most important religious festivals are the following:

1. Saint Isidro's Feast Day is celebrated on May 15. Saint Isidro is Madrid's religious patron, born in the 11th century; he was a farmer and was well-known for his many miracles.
2. The typical Madrid Christmas decoration is the Nativity scene with a cradle, and some very beautiful ones can be seen in different churches

during this time. On January 5 (Epiphany), many Spanish cities organize a procession of the Three Wise Men. One of the biggest ones is in Madrid, and it usually starts in the Retiro Park and ends at Plaza Mayor.

3. The Feast of Almudena Virgin is celebrated on November 9. According to legend, there was an image of the Virgin Mary that the apostle James had brought to Spain. In the eighth century, during the period of the Arab conquest and occupation, the people of Madrid were afraid that the occupiers would destroy this image, and they decided to hide it in a niche in a wall. Following the expulsion of the Arabs, King Alfonso VI of Castilla wished to reclaim the long-hidden image, but there was no one who knew its exact whereabouts. The king asked the people of Madrid to pray for the rediscovery of the image. A procession went along the possible places where the image might be located, and when the procession arrived at the spot, the wall suddenly crumbled, and the image was found.

4. The processions during Holy Week have their origin in the Passion of the Christ as related in the Gospels. According to Catholic customs, those who were found guilty by the Inquisition had to expiate their sins through penance. The images that take part in a procession are called *pasos*. The word *paso* refers both to the image and its carriage. The carriages can be mounted on wheels, usually pushed by the *cofrades* (celebrants) or carried by them directly.

In the context of labor law, religious feast days according to Protestant, Islamic, Catholic, and Jewish beliefs are religious holidays and subject to an agreement between employers and workers that during religious observances the workers will not attend work; or workers can give up their religious holidays for the established (secular) holidays in the state labor calendar. This is not a compulsory regulation but an option, because prior agreement must be reached between workers and employers, and the hours not worked must be made up with no compensation.

Protestant, Islamic, Catholic, and Jew students enrolled in public or publicly subsidized schools in Madrid shall be excused from attending class during their religious festivities, at their own request or at the request of their parents or guardians.

Religious Matrimony

In accordance with national regulations, religious marriages celebrated in Madrid will have civil validity if the marriage is administered in accordance with the religious ceremony established under religious law and the parties meet the legal capacity requirements established by the civil code. Full recognition of such validity shall call for registration of such marriages in the civil registry. Persons who wish to register their religious marriage must furnish prior witness of their qualification to marry, consisting of a certificate issued by the corresponding civil registry. This means that residents of Madrid can get married according to their religious faith with civil effects if they abide by the civil code; but with the exception of the Catholic Church, the decisions of religious authorities concerning divorce have no civil effects.

For full recognition of these effects, the marriage must be registered in the civil registry; this may be done with the presentation of the church certificate of the existence of the marriage. The marriage partners, in accordance with the provisions of canon law, may go to the ecclesiastical courts to request a declaration of annulment or to request a pontifical decision concerning a valid but unconsummated marriage. By request of either of the parties, the said ecclesiastical resolutions shall be considered valid under civil law if declared in compliance with state law by sentence of the competent civil court.

Religious Assistance in Public Institutions

National regulations guarantee the right of religious minority members (Muslim, Jewish, and Protestant) serving in the Spanish armed forces stationed in Madrid to receive spiritual support and participate in their religious services subject to authorization from their superiors. Religious assistance for the minority religious groups in the armed forces shall be rendered by ministers designated by the religious community and authorized by the army commanders. The national regulation guarantees the right of Muslims, Jews, and Protestants living in Madrid to receive religious assistance when they are confined to penitentiaries, hospitals, or other public institutions. Spiritual support is to be provided by persons designated by the religious communities, subject to authorization

by the corresponding administrative authority. As far as penitentiaries are concerned, religious services are to be conducted in accordance with the security provisions of the corresponding legislation. With regard to other religious groups, the state has not created mechanisms for their members to receive religious assistance in the public institutions.

Religion and Education

In Madrid, the Catholic population attends religious private schools owned and financed by the regional government, but students from families belonging to other religious groups attend public schools. In fact, there are no private schools financed by the state for religious groups other than Catholic. The reason for this clear case of discrimination is to be found in the political influence of the Catholic Church historically in this area.

The model of religious education in public schools in Madrid can be described as a secular and neutral public school with religious education only for the majority religious groups. The teaching of Catholic religion in public schools is regulated through the Agreement of 3 January 1979, Between the Spanish State and the Holy See, Concerning Education and Cultural Affairs, which establishes that

educational plans at the levels of preschool, Elementary School (EGB) and High School (BUP) and technical colleges for students of the corresponding ages, shall include the teaching of the Catholic Religion in all Educational Centers, in conditions equal to those of the basic subjects. . . . This religious education shall not be obligatory for all students. However, the right to receive it is guaranteed. . . . Religious instruction shall be imparted by those persons who, each school year, shall be appointed by the academic authority from among those proposed by the diocesan Ordinary. (<http://spcp.prf.cuni.cz/dokument/esp4a.htm>, accessed May 17, 2011)

In the case of Muslims, Jews, and Evangelical Christians, their pupils have the right to receive religious teaching in public schools, and the content of religious teaching as well as the

textbooks relating thereto shall be provided by the respective communities. Faculty status and salaries for the teachers responsible for such religious instruction, however, are not uniform.

Religion and Public Economic Subsidies

Religious associations dedicated to religious, charitable, teaching, medical, hospitable, or social activities enjoy the special benefits provided by the national and Madrid tax regulations. Such groups may freely request services and donations from their followers, organize public donation campaigns, and receive offerings and other contributions. The amounts donated to the religious group will have the same deductions on income tax as the amounts given to organizations classified or declared as charitable or of public utility.

The Catholic Church receives 0.7% of the personal income taxes of those taxpayers who, on their respective tax forms, expressly declare their decision concerning how they wish to make use of the money concerned. Religious minorities, however, do not receive direct economic subsidies as is the case with the Catholic Church. For this reason, religious minorities have requested repeatedly to be treated like the Catholic Church and to receive public funding. In an answer to these petitions, the current government created in 2005 a foundation that reports to the Ministry of Justice located in Madrid, whose purpose is to promote and improve the knowledge society has of its religious minorities.

The beneficiaries of the foundation are exclusively the religious groups that signed agreements with the state in 1992 (evangelical Christian, Jews, and Muslims) and other religious groups that the Ministry of Justice has recognized (Church of Latter-Day Saints, Jehovah's Witnesses, and Buddhists). The foundation funds (€4.5 million in 2008) are used for cultural, educational, and social integration programs (not for religious activities). The foundation does not finance worship services; rather, it seeks to benefit religious groups as they carry out activities relating to education, cultural development, and community service.

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See also Global Cities; Roman Catholicism; Spain

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MAHAYANA BUDDHISM

From its beginnings as a small religious community of mendicants and householders in northeastern India in the sixth century BCE, Buddhism developed into a global religion with a significant presence today in India, Southeast Asia, Tibet, Bhutan, Mongolia, China, Taiwan, Korea, and Japan and, more recently, in Europe, the Americas, Australia, and New Zealand. Buddhism's vitality and adaptability have allowed it to transform civilizations and to shape and be shaped by the cultures with which it came into contact. Mahayana, or the "Great Vehicle," is one of two major schools or branches of Buddhism. This entry reviews the history of Mahayana Buddhism, its tenets, and the diverse forms that it has assumed from its origins to the present day.

Origins

Arising in the Indian Buddhist community in the first century CE as a reform movement, Mahayanaists sought to restore what they considered to be the original purpose of Buddhism—the enlightenment of all people—from an increasingly withdrawn monasticism where practitioners focused primarily on personal salvation through a monastic regimen based on precepts and doctrinal exegesis.

In contrast, these new Buddhists promoted the "bodhisattva ideal." A bodhisattva is a "Buddha-to-be," that is, one who renounces complete entry into the realm of nirvana (freedom from suffering) to save others enmeshed in samsara, or cyclical rebirth. For only bodhisattvas who have not abandoned the realm of imperfect living beings can be trusted to respond to their suffering. The bodhisattva path involves the cultivation of the virtues of wisdom and compassion; the former involves an understanding of the self as without "essence," and the latter represents an active striving for the benefit of others. This attitude is expressed in the vow taken by all Mahayanists, lay and clergy alike, to seek enlightenment for the sake of all beings.

Another important innovation of the Mahayana movement was a new interpretation of the focal concept of "merit." Whereas in earlier Buddhism, a person could generate merit only for himself or herself alone, Mahayanists argued that merit could be shared and transferred to others, thus expanding the meaning of ritual into an altruistic dimension. Because Mahayanaists valued a versatile approach that opened the way of liberation to many people, its adherents referred to the elitism of the earlier school of Buddhism as "Hinayana," or the "Lesser Vehicle." But those who adhered to the Buddha's original teachings considered the label *Hinayana* offensive. Instead, they referred to their own school as "Theravada," or "the way of the elders." They emphasized the liberation of the individual achieved through his or her own efforts.

As the older school began to close its canons, the Mahayanaists were composing a set of texts that would distinguish them from the older scholastic tradition. These works claimed antiquity for Mahayana, stating that the historical Buddha (Shakyamuni) convened a special assembly of bodhisattvas on Vulture Peak Mountain in Rajagriha from which other Buddhists were excluded. Referred to as the "Second Turning of the Wheel of Dharma" (the first being the sermon the Buddha gave in the Deer Park in Sarnath after his awakening), they believed the sutras (canonical texts) produced from this event to have been concealed for several centuries until the world was ready to engage their wisdom.

One of the key texts of the Mahayana tradition is the Lotus Sutra, written down around 200 CE.

This sutra represents a discourse the Buddha delivered on Vulture Peak at the end of his teaching career and therefore considered by followers to contain his most complete teachings, in contrast to the partial teachings of the earlier Theravada canon. A central Mahayana concept expounded in the Lotus Sutra is that of “skillful means,” or *upaya* in Sanskrit (the ecclesiastical language of Mahayana). The use of this concept attempts to reconcile the new Mahayana movement with the older Buddhism. The early texts are interpreted as provisional rather than ultimate since the Buddha adapted his message skillfully to the time, place, and level of his audience. Therefore, many temporary methods (“vehicles”) exist that may lead a person to enlightenment. These methods may range from the seemingly mundane to the miraculous. Skillful means is epitomized in the salvific power of Avalokiteśvara, the bodhisattva of compassion, who vows to assume any form necessary to save sentient beings.

In the sixth century CE, another major movement of Buddhism, referred to as Vajrayana, the “Diamond Vehicle” (known also as Tantrism), emerged from within Mahayana. While Theravada and Mahayana both elaborated a gradual path to enlightenment over many lifetimes, Vajrayanists felt that individual enlightenment could be accomplished more quickly, even in a person’s present lifetime. Vajrayanaists shared the basic approach and goal of Mahayana but incorporated “magical” practices, elaborate fire rituals, and psychological techniques employing mandalas, and introduced a transmission of secret knowledge from master to disciple that became the basis of esoteric lineages. This new form of Mahayana (for Vajrayana should be thought of as such) arose at a time when Mahayana philosophy was no longer at its creative height. When introduced to Tibet in the seventh century CE, it produced a rich monastic culture whose influence radiated to the neighboring kingdoms of Bhutan, Sikkim, and Ladakh, and to Mongolia, all of which adopted this new religion as their own.

Globalization of Buddhism

From India, Mahayana and Theravada spread in every direction, with certain areas becoming predominantly one or the other. Thus, in Southeast Asia, Theravada became the dominant form of Buddhism. But this does not mean that Mahayana

was not also present at certain times and places in Theravada countries, and vice versa. As Buddhism spread across Central Asia, Mahayana came to dominate the region and eventually became the primary form of Buddhism in China, Korea, Japan, and also Vietnam, which remained under Chinese influence for much of its history.

A striking innovation in Buddhism occurred along with Mahayana’s development both inside and outside India. For the first time, artisans began to make images of the Buddha as a human being. Previously, only aniconic or symbolic representations of the historical Buddha existed, such as his stylized footprints or eight-spoke dharma wheels, expressive of the Noble Eightfold Path. The new freedom to depict the actual person of the Buddha was evidence of the growing prominence of Mahayana, a movement that stressed the fact that everyone had a Buddha nature and therefore was capable of enlightenment.

In Gandhara, a region between Pakistan and Afghanistan, Greek artisans who worked in domains Hellenized by Alexander the Great made Greco-Buddhist images of Shakyamuni modeled after a toga-clad Apollo. The monumental Buddha figures in the sandstone cliffs of Bamiyan in Afghanistan (destroyed by the Taliban government in 2001) demonstrate the suppleness and astonishing cultural diversity to which the Mahayana tradition was continually giving form. But with the gradual Islamization of the region, which culminated in the 8th century CE, Buddhist culture disappeared in Central Asia. From the 8 to the 10th century CE, waves of Muslim invaders from Afghanistan crossed northern India and sacked the Buddhist universities and monasteries. By 1200, the Buddhist monastic culture no longer existed in northern India.

The closure of India as a repository of Buddhist culture facilitated the development of a distinct form of Chinese Mahayana. Of China’s two great religious systems—Confucianism and Daoism—the encounter between Mahayana Buddhism and Daoism proved the most fertile. Intellectuals found a natural affinity between certain key concepts in Buddhism and Daoism. They translated the Buddhist dharma, or teachings, as *dao* and nirvana as *wu-wei*, meaning “no action.” In particular, Daoism proved congenial to Ch’an (“Meditation”) monks, such as the eighth-century CE Huineng,

who stressed the human capacity for sudden enlightenment. In this manner, Daoism transformed Buddhism from an abstract philosophical religion into one that was altogether more “Chinese”—pragmatic, down-to-earth, and much closer to nature. Chi-i, the founder of T’ien’tai (“Heavenly Terrace”), one of China’s two schools of Vajrayana, tried to find some unity in the multiplicity of sutras from India and settled on the Lotus Sutra as the most inclusive of all. The Ching-t’u (“Pure Land”) school promoted salvation through repeating the mantra of Amitabha (“Buddha of Infinite Light”). These Sinified schools of Buddhism came to be adopted and adapted in different ways in both Korea and Japan.

Japan produced important innovations within Mahayana as early as the 13th century. Reformers such as Honen had received monastic training in the Tendai (T’ien’tai) school on Mt. Hiei in Kyoto. The rigorous training undertaken by Hiei’s “marathon monks” sometimes finished with the monk’s death rather than the completion of the training. In this context of a Mahayana that had become the province of religious virtuosi, Honen sought a way to restore the bodhisattva ideal and return Buddhism to its original purpose according to Mahayana belief—the enlightenment of all people. Honen came to reject Tendai orthodoxy and its extremist and exclusive path to salvation. In embracing Jôdo (Ching-t’u) or Pure Land Buddhism, he salvaged only one of Tendai’s practices as necessary and suitable for the path to enlightenment—the recitation of the mantra of Amida (Amitabha).

The impulse to make Buddhism relevant and accessible to all people represents a recurring theme in the history of Mahayana in east Asia. It reiterates the reason for the emergence of the Mahayana schism in India in the first place. In a very different and remarkable way, Zen (Ch’an) Buddhism evangelized through an aesthetic dominance that came to permeate virtually every aspect of Japanese culture, from landscape gardens to the martial arts. In promoting ordinary work as a legitimate path to enlightenment, Zen also succeeded in aestheticizing and sacralizing work.

Mahayana in the West

Nineteenth-century Theosophists and the Transcendentalists of New England esteemed the

Mahayana traditions they had come to know chiefly through books such as Eugène Burnouf’s *Introduction to the History of Indian Buddhism*. Although Chinese and Japanese immigrants of diverse schools of the Mahayana faith had settled on the West Coast of the United States, Hawai‘i, and Latin America in the 1800s, their religion remained largely sequestered in the ethnic communities in which they resided. For these immigrants, a major function of Buddhism in the new environment was to help them maintain their cultural identity intact. This “traditionalist” Buddhism did not readily welcome (nor did it attract) those outside the ethnic enclave. The result was that few non-Asian Americans knew much about the Mahayana traditions in their own country for more than 100 years.

After the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893, this situation began to change; interest in both Mahayana and Theravada expanded in the West. For the most part, Europe fostered the Theravada tradition and America the Mahayana. Among the many prominent religious leaders from Asia who attended the event was the Zen master Soen Shaku from Japan, who arranged for two monks to teach in the United States. Despite their years of labor, not until the young scholar-translator D. T. Suzuki arrived for an extended stay in the 1950s did interest in Zen explode. Suzuki spoke excellent English and lectured and published widely. Zen’s popularity grew among intellectuals who were disaffected with their own Judeo-Christian tradition and sought an alternative faith. What they received was a Zen filtered through the theosophizing imagination of Suzuki. This new sensibility with a focus on meditation became a staple of the countercultural movements of the beats and the hippies.

Two subsequent developments facilitated the growth and acceptance of Mahayana among non-Asian Americans. Zen enthusiasts who had sojourned in Japan to undergo traditional religious training returned and established meditation centers in the United States and Europe. At the same time, the loosening of immigration regulations allowed influential Asian Buddhist teachers to remain in the United States. Until this time, Buddhism was largely equated with Zen as shaped by Suzuki to capture the Western imagination. But another form of Mahayana began to attract the

attention of Westerners—Tibetan Buddhism. The Chinese occupation of Tibet in 1959 had forced the Dalai Lama, Tibet's political and religious sovereign, to flee to India, where he reestablished his community in exile. From the South Asian subcontinent, Tibetan lamas took various trajectories and resettled mostly in the United States and Europe.

Four years earlier, a Kalmyk-Mongolian lama emigrated to the United States from India to serve the refugee Kalmyk community in Howell, New Jersey. This community built the first Tibetan Buddhist monastery in the West. Tibetan lamas of several lineages, doubtful of the possibility of repatriation, established meditation centers and Buddhist educational institutions in many countries. The intensification of exchanges such as these on a global scale led to a qualitative shift in orientation: Theravada no longer dominated Buddhist Europe, Buddhism in the United States was no longer necessarily Mahayana, Neo-Buddhist groups began to emerge in various Asian countries, and India also had regained the most intact expression of its early Buddhist monasticism. A common feature of the modern world was the plurality of Buddhist traditions that began to exist side by side. The close proximity increased the cross-fertilization and resulted in both unwitting and self-conscious forms of Buddhist eclecticism.

Buddhism experienced a new wave of popularity beginning in the 1970s. Common to both Asia and the West was the high degree of lay participation. In the United States, Buddhism was no longer perceived as the exclusive province of intellectuals or of Asian immigrants as in the 19th century, or even as the badge of the counterculture of the mid-20th century. Instead, people sought Buddhism as a personal faith as often as an addendum to other therapeutic techniques. Mahayana's success in the industrialized West was partly attributable to the perceived affinity of some of its tenets with the postmodern condition itself. The doctrine of impermanence resonated with the increased mobility and uncertainty of people in an increasingly globalized world. The belief that no essential self exists captured the labile, fragmented, yet multiple sense of identity characteristic of people who must occupy an increasing number of roles. The bodhisattva ideal appealed to Western egalitarian values. Finally, Zen Buddhism reinvigorated the traditional Protestant work ethic.

A New “Yana”: Transcending Mahayana and Theravada

The classical distinction between Mahayana and Theravada—the bodhisattva ideal—has blurred in recent decades largely because of two major developments in Buddhism worldwide—Neo-Buddhism and Engaged Buddhism. Neo-Buddhism represents the emergence of new religions that either self-identify as Buddhist or draw significantly from Buddhist philosophy and doctrine. They are primarily lay movements often with charismatic leaders and characterized by a syncretism that may draw from both Mahayana and Theravada and also not infrequently from non-Buddhist and even nonreligious traditions. These movements are found today in countries that were traditionally Mahayana or Theravada.

The Japanese lay-Buddhist association Agonshū combines elements from Theravada with Japanese and Tibetan forms of Vajrayana, along with the psychological theory of Lipot Szondi, and pastlife counseling inspired by Edgar Cayce. Agonshū has built social welfare institutions in its own country and endowed a Buddhist research center in the United Kingdom. The Thai lay-Buddhist group Santi Asoke, described sometimes as “born-again Buddhism,” forbids the use of tobacco and alcohol and combines a traditional forest monk simplicity with activist projects. Members build self-sufficient villages in the poorest regions of Thailand, drawing from the tenets of Buddhist economics and Buddhist ecology. Asoke rejects traditional Theravada meditation since the organization considers the entire life as a meditation in action. Won Buddhism in South Korea defines itself as Neo-Buddhist and as a “New Religion.” It incorporates under its Buddhist umbrella elements from Confucianism, Daoism, Tonghak (Eastern Learning), and Christianity and is one of the most popular Buddhist movements in Korea today.

The second significant development within Mahayana is Engaged Buddhism. The Chinese Ch'an monk Taixu first developed the concept in the early 20th century. His reforms inspired a Buddhist revival movement in Vietnam that promoted Buddhism as a national religion. But the actual phrase—*Engaged Buddhism*—was coined and popularized in the West by the Vietnamese Zen monk Thich Nhat Hanh. Engaged Buddhism represents the application of Buddhist principles to

the solution of social problems within a modern discourse based on universal human rights. It is a global, Pan-Buddhist movement that has reinvigorated traditional schools of Buddhism and provided inspiration for the emergence of new ones.

Engaged Buddhism is evidence of the bodhisattva ideal reinterpreted in the context of late modernity. It addresses the systemic causes of social suffering and the necessity to take action to alleviate them. Engaged Buddhism represents a new “vehicle” or *yana* within Buddhism because both Theravada and Mahayana have embraced various versions of it and find the possibility to reunite under its banner. Thich Nhat Hanh exemplified the spirit of Engaged Buddhism when he visited members of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives calling for the cessation of U.S. bombing of his country during the Vietnam War.

Engaged Buddhists are especially active in two areas: Buddhist economics and Buddhist ecology. The roots of the former have been strongly present in the Japanese Zen tradition, in which a person’s work is considered a legitimate path to enlightenment. The term itself was coined by the British economist E. F. Schumacher as a reflection of his experience with Burmese Buddhists. Japanese Buddhists embraced the concept and elaborated on it. Buddhist economics constitutes a theory of development critical of Western capitalism without being an endorsement of Marxism. Buddhist economics often dovetails with Buddhist ecology. The Thai monk-reformer Buddhadasa Bhikkhu, an extreme critic of the self-serving merit making of the Thai Buddhist establishment, combined aspects of early Buddhist forest practice with a vision of a just society that included the natural world.

A softer form of Engaged Buddhism, launched by Taixu and known as “Humanistic Buddhism,” developed in Taiwan in response to mainline Buddhism’s overemphasis on funeral rites and Buddha worship rather than assisting living people who might actually attain enlightenment. It redefined the focus of Mahayana for modern society as a vehicle of welfare and education. This new role is exemplified in two widely successful Taiwanese Neo-Buddhist sects rooted in the Pure Land tradition that subscribe to Humanistic Buddhism—Tzu Chi and Foguang Shan. Both organizations are heavily committed to charitable enterprises. Tzu

Chi has organized Western-style hospitals, an international bone marrow registry, and global disaster relief with the help of the voluntary services of professionals. In Japan, all of the major Neo-Buddhist organizations—Sôka Gakkai, Risshô Kôsei Kai, Shinnyoen, and Agonshû—have developed novel forms of counseling to help members cope with the psychological stresses and practical problems of modern life in the metropolis.

Mahayana has been globalizing since its early origins in India. As it migrated across Asia, Mahayana demonstrated its capacity to generate new and relevant expressions of the faith. Mahayana is now undergoing another great transformation in its accommodation to the West. The affordability of air travel and the presence of virtually every Buddhist tradition in close proximity in many Western cities have led to an eclectic approach to being a Buddhist. Since it is frequently equated with meditation, interest in Buddhism is often driven by therapeutic considerations that have exerted a secularizing influence conducive to the formation of nonsectarian spiritualities. Buddhism’s encounter with Western civilization has led Asian Buddhists to reflect on their own tradition as never before and to rediscover their own common heritage as Buddhists beyond sectarian divisions. The confrontation of Buddhism with Christianity and its tradition of charitable works has invigorated and provided a new direction for many East Asian schools of Mahayana.

Christal Whelan

See also China; Engaged Buddhist Groups; Gautama, Siddharta; India; Japan; Korea, Democratic People’s Republic of (North Korea); Korea, Republic of (South Korea); New Religions in Japan; Pāli; Sangha; Theravada Buddhism; Vajrayana, Tibetan; Zen Buddhism

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MAHDI

Mahdi is the title reserved for the future savior of the Muslim community. The name means “divinely guided person.” Muslims believe that the Mahdi, as God’s caliph, will launch a revolution to deliver people from tyranny and oppression in order to usher an era of justice and equity on earth at the “End of Time,” prior to the final resurrection and judgment. Messianism is a salient feature of Islamic salvation history. Major compilations of Muslim traditions, both Sunnī and Shi’a, have long sections dealing with the final days of the world, foretelling the apocalyptic signs that will appear before the Mahdi launches the restorative justice. Messianic expectations were part of the early Muslim belief in Prophet Muhammad being the “apostle of the End of Time” (*nabi akhīr al-zaman*). This was the source of the doctrine about the universal mission with which Prophet Muhammad was commissioned to usher humanity toward an ideal global community. The Qur’anic preoccupation with the impending Day of Judgment and the Signs of the Hour, which announced cosmic disorder and a period of terror and fear preceding the Final Days, points to the millennialism announcing a future utopian age of joy, peace, and justice, especially one created through revolution, under the descendant of the Prophet, al-Mahdi.

The responsibility to create an ideal public order that carried within itself the revolutionary challenge to any inimical order that might hamper its realization was historically assumed by the

prophet Muhammad himself when he established the first Muslim polity in Medina in 622 CE. The decisive connection between the divine investiture and the political mission of creating an Islamic world order is the integral facet of the idea of Mahdi. Hence, the Mahdi, through his investiture as Prophet Muhammad’s successor and God’s caliph, is awaited by all Muslims to implement the divinely ordained public order on earth.

Historical and sociological factors in the first century, following the Prophet’s death in 632 CE, were instrumental in heightening the messianic expectations in the Muslim community, especially among those who were persecuted as Shi’a—partisans of ‘Ali (d. 661), the cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet, and sympathizers of his claim to the caliphate. The idea of a perfect leader, the divinely guided, continued to be emphasized more specifically among the religious-minded Muslims in general and among the Shi’i in particular. The outbreak of the civil wars and the perturbed condition that followed greatly contributed to the notion of the messianic savior whose function was, first, to redress the wrongs committed against the downtrodden and establish justice—by which the Shi’i meant abolition of the caliphate of the oppressors and return to a pure Islam—and, second, to achieve the conversion of the world to Islam. Among the various factions of the Shi’i, disagreement on the identification of the Mahdi was one of the chief factors separating each sect. Shi’i hope for justice was an expression of radical social protest. The expectation meant not merely a hope for the future but a reevaluation of present social and historical life. Every generation found reason to believe that it was likely that the Mahdi would appear in its own time and test the faithful by summoning them to launch the great social transformation themselves under his command, with the promise of divine help when it would be needed. Hence, belief in the Mahdi became the source of heretical and even combative tendencies among the Shi’i. Their revolutionary insurrections were feared and severely crushed by the ruling authorities for their potentially destructive and chaotic repercussions.

However, all Shi’a attempts were not successful, and once its adherents met with repeated failures and persecutions, they ceased to attempt revolutionary transformation. With this change in fortunes, the Shi’a ideology became the chief vehicle for any

Muslim who entertained radical change, and it was perpetuated in terms of esoteric messianic teaching. The title “Mahdi” ceased to connote immediate and direct political action. It continued to express the idealism of the Muslim community, the hope that one day Islam, with all its political and social implications, will return to its pristine purity. It is believed that the original historical mission of Islam—namely, the establishment of the ideal society under divine guidance—will attain fulfillment in the future under the Mahdi, whose emergence as the restorer of ideal Muslim order is awaited by all Muslims.

Abdulaziz Sachedina

See also Apocalypticism; Iran; Islam; Shi’a Islam; Sunnī Islam

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MAHDI OF SUDAN (1844–1885)

Muhammad Ahmad, also known as the Mahdi of Sudan, was a 19th-century Sufi Muslim religious reformer, revivalist, and militant. The Mahdi’s messianic resistance movement mobilized Northern Sudanese Muslims to fight against the Ottoman Egyptians, who had exploited Sudan for slaves and ivory since the early 1820s. The British, who occupied Egypt in the early 1880s, oversaw and participated in Egypt’s expansionist project in Sudan, to protect British financial interests in the region. The Mahdi and his followers successfully ousted the British-supported Turko-Egyptian regime in 1885.

The son of a boat builder, Muhammad Ahmad was born in Labab, an island in the province of Dongola, and was raised in the Nile Valley near Khartoum. An apt student, he studied theology and Sufism (mystical Islam) and later joined the

Sammaniyya Sufi order, eventually becoming a Sufi shaykh. Sufism and Sufi orders were widespread in Sudan during the 1800s. Muhammad Ahmed became progressively more frustrated with the mismanagement of Sudan by the Turko-Egyptian invaders and with what he felt was their low morality. His own sense of mission, combined with his study of the concept of the Islamic Mahdi, led him to proclaim himself to be the Mahdi in 1881, successor to the prophet Muhammad and a representative of God on earth. The term *Mahdi* refers to a divinely guided messianic figure who returns to earth rid the world of evil, tyranny, and oppression and establish justice in its place. The belief in the return of the Mahdi is prevalent in Shi’a and Sufi doctrine; Sunnī mahdist movements have also taken place, but to a lesser extent.

Muhammad Ahmad’s followers swore an oath of allegiance to him as Mahdi and were known as the Ansar, or “helpers.” This term, also given to the prophet Muhammad’s followers in Medina, served to link the Sudanese struggle with that of the early Muslim community, thus lending legitimacy to the Mahdi’s efforts. His political and revivalist movement was known as the Mahdiyya.

The Egyptian ulema (religious scholars) were severely critical of Muhammad Ahmad’s claim, leading him to call those who challenged his mahdship infidels, further fueling hostilities. In favor of an independent Sufi Muslim Sudan, he was critical of the imperial foreign power structure and also of Egypt’s orthodox form of Islam, which differed from the Sudanese indigenous Sufism. Because of this, and because the Turko-Egyptian invasion was supported by the non-Muslim British, the Mahdi considered the entire occupying group to be religiously suspect and his battle against them to be a holy war.

Claiming victory over the Turko-Egyptian regime in 1885, the Mahdists famously decapitated General Gordon, the British general sent to Khartoum to evacuate the surviving occupying forces. The Mahdi died shortly after, perhaps of typhus, and the Khalifa ‘Abdullahi took his place. The Mahdi had established an Islamic Mahdist state in Khartoum, which survived from 1885 to 1898; in 1898, the British defeated Abdullahi and dominated the region until Sudan’s independence in 1956.

The Mahdi was one of the most influential figures in the contemporary history of Sudan. He is

remembered by some as a “resistance hero,” and he left a legacy of Sudanese Islamic nationalism. The Ansar later became known as the Umma Party, which is still active today. The Mahdiyya today is one of five Muslim sects in North Sudan, and they are represented by the Umma Party. Sadiq al-Mahdi, the great-grandson of the Mahdi, is a prominent politician and head of the Umma Party, who has twice served as the prime minister of Sudan (1967–1969 and 1986–1989), before being overthrown in a 1989 coup by ‘Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir.

Sophia Pandya

See also Islam; Islamic Modernism; Mahdi; Sudan; Sufism

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MALAWI

Malawi is a small, landlocked republic located in southeastern Africa, bounded by Tanzania, Mozambique, and Zambia. Its diverse geography includes semiarid savannas in the central region, mountains in the north, and the third largest African freshwater body, Lake Malawi. The country has two urban centers in Lilongwe, the capital, and Blantyre; however, the population remains mostly rural and survives on subsistence farming and wage labor. Malawi is one of the poorest countries in the world with more than 50% of its population living below the poverty line. Christians make up the overwhelming majority among the Tumbuka and Chewa peoples of the central and northern regions, whereas Muslims are the majority among the Yao people of the southern region.

Malawi was settled by groups of Bantu people from the north in the 10th century CE, and by the 16th century these tribes had established three neighboring kingdoms to the west and south of

Lake Malawi. Rich oral histories indicate that these civilizations shared many common religious elements, including a Supreme God associated with rain and the sky, worship of divinized royal ancestors, and tribal kings who functioned as rain callers and spiritual leaders of the community. In the 1600s and 1700s, these kingdoms had some contact with Portuguese traders and settlers. Muslim influence came slightly earlier through contact with Arab traders but was limited in scope. The Scottish missionary and explorer David Livingston reached Lake Malawi in 1859, and the Scottish Presbyterian mission of Livingstonia was founded in 1894. Malawi, then called Nyasaland, was ruled by the British from 1894 until independence in 1964. Malawi was ruled by the dictator Hastings Banda until 1994, when his peaceful overthrow resulted in the establishment of a multi-party democracy.

Roughly 75% of Malawi’s population are Protestant Christian, 10% are Catholic, 10% are Muslim, and 5% follow traditional African religions or other religions exclusively. However, these numbers have been changing quickly since independence due to a rapid increase in new religious movements, particularly African-initiated Pentecostal groups, Seventh-Day Adventists, Jehovah’s Witnesses, and other new Protestant sects. Malawi is the birthplace of several vibrant Pentecostal denominations that are extending their reach beyond its borders, including Living Waters Church International, Agape Life Church, and Destiny Ministries. All of these groups preach the importance of supernatural power and the necessity of a puritan moral lifestyle. These groups have also been hostile to participation in indigenous rites and religious beliefs, which has contributed to the decline of traditional African religious elements in Malawi. Nevertheless, among Malawian Christians and Muslims, there is still a fairly widespread belief in witchcraft, use of traditional healers, and, to a lesser degree, participation in traditional initiation rites.

Nicolette D. Manglos

See also Africa; Ancestors; Christianity; Indigenous Religions; Islam; Missions and Missionaries; Mozambique; New Religions in Africa; Pentecostal Movements; Protestant Christianity; Tanzania; Zambia

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MALAYSIA

In the Southeast Asian nation of Malaysia, located south of Thailand and north of Indonesia, religion and ethnicity are the primary components of social identities. Although Islam is the state religion, freedom of religion is guaranteed. Ethnic Malays, who are Sunnī Muslim, are a little more than 50% of the population, and an additional approximately 10% of Malaysians are Muslims from other ethnic backgrounds. Chinese Malaysians, who compose approximately 24% of the population, are generally syncretic Mahayana Buddhists, with small numbers who identify as Daoist, Confucian, or Christian. Christianity has had a much greater impact in east Malaysia, where missionaries were allowed to convert natives with animist traditions; overall 9% of Malaysians are Christian. Indians, who are 7% of the population, are mostly Hindu. Other religious minorities include animists, Sikhs, and Baha'i. This ethnic and religious diversity is a result of the increase of non-Malay peoples from the beginning of colonization in the 18th century up to the formation of the Malayan Federation in 1948.

Islam

According to the *Sejarah Melayu* (Malay Annals), the Sultan of Malacca converted to Islam in the beginning of the 15th century. The prophet Muhammad is said to have appeared to the ruler in a dream, taught him the profession of faith, and given him the name Muhammad. The next day, a ship arrived from Jeddah with a Sayid, descendant of the Prophet, who converted the other nobles in the court. In the 15th century, with the Malacca Sultanate dominating the sea lanes in Southeast Asia, Islam spread to coastal ports throughout the area. The Islam that Indian traders brought to

Malaysia was deeply Sufi, and among the populace, more generally, Islam was combined with shamanic and animist beliefs.

In the early decades of the 20th century, an Islamic reform movement known as Kaum Muda (Youth Faction) spread from the Middle East to Malaysia. Influenced by the writings of Muhammad Abduh (1849–1905) and Rashid Rida (1865–1935), the Kaum Muda attacked Sufi ritualism and sought to modernize Islam through the establishment of religious schools (madrasas). In the 1970s, a revival movement known as *dakwah* arose in the aftermath of anti-Chinese race riots in 1969. It was inspired by disillusionment with secular nationalism after the defeat of Egypt and Syria in the 1967 Arab-Israeli War and by the civil rights movement in the United States. At the University of Malaya, students who were influenced by writings of the Muslim Brotherhood (*Ikhwan-al-Muslimeen*) in Egypt and reformers such as Abdul Ala Maududi of Pakistan formed the Malaysian Islamic Youth Movement (*Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia*, ABIM). ABIM began to work in the slums around Kuala Lumpur and in 1974 organized demonstrations protesting against Malay poverty. Although Anwar Ibrahim, ABIM's leader, was imprisoned for 2 years as a result of the protests, the Malaysian government began to accommodate the demands of Islamic activists. The *dakwah* movement was particularly strong in the states of Kelantan and Terengganu and in rural Kedah, the base of the Pan-Malaysia Islamic Party (PAS), formed in 1951 to struggle for an Islamic state. The Iranian Revolution in 1979 and government efforts to suppress PAS fortified the commitment of Islamic activists. In 1986, 14 villagers in Kedah were killed by the police when they tried to prevent the arrest of a PAS preacher.

To combat the appeal of militant Islam and co-opt PAS supporters, the ruling party, the United Malay National Organization (UMNO), adopted a range of pro-Islam policies. The Islamic Center, established in 1980, was a government-sponsored *dakwah* organization. In 1983, the International Islamic University and the Islamic Bank were established. And in 1992, the Institute of Islamic Understanding Malaysia (*Institut Kefahaman Islam Malaysia*, IKIM) was set up to support a government program of modernization called "Vision 2020." According to its publication, *An*

Inspiration for the Future of Islam, IKIM's goal was to "provide a clearer picture of Islam in line with the demands and needs of modern times." An alternative vision of progressive Islam formulated by Anwar Ibrahim was Islam Madani, which drew on the writings of the reformer Muhammad Iqbal and stressed the development of civil society and individual rights. In 2004, Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, who succeeded Mohamad Mahathir as prime minister, introduced the idea of Islam Hadhari. Drawing on the teachings of Ibn Khaldun, Islam Hadhari stresses the importance of education, social order, and the restraints that are required for the development of a great urban civilization.

Each of the 11 states of peninsular Malaysia has its own Religious Council and Islamic judiciary. The Sharia courts are governed by judges trained in Sharia law. Muslims are obliged to follow the decisions of Sharia courts in matters concerning their religion, which include marriage and divorce, inheritance, apostasy, conversion, and custody. Non-Muslims who marry Muslims must renounce their religion and convert to Islam. This last provision has caused great controversy in recent years and led to legal challenges that have reached the Supreme Court.

Buddhism and Chinese Religious Traditions

Kuan Yin, the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, is the most popular deity among Chinese in Malaysia. She is worshipped as the compassionate one who rescues people who suffer. Wesak, the birthday of the Buddha, is a public holiday on which a great procession is sponsored jointly by Mahayana, Theravada, and Vajrayana Buddhists. The latter are represented by the Karma Kagyu sect, established in Malaysia in 1976 after a visit by the Karmapa. The Venerable Zhu Mo from Taiwan, who established the Malaysian Buddhist Institute in Penang in 1959, brought the *anapanasati* meditation tradition of Mahayana Buddhism to Malaysia. This tradition has appealed to the Mandarin-speaking Chinese. In the 1950s, a Theravada reform movement emphasizing *vipassana* meditation, brought to Malaysia by the Venerable K. Sri Dhammananda from Sri Lanka, attracted many English-speaking Chinese. In the 1980s, Achaan Yantra from Thailand renewed the

vipassana teaching. While few Buddhists in Malaysia become monks, lay meditation training has become very popular.

Folk traditions of spirit mediumship, divination, and ancestor worship are also strong among the overseas Chinese. The Chinese New Year, the Ch'ing Ming Festival, the Feast of the Hungry Ghosts, and the Nine Emperors Festival are major occasions for worship of the ancestors and the gods and for appeasement of wandering spirits. A rich variety of southern Chinese ritual traditions has been preserved in Malaysia, including worship of T'ien Kung, the God of Heaven (sometimes identified with the Jade Emperor) and worship of Tuah Peh Kong, who is often associated with the visit of the Ming Admiral Cheng Ho (Zheng He) to Southeast Asia in the 15th century.

Hinduism

Archaeological research in Kedah provides evidence of Hindu influence in Malaysia in the fifth century CE, but this early contact has little connection with Hinduism as practiced today. At the beginning of the 19th century, the British began to recruit indentured laborers from South India and English-educated clerks from Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) for plantations they had established in Malaya. The low-caste and untouchable laborers built shrines to the lineage deities, such as Muniandi and Maduraiveeran, they had worshipped back home. In almost every rubber estate and in the neighborhoods where the dock workers and manual laborers settled, a temple was built to the *Amman* (Goddess), who was at the center of community life. In the Goddess Temple, an annual fire-walking ritual was performed. In the cities, the upper-caste Chettiars and English-educated Tamils from Jaffna built temples to Siva and the Goddess, where Brahmin priests who were brought from India performed *agamic* rituals. The major festival of all Tamils in Malaysia is the Thaipusam, during which devotees fulfill their vows to Murugan, the son of Siva, by participating in a *kavadi* (a dance) and performing vow fulfillment.

E. V. Ramasami Naicker brought the Adi Dravida "self-respect" movement, calling for the end of the caste system from Tamil Nadu to Malaysia in 1929. Tamil dockworkers and Tamil employees of the George Town municipality organized the "temple

entry movement,” which led to the opening of the Queen Street Mariamman Temple in Penang to lower castes and untouchables in 1933. Since then, there have been several reform movements to end rituals of blood sacrifice, fire walking, and forms of vow fulfillment that involve piercing the body, but none of these movements has succeeded in eradicating these practices.

In the late 1970s, two dozen Hindu temples were attacked by a small group of Islamic extremists. As the government adopted pro-Islam policies, Malaysian Hindus responded with rising anxiety. In 1992, the Perak state government initiated a campaign of temple demolition on state land. The destruction of the Babri Masjid by Hindu extremists in India that same year provided fuel for further sporadic attacks on Hindu shrines in Malaysia. In 2007, the rising tensions led to mass demonstrations by ethnic Indians protesting government policies favoring ethnic Malays.

Christianity

Under the Portuguese (1511–1640), Melaka became a Catholic city, and the Roman Catholic Church proved resilient under Dutch rule. Protestant missionary activity in the Straits Settlements of Penang, Melaka, and Singapore began under the British in the 18th century, but in 1874 the colonial power committed to upholding the status of Islam in the Malay states. In Sarawak on Borneo, Raja Brooke invited missionaries to work among the animists Iban and Dayak. Today, Christians are more numerous than Muslims in Sarawak. Since the 1970s, evangelical Protestant organizations, such as the Assemblies of God, have been active in Malaysia.

Elizabeth Fuller Collins

See also Islam; Islamic Modernism; Liberal Islam; Muslim Brotherhood; Singapore; Southeast Asia; Thailand

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MALI

The Republic of Mali is a large, northwest African country with 14 million citizens, who live in a terrain bordered and landlocked by seven other nations, including Algeria, Burkina Faso, and Mauritania. Mali stands at the crossroads of global exchange in Africa, weaving a hybridity of Arab, West African, and European cultures enmeshed through centuries of trade, conquest, empire, and colonial relationships. Though poverty-stricken and consisting of predominantly nonarable desert, Mali is considered to be one of the most democratic nations in Africa, with free and fair elections, an open and variegated press, and a successfully practicing multiparty republic. Formerly called the French Sudan under colonial rule and later the Sudanese Republic, at independence in 1960, the nation of Mali faced a two-decade dictatorship and military coup before the country's first president was democratically elected in 1992. Amadou Toumani Toure played a significant role in bringing Malians out of dictatorship in 1991, and perhaps because of this, as twice-elected and current president, the former

general is trusted and highly regarded as a sign of national stability.

Financially, loans from the IMF and other international agencies have kept Mali afloat as it works to improve social and industrial development. Malian cotton, a significant national industry, has not become a viable export commodity due to drought and overly subsidized global produce. Ethnically, Mali is made up of the Mande, Fulani, Voltaic, Songhai, Moor, and Tuareg peoples, among others. Linguistically, Malians speak the official language, French, as well as Arabic, Berber, and Bambara. The Bambara (or Bamana), who are predominantly agricultural, provided the nation with the *Chiwara* symbol, a carved wooden antelope, which represents vitality, perseverance, and social responsibility to community.

Religiously, Mali is markedly Sunnī and Sufi Muslim. Adherents of Christianity and indigenous practices constitute only 1/10 of the Malian population. Islam peacefully came to the region in the ninth century and spread across what is now present-day Mali via the trans-Saharan trade routes and the ancient Mali, Ghana, and Songhai empires, which were collectively active between the 9th and 17th centuries. Just as the Great Mosque of Djenné is known across Africa as an architectural feat and a site of Muslim pilgrimage, the Malian city of Timbuktu, famous for its kingdom of gold, was a thriving Islamic scholastic center with a university, libraries, transcribers, and clerics by the 12th century. Malian griots, who were traditionally poet-historians, spiritual-political advisors, and singers, are continentally recognized for their keen insights and stories, which are still readily available today in works such as *The Epic of Sundiata*. As in other West African nations, Islam in Mali is often combined with local practices that can include farming ceremonies, rites of passage, the honoring of ancestors, and traditional arts. In recent years, Mali has faced increasing pressures from al Qaeda, and with threats of kidnapping and harboring of terrorist cells in the countryside, Mali is struggling to rid itself of Islamic extremism and protect its many borders.

Christi M. Dietrich

See also Africa; Algeria; Burkina Faso; Islam; Mauritania; North Africa

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MALINOWSKI, BRONISLAW (1884–1942)

The Polish-born British anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski was a professor at the London School of Economics and an early exponent of extensive systematic field research and empathetic study of small-scale traditional societies. He was a pioneer of the functionalist approach to anthropology, in which society is seen as serving the biological and psychological needs of its members, the individual becoming the focus of anthropological study rather than institutions.

Born on April 7, 1884, to parents of upper-middle-class standing in Krakow, Poland, then still part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Malinowski early on determined to follow in the footsteps of his father, a professor of folklore at Jagiellonian University in Krakow. At Jagiellonian, Malinowski studied mathematics and physical sciences, receiving a doctorate in 1908. Shortly thereafter, as Malinowski later recounted, he read James Frazer's *The Golden Bough*, and his interests immediately shifted to the study of religion and culture. He ventured first to Leipzig University to study psychology under Wilhelm Wundt and then, in 1910, to the London School of Economics (LSE), where he undertook advanced studies in anthropology under C. G. Seligman and Edward Westermarck and became a lecturer in 1913.

The pivotal point in Malinowski's career came in 1914, when he traveled to the western Pacific for what was to have been a relatively brief expedition. The advent of World War I prevented his return to England until 1920. During that time, Malinowski spent 6 months among the inhabitants of the island of Mailu, off the southeast coast of New Guinea, and then a total of 26 months in the Trobriand Islands, about 100 miles (1 mile = 1.609 kilometers) northeast of New Guinea. Malinowski

became the first European anthropologist to live day in and day out among the subjects of his study, observing firsthand the lives and routines of the Trobrianders. Though the field methods that he developed were anthropological, Malinowski was interested not merely in rituals and customs but in the feelings and motivations that guided an individual's daily actions. He also noted that the Trobrianders employed magic, not as "primitive science" but as a response to frustrated desires.

The result of his fieldwork was the publication of *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (1922), a work that secured his reputation as the leading anthropologist of his generation. He spent the next two decades at the LSE, when, in 1939, he accepted visiting lecturer appointments in the United States. World War II once again prevented his return to England. He died on May 16, 1942, in New Haven, Connecticut. His later works included *Myth in Primitive Psychology* (1926); *Sex and Repression in Savage Society* (1927), which owed much to Malinowski's interest in applying Freudian psychoanalytic theory to non-Western cultures; *A Scientific Theory of Culture* (1944); and *Magic, Science, and Religion* (1948).

Jon R. Stone

See also Indigenous Religions; Myth; Pacific Islands/Oceania

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MALTA

The Maltese archipelago of islands is centrally situated in the Mediterranean Sea. Its strategic location made it an important trading post and point of cultural interaction in antiquity, and various Christian and Muslim powers vied for possession of the islands until Malta's independence from Britain in 1964. Nevertheless, since St. Paul founded its church in the mid-first century, Malta has remained a predominantly Christian nation. Its constitution establishes Roman Catholicism as the state religion but guarantees freedom of religion to the approximately 5% of non-Catholics on the islands, which include Protestants (mostly British expatriates and tourists), Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, Muslims, Jews, and very small populations of Zen Buddhists and Baha'is.

Malta's Muslims currently number less than 1% of the total population of approximately 415,000, a mere trace of the islands' Fātimid heritage. Muslims from Sicily and North Africa immigrated to Malta in the late ninth century and remained until the early 13th century, when the last Muslims were expelled. In 1973, however, the Maltese government symbolically contributed toward restoring the country's Islamic legacy by donating land for construction of a mosque. The Libyan World Islamic Call Society also sponsored the project, and until today the mosque serves some 3,000 Muslims. Ahmadiyya Muslims maintain a noticeable public presence in Malta, especially by hosting interfaith conferences.

Despite the recent diversity in religious minority groups, Malta's historically Catholic identity has traditionally defined its national character. Home to one of the earliest Christian communities, Malta features several important sites, including the supposed location of Paul's shipwreck as described in the Bible (Acts 27–28) and the Mosta Rotunda, a Catholic church bearing the world's third largest unsupported dome.

The eponymous Knights of Malta are descendants of the Knights Hospitaller, a Catholic monastic and military order founded in Jerusalem prior to the Crusades, and governed the islands from 1530 until the arrival of Napoleon in 1798. In addition to performing acts of faith-inspired

valor and ministering to sick pilgrims, the Knights dedicated much of their energy to fending off attacks by Ottoman corsairs, including a 4-month siege in 1565. Although defunct militarily since 1798, the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of St. John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta, as the Knights have come to be officially known, continues to serve the suffering worldwide in obedience to its motto, *Tuitio Fidei et Obsequium Pauperum*, or “Defence of the faith and service to the poor.” Now based in Rome, the independent organization enjoys permanent observer status in the United Nations and 18 other international organizations, as well as bilateral diplomatic relations with more than 100 states.

Emily Pollokoff

See also Ahmaddiya; Christianity; Crusades; Mediterranean World; Roman Catholicism

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MANICHAISM

Manichaeism is an Iranian Gnostic religion that was founded by the prophet Mani in the third century CE. Manichaeism was at its greatest prevalence from the third through the sixth centuries, although it remained active through at least the ninth century and at its peak was one of the most popular and influential religions in the ancient world. Although it began in the Persian Empire (modern Iran), the religion quickly spread from the Roman Empire all the way to China through the Silk Road trade route. Manichaeism was seen as a serious threat to Christianity, Islam,

Buddhism, and Zoroastrianism, and it was deliberately targeted by these religious traditions, its followers persecuted and its sacred texts destroyed. It was not until the beginning of the 20th century that Manichaean texts began to be discovered buried in deserts and hidden in secret vaults.

Mani (216–276 CE) was born during the Sassanian period in the Persian Empire and raised in an ascetic Christian and Jewish environment. Mani came into contact with various other religions through his travels, including Buddhism and Zoroastrianism, and incorporated aspects of these traditions into his teachings. He claimed to have received two revelations from a spirit he called the “Twin,” and after the second revelation took up the role of a prophet. Manichaeism presented itself as the complete vision of a variety of teachings that had only partially been revealed by figures such as Jesus and the Buddha. Because of this, the religion appealed to followers from many different religious backgrounds, who saw Mani’s teachings as the culmination of their beliefs.

Manichaeism’s complex ideology combined aspects of the dualistic creation myth of Zoroastrianism, another ancient Persian religion, and Gnosticism, a term used to describe a variety of religious systems that emphasized gnosis, or knowledge, as the key to salvation. The Manichaean creation myth saw the world as a struggle between the forces of good, found in the spiritual world of light, and the forces of evil, manifested in the physical, material world of darkness. Throughout history, this light is gradually freed from its imprisonment in the physical world and returned to the spirit world. Mani preached the virtues of knowledge, self-denial, vegetarianism, chastity, and fasting; Manichaean communities followed ascetic practices and were divided into the “elect,” male and female monks, and the “hearers,” the lay people who supported them.

Manichaeism was able to gain strength rapidly because it attracted a number of influential adherents, including members of the ruling house of Persia. However, its message proved to be too threatening, and it became the target of intense persecution, disappearing entirely in many places by the end of the sixth century, though it lasted longer in China and the Far East.

Victoria J. Ballmes

See also Christianity; Iran; Mediterranean World; Middle East; Silk Road; Zoroastrianism (and Parsis)

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MARÍA LIONZA CULT OF VENEZUELA

María Lionza is a matriarchal goddess, an erotic symbol, and a water deity celebrated by an indigenous religion that originated in Venezuela; the places of worship of this deity are Sorte, Quiballo, Falcón, and Carabobo, sacred spaces of aboriginals from Nirgua, in the state of Yaracuy. It has also extended to Colombia, Spain, Central America, The Antilles, and the United States. The core value of the cult is freedom; it does not have a common doctrine and rejects unified rituals.

There are different versions regarding the origins of the religion. One of them affirms that María Lionza was the daughter of a *cacique caquetío* (pre-Columbian tribal chief of the Caquetío ethnic group) who hid aboriginals from the Inquisition's courts (created in 1610) and appeared naked riding a tapir to intimidate the Spaniards. A second version from the 17th century portrays her as a woman of mixed European and Moorish heritage who survived a shipwreck and was adopted by the *arahuacos* (Nívares and Caquetíos ethnic groups), who gave her the name María Lionza, which means "Queen emerged from the waters." She was tall, white, green-eyed, and a snake charmer. She married the *cacique* Chivacoa, who died leaving her in power, which explains why she is called Queen, Goddess, or Mother.

Another version establishes that a Nívar shaman predicted the birth of a tribal chief's daughter whose eyes were so extraordinary that when their pupils were reflected on water, it would make a destructive serpent emerge. A green-eyed girl was born, and her father protected her until the day she was reflected

on the lagoon and from her eyes a giant snake jumped, creating the Tacarigua lagoon, now known as Valencia Lake. This myth turns María Lionza into a sacred woman-snake typical of the Amazonic cosmic vision and a protector of nature.

The cult originated with the arrival of the Spaniard conquerors between 1499 and 1515 and remained, with a few followers, until the beginning of the 20th century. In the 1920s, the cult leaders were incarcerated, and toward 1930, aboriginalists compiled oral traditions about María Lionza and registered cases of disease cures performed in her name.

In 1950, the sculptor Alejandro Colina created a symbolic statue for the III Bolivarian Sport Games, held in 1951 in Venezuela: a huge statue of María Lionza riding a tapir and raising a pelvic bone over her head; in 1954, the statue was placed on the Francisco Fajardo highway in Caracas. Subsequently, the statue became a place of worship, where flowers, money, and rituals are offered.

In the cult, there are only priestesses, *bancos*, and mediums. The *banco* uses the medium to bring down a healing spirit and help in the trance. In rituals, María Lionza is offered perfume and liquor, which are poured into the water, on the altars, and on the followers; tobacco is also smoked since it is considered a purification resource.

Laura Fuentes Belgrave

See also Goddess; Indigenous Religions; Latin America; New Religions in South America; Shamanism; Venezuela

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MARIAN CULTS AND APPARITIONS IN LATIN AMERICA

Since the final decades of the 20th century, there has been an expressive proliferation of Marian

manifestations in Catholic countries, especially in Latin America. They contain the structural patterns of older European phenomena recognized by the Church, such as messages, supernatural visions, and sanctuary building, but they also have new elements relating to their local and national contexts, characteristics of contemporary globalized Catholicism and the visionaries' performance. This mixture of breaks with the past and historical continuity places the manifestations on a long diachronic line, which is being updated within traditional parameters while also revealing to devotees unknown aspects of the Virgin, since the Gospels and official documents tell us little about her.

The symbolic starting point of these Latin American phenomena is the apparitions of Medjugorje, Bosnia-Herzegovina, beginning in 1981, representing the unfolding and reinterpretation of modern Marian ideology based on the following apocalyptic points: the world's end; divine justice; God's wrath; Maria the Intercessor, who is compassionate toward the suffering of humans and advocates in their favor; humankind's sins; and castigation and atonement through conversion and salvation. What distinguishes this manifestation from previous ones is that it has existed over a period of years and is no longer confined to its original socio-geographic niche. It can happen anywhere the visionaries happen to be, as a single complete rite or as an interrelated series of rites within a specific story. The phenomena have acquired a strong public character, involving the consecrating of settings, the breaking of denominational boundaries and institutional controls, and considerable use of the media and the Internet.

In Latin America, following the fading of the intense presence of Liberation Theology in Catholic communities, the cults and apparitions emerged again, principally among poorer groups, or took a contrary stance to the capitalist political and economic logic, whereby the threatened traditional system struggled to resist contemporary tribulations, thus recovering an idealized order (e.g., indigenous people in Mexico and Colombia). Led by people considered pure, oppressed, and lacking formal religious knowledge, such as beggars in Chile and peasant children in Brazil, these phenomena showed themselves to be subversive by becoming organized, expressing their force, and appropriating the sacred without ecclesiastical

mediation. Charismatic Renovation was the Catholic movement that came closest to these Marian manifestations, especially where Catholicism attempted to remain dominant in the face of ground lost to other religions. However, this approximation was not totally accepted by devotees, despite its having been able to communicate to the urban middle classes meanings of the manifestations proper to the poorer rural communities.

The message announced in these contexts does not have the same strong eschatological content it has in Europe; rather it is benign and welcoming, coming from an accessible Virgin. In addition, among Latin people, the events have brought together in *communitas* the faithful from different social classes, races, ethnic groups, educational levels, gender, and age, capable of investing the visionaries and messengers with a virtually sacerdotal power of mediation between divinity and humans, bringing popular devotion into the bosom of the Church.

Tânia Mara Campos de Almeida

See also Colombia; Indigenous Religions; Latin America; Mexico; New Religions in South America; Roman Catholicism

MARSHALL ISLANDS

The Marshall Islands (also called the Republic of the Marshall Islands) is a Pacific island nation that, along with Saipan, Guam, the Caroline Islands, and others, constitutes the Federated States of Micronesia, located in the center of the Pacific Ocean. The islands contain more than 60,000 people and lie to the north of Kiribati and Nauru, while to the south lies the American territory of Wake Island.

Christianity is the primary religion throughout the islands, and most citizens are Protestant. The single largest religious denomination is the United Church of Christ, with slightly more than half of the population (approximately 55%). The Pentecostal Church (found within the Assembly of God) is also well represented, with 25% of the population considering themselves adherents. Roman Catholicism has slightly more than 8% of

the population. Smaller Protestant denominations include the Pentecostal faith called the Bukot Non Jesus, which is also known by the title "Assembly of God Part II." In addition, there are Seventh-Day Adventists and Full Gospel believers (holiness beliefs similar to Pentecostals).

Mormonism (Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints) may also be found in the Marshall Islands, as are believers of the Baha'i Faith (a small church accentuating monotheism that was started in 19th-century Persia). Followers of Ahmadiyya Islam and Jehovah's Witnesses are thought to have small enclaves of believers, measuring somewhere in the hundreds. Missionaries of any faith are welcome in the Marshall Islands to evangelize to the citizens, and it is the same throughout Micronesia.

Indigenous beliefs throughout Micronesia were polytheistic; that is, there were a number of gods of both sexes, and each had a specific function. Many chief gods were symbolized as being instrumental within the annual succession of regeneration and renewal that secures the prospects of humanity's continued existence on earth. Other gods were minor and were linked with neighborhood shrines. Spirits from one's ancestors were understood to frequently intermingle with people; those who knew how to contact them often did so. These ancestors were believed to monitor the day-to-day behavior of the living, pondering whether the individual in question acted in a forbidden manner or contravened any of the ethical rules that the major gods had established.

Death was considered the stealing of a person's ability to breathe and the complete absence of the animating force that keeps each person alive. Moreover, it occurred as a result of the behavior of other beings, both alive and deceased. One's personality does not change at death; on the contrary, each individual carries his or her personality characteristics throughout life and death. If a person was friendly or cruel in earthbound existence, he or she would remain so in the afterlife. Spirits of the dead intermingle with the living, and individuals newly deceased stay close to the living, often shielding family members or good friends from harm. However, cruel spirits often enjoy scaring people, and those that are the nastiest enjoy bringing death or bad luck to the living.

Cary Stacy Smith and Li-Ching Hung

See also Christianity; Guam; Micronesia; Missions and Missionaries; Mormons; Northern Mariana Islands; Pacific Islands/Oceania

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MARTIN, DAVID (B. 1929)

David Alfred Martin is an emeritus professor of sociology at the London School of Economics and an adjunct professor at Liverpool Hope University. He is the author of about 20 books and 300 articles on a wide variety of subjects, including the relation between religion and politics and the rise of Pentecostalism, but is probably best known for his writings on secularization.

Martin was born in London in 1929. He attended Sheen Grammar School, spent his 2 years of compulsory National Service in the Non-Combatant Corps and obtained a diploma in education with distinction from the Methodist Westminster College of Education. He then earned his living as a primary school teacher from 1952 until 1959, when, having undertaken private study for an External London University degree, he gained a first-class honors in sociology. This led to his being awarded a postgraduate scholarship, which, together with a year's assistant lectureship at Sheffield University, followed by an appointment as a lecturer at the London School of Economics (LSE), enabled him to study the history and sociology of pacifism under the supervision of Donald MacRae at the LSE. The resulting PhD was published in 1965. Martin remained at the LSE, becoming a professor of sociology in 1971, until taking early retirement in 1989 and has since held various posts as visiting professor at universities in England and the United States.

Martin's questioning of the secularization thesis gained much attention in the mid-1960s, when he

suggested that the concept of secularization was so laden with ideological distortions that it interfered with a proper examination of the complexities of religious reality and should, therefore, be erased from the sociological dictionary. However, rather than abandoning it, Martin spent much of the following decades employing the concept to illuminate those very complexities that lie in the different geographical, political, economic, cultural, and spiritual aspects of religious life. His work on the spread of Pentecostalism, especially in South America and Africa, has provided but one illustration of the ways in which contemporary religiosity continues to play a crucially significant role in the lives of both individuals and society.

Martin's strongly held belief in the importance of religious symbolism as an upholder of cultural tradition has led to accusations that his work is occasionally more theological than sociological. Others laud the richness of his distinctive and often poetic style. Born into a Methodist family, Martin practiced as a Methodist lay preacher for several years but became increasingly attracted to the Church of England and its heritage and stoutly defended the 1662 *Book of Common Prayer* in opposition to the introduction of modern liturgies. In 1984, he was ordained as a priest in the Church of England. He was elected a fellow of the British Academy in 2007.

Eileen Barker

See also Anglicans; Politics and Religion; Protestant Christianity; Secularization

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MARTINIQUE

Often referred to as the Paris of the Caribbean, the heavily Catholic island of Martinique is the

largest of the Windward Islands, surrounded by the Caribbean Sea to the west, the Atlantic Ocean to the east, and the islands of Dominica and St. Lucia to the north and south, respectively. The islands' residents are French citizens with all the rights, privileges, and responsibilities of French nationals, including military duties, and at the beginning of the 21st century, nearly one third of all Martinicans reside in France. More than 90% of the population are of African or mixed descent, with about 5% of the population White and the remainder Indian and/or Chinese. About 2,500 residents are direct descendants of the original French settlers known as *békés*. *Békés* have long constituted an island élite, while Whites from France are regarded as "outsiders." More than 86% of the population identify themselves as Roman Catholics, though church attendance is relatively low. Pockets of Protestant, Hindu, Rastafarian, and syncretic Afro-Caribbean Quimbois practitioners are found also on the island. A variant of 19th-century Hinduism—brought to Martinique by South Indian immigrants via the West Indies—survives, but many Hindus and *quimboiseurs* also consider themselves Roman Catholics.

French settlers first came to the island in 1635 and established a plantation economy based on African slavery. Slavery was not abolished until 1848, after which Chinese and Indian laborers were brought to the island to replace African slave labor. The Catholic Church was established with the first French settlers in Martinique, and the first missions were started by members of the Dominican, Jesuit, and Capuchin orders. In 1909, the island was placed under the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith at the Vatican, which transferred the responsibility for Martinique to the Holy Ghost Fathers. At the beginning of the 21st century, an archbishop administered 47 parishes and more than 60 priests. In 1946, the National Assembly in Paris voted to make Martinique an overseas department of France; thereafter, Martinique became one of the 100 *départements* (states) of the French Republic and one of the 5 overseas departments (DOMs). The island sends four deputies (representatives) to the National Assembly.

As noted, Roman Catholicism has long been the dominant religion on Martinique. But recently,

other religions (e.g., Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Jehovah's Witnesses, Baha'i, Judaism, Mormonism, and Islam) have grown in influence. Protestant denominations, for example, increased their membership from 3% of the population in 1983 to 12% of the population in 1998. The Seventh-Day Adventist Church began missionary work on the island in 1924, with Evangelical Baptists and Jehovah's Witnesses beginning work following World War II. Martinique has a small community of Orthodox Jews in Fort-de-France and a synagogue in Schoelcher. A Baha'i assembly was opened in the 1960s. There are currently about 300 Muslims and 80 Mormons in Martinique. As on other Caribbean islands, the Ancient and Mystical Rosicrucian Order has established a number of lodges.

A parallel system of belief and practice, known locally as *quimbois*, has long existed alongside Christianity. Deeply embedded in popular culture, *Quimbois* encompasses a variety of plant and herbal remedies, sorcery, and various forms of spiritual healing. Government documents suggest that European medicine has largely supplanted traditional medical practices and that traditional healers (*guérisseurs*) are less prevalent than in the past. Belief in sorcery and the "evil eye" is said to be declining. Still earlier beliefs persist, including belief in zombies ("the living dead") and vampires.

As elsewhere in the Caribbean, religious pluralism abounds. The cult of Maldevidan, a blending of Hinduism and Catholicism, in which the principal cult deity, Maldevidan, is identified with Jesus Christ, is primarily found in the northern part of Martinique. Most religions are supportive of the French government, but Rastafari—a religion that began in Jamaica—is highly critical of European politics, culture, and Christianity. As a department of France, citizens of Martinique enjoy religious freedom and separation of church and state. A French law passed in 2000 punishes sects for using "mental manipulation" by imposing up to 5 years' imprisonment and a \$75,000 fine. France's armed force in Martinique constitutes the third largest military presence in the Caribbean after the United States and Cuba.

Stephen D. Glazier and Christi M. Dietrich

See also Caribbean; Diaspora; France; Missions and Missionaries; Roman Catholicism; Syncretism

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MARTYRDOM

Martyrdom is a death marked with religious or ideological significance because of the martyr's refusal to betray a deeply held belief, often in obedience to a deity. Martyrdom includes three components: (1) the sufferer, (2) his or her community, and (3) opposition. Stories of martyrdom often describe in great detail the bodily torture inflicted on the martyr, emphasizing the fierce, even supernatural, cruelty of the opponents and the martyr's exchange of corporeal life for a greater afterlife. The act of martyrdom, a self-sacrifice, is thus a powerful means of identity formation, for both the martyr and the martyr's community. Yet because of the exclusivity of this identity, martyrdom is also a contentious and potentially divisive act. The death of the martyr has historically been and continues to be a poignant symbol of the power of belief.

History of Martyrdom

The word *martyr* comes from the Greek word *martus*, or witness, and was employed in the Greco-Roman world to identify one who provided

testimony in legal proceedings. However, martyrdom became closely associated with the Christian tradition, largely because of the death of its progenitor, Jesus. Brought by Jewish leaders before the Roman governor of Judea for blasphemy, Jesus was crucified. After his death, the term *martyr* was increasingly used by the burgeoning Christian sect to denote one who testified to Jesus' resurrection, which sometimes resulted in punishment by death. The Acts of the Apostles recounts the story of Stephen, who was stoned by Jewish religious authorities and came to be known as the proto-martyr, the first to die for his Christian beliefs. According to tradition, most of the original followers of Jesus similarly underwent martyrdom.

Antecedents for martyrdom appear in both Greek and Jewish traditions before the time of Jesus. An early example in the Western tradition comes from the death of the philosopher Socrates in 399 BCE. Tried and convicted of teaching impiety, Socrates chose the sentence of drinking poison rather than being exiled from Athens. Speaking shortly before his death, he attributed his actions to divine compulsion. There were martyrs in the Jewish tradition before Jesus as well, most notably the Maccabees, seven brothers who were executed by the Seleucid Emperor Antiochus Epiphanes for their refusal to defame the Jewish God by worshipping Greek deities. As Christianity spread throughout the Roman world, however, Christians' refusal to participate in the social and civic functions earned the notice of public officials. Refusal, on questioning, to deny a Christian identity earned martyrs a public death. Martyrdom became the leitmotif of early Christianity, for the martyr was thought to act in imitation of Jesus Christ and provide an example to others. Furthermore, in death the martyr gained forgiveness and a place in heaven.

There were brief periods of Roman imperial action against Christianity during the first three centuries. This culminated with the Great Persecution, instituted by Diocletian in 303 and lasting until 313. It ended with the triumph of Constantine over his rivals. As the first Christian emperor, Constantine extended religious freedom to Christianity, and the time of active martyrdom came to a close.

With the backing of previously antagonistic emperors, the power of the Christian church began to increase. Beginning in the east and spreading to the west, bishops and local Christians began to

establish cults around individuals who had suffered martyrdom. They were celebrated in annual festivals where the presiding bishop would retell the story of the martyr's death, often at an edifice constructed near his or her place of execution. Stories and celebrations of martyrdom multiplied throughout Roman territory, and the trafficking of martyr relics increased, most often with the support of the Church.

Stories of martyrdom remained a critical component of Christianity in the Byzantine Empire and in growing European nations. During the Reformation in the 15th and 16th centuries, both Catholic and Protestant groups claimed new martyrdoms in their internecine struggles. As Christian groups sent out missionaries to Asia and the newly discovered Americas, martyrdoms sometimes occurred among native populations unwilling to accept the intervention of foreign religion and culture.

In its early centuries, Islam also showed a propensity for martyrdom. Jihad entailed a nonviolent and defensive struggle against other groups, and the martyr, or *shahid*, was a witness to the faith. As the religion grew and encountered increasing conflict in its second century, martyrdom gained a more specific meaning, eventually denoting one who died for the faith in the course of battle. As in Christianity, death for Allah gained the martyr eternal paradise. The aggressive tone of later Islamic tales of martyrdom was similar to and influenced by the tales of Christian sects who were at odds with orthodox Christianity and often found refuge in Muslim territory.

More recent religious traditions likewise revere martyr figures. Sikhism, founded in the 15th century in India, emphasizes defense of the faith and potential martyrdom. Sikhs violated the norms of Hindu practice and struggled against the larger Hindu and Muslim communities. In particular, the 18th-century warrior Banda Singh Bahadur is renowned for his martyrdom in his retaliation against the Mughal Empire for its persecutions of Sikhs. Contemporary conflicts in India, such as the siege of the Golden Temple Complex in 1984, continue to foster martyrdoms.

Issues Concerning Martyrdom

There are several issues in dealing with martyrdom, both within a single tradition and between

different ideological or religious traditions. One is martyrdom's potential incompatibility with tradition, and another is the exclusivity of martyrdom claims. Both of these problems are present in a larger paradox between peace and violence within religious traditions that affects the larger global society.

A critical question regarding martyrdom is whether or not the death is justifiable by the martyr's community. The martyr must be willing to suffer unto death, and in stories of martyrdom, the martyr is usually resolute. However, ideally, the religious adherent ought not to seek death aggressively but accept martyrdom willingly. Within the Christian tradition, support can be found both for aggressively seeking death and for fleeing persecution as well. Religious leaders have often attempted to outline parameters for acceptable martyrdom that exclude destruction of property or other acts of violence to gain notice, yet so-called voluntary martyrs are often accepted nonetheless. This seeming contradiction parallels the tension between conflicting tenets of pacifism and violence within many traditions. Religions that advocate peace also remember and treasure stories of martyrdom.

The ambiguous connection between martyrdom and self-killing is also a source of tension. Many saw the death of the Vietnamese monk Thich Quang Duc in protest against the persecution of Buddhists by South Vietnam's Diem administration during the Vietnam War as martyrdom. However, the monk's death by self-immolation prompted others to label it suicide. The action prompted a series of additional self-immolations by Buddhists and Christians. This is indicative of the power of self-sacrificial death. Despite causing tension within existing tradition, martyrdom is often incorporated within the dominant tradition.

The contention over the manner of death begs the larger question of who has the power to label a "martyrdom." This is a concern within religious traditions, but it can also be a source of further violence between traditions. For the followers of some Islamic groups, what is seen as a suicide bombing to those outside the tradition is justified as a martyrdom pleasing to God. Likewise, the death of a religious missionary, which is seen as a martyrdom to his tradition or her may be viewed by indigenous groups as the result of unwelcome cultural interference.

Even when religious traditions are not directly opposed, the question of what constitutes a martyrdom remains important. In the wake of the Columbine school shootings, some students were called martyrs for professing belief in God before being killed. The immediacy of that situation raises an important question of whether the supposed martyrs intended to be so and whether intention is necessary for martyrdom. Interrogation before death fills one important criteria of martyrdom, but this may seem to imply that the others who died were not martyrs, rendering those deaths less meaningful. Thus, the necessary requirements and clear boundaries of the martyr's identity potentially threaten the identity of others.

In an age where global conflict is often expressed in religious terms, martyrdom has tremendous sway in creating a sense of identity for the martyr and his or her community. A power to unite is matched by a potential divisiveness within traditions and a penchant for promoting further violence between them. For this reason, martyrdom remains a contentious force as a witness to religious traditions and the global community.

Matt Recla

See also Asceticism; Missions and Missionaries; Religious Identity; Suicide Bombing; Torture; Violence

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MARX AND RELIGION

The political economist and philosopher Karl Marx (1818–1883) viewed religion as the very basis of the self-conscious knowledge of oneself as

a social being; thus, the criticism of religion was the required starting point of all social critique. Marx's understanding of how religion is closely coupled with political economy renders him crucial for considering how global religions and global economic forces intersect and may become interdependent on one another for their expansion. Such a critical perspective has been central to anti-globalization social movements and has informed anticapitalist religious movements such as the Base Communities of Latin America. This short entry describes the distinct functions Marx attributed to religion and then explores Marx's relevance to discussions of global religion.

First, religion functions as a consolation and otherworldly compensation. Religion works in this way for those deprived of material comforts and agency—those whose numbingly repetitive and underpaid labor alienates them from the hope or capacity of exerting control over their destinies. Religion *expresses* alienation, since the gods' control over humanity mirrors and replicates people's impotent suffering in earthly life, yet it also *protests* alienation by trying to transform its conditions, even if, from Marx's perspective, such religious protest misrecognizes the real sources of oppression.

Second, for the ruling classes—formerly the land-owning nobility and, later, capitalists who own the productive infrastructure—religion functions as an ideological justification. Religion provides a language and rationale justifying unequal distributions of wealth as providentially ordained or as the reward of moral virtue. Just as European kings once presented themselves as not only the agents but also the very vessels of God's presence on earth, ruling classes and nation-states of the modern period present, and may actually perceive, their favored positions as a manifestation of divine favor. Furthermore, the “ruling ideas” of a given period that typically institutionalize the rights of the powerful (who are also those ideas' authors) may be claimed to reside in a transcendent authority beyond political contest. The “right to private property” is a key example.

Third, Marx understood religion and political economy to be intimately related. Like the sociologist Max Weber after him, he viewed certain religious ideas as providing fertile ground for specific economic forms. For example, in the first section of *Das Kapital* (Capital), Marx described

Christianity, with its “cult of abstract man,” as the perfect religion for societies based on the production and exchange of commodities abstracted from any particular local meaning. In this sense, Marx remains salient for the discussion of global religions. For example, Marx pioneered the by now commonplace recognition not only that the West's Christian missionary projects were closely imbricated with colonial demands of economic reform, but that conversion to Christianity and conversion to capitalism were frequently two facets of a single social process.

Christianity and other global religions are easily transmitted in part because they are abstracted from any particular territory and context of meaning. Commodities exchanged in capitalist economies share this ease of circulation. Both capitalism and global religions acquire their vitality from the prospect of relentless expansion into new markets, and both transform the very meaning of human social exchange and relations with their arrival. Thus, Marx viewed capitalism as itself akin to a global religion, a religion best opposed by a different “specter,” namely, communism.

Paul Christopher Johnson

See also Base Communities in Latin America; Communism; Consumer Culture; Conversion; Economic Issues and Religion; Globalization; Liberation Theology; Local Religion; Marxism; Weber, Max

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MARXISM

Perhaps no other modern idea has spread as quickly and as widely as the sociopolitical ideas of

the 19th-century thinker Karl Marx (1818–1883). Any concept that draws on the discourse of Marx’s teaching is considered Marxism. More specifically, Marxism entails a critique of the political economy from a proletarian point of view, where seemingly natural underpinnings of inequality can be interpreted through the concepts of exploitation, alienation, and profit seeking. Although the globalization of Marxism was largely a late-19th-century and 20th-century phenomenon, the impact of this type of ideological reasoning has served to create enormous changes in the world’s economic systems and poses challenges to the social structures developed through the capitalist mode of production. The ideas within Marxism have incited wars, transformed ways of living, inspired intellectual revolutions, and formed political alliances that still remain in the second decade of the 21st century.

Life and Works of Karl Marx

Karl Heinrich Marx was born on May 5, 1818, in Trier, Prussia. Educated in the University of Bonn, Friedrich Wilhelm University, and the University of Jena, Marx officially studied law yet retained an interest in several other disciplines including philosophy, economics, and politics. As a student, Marx was heavily influenced by the classical works of Aristotle, Democritus, Plato, Pythagoras, and Thales. In addition to more modern works by Erasmus, Kant, Ricardo, and Machiavelli, Marx was especially concerned with the ideas of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831) and his own contemporary Ludwig Andreas von Feuerbach (1804–1872).

It was Hegel’s philosophy of history and his notion of advancing humanity through contradictory ideas—termed *dialectics*—that first attracted Marx. However, Hegel had already died by the time Marx began to study his work, and hence, Marx was exposed to the ideas of his peers who had studied under Hegel, chiefly Feuerbach. Feuerbach advocated putting Hegel’s ideas into practice, something Marx would later use to fortify his notion of the need to interact with material items in nature rather than concentrating on the ideational concepts that Hegel had proposed.

In late November of 1843, Karl Marx met Friedrich Engels, a young and ambitious advocate for laborers’ role in achieving justice. Engels and Marx soon developed a friendship that lasted

throughout much of their adult lives. Engels went on to assist Marx financially and support his literary endeavors as a coauthor in much of his work. Given the importance of his affiliation with Marx and his contributions to his career as a social philosopher, Friedrich Engels is regarded as a central figure in the development of Marxism.

Apart from secondary works that grew out of mid-20th-century reinterpretations of Karl Marx’s works, his original writings remain the foundation on which much of Marxism is based today. Some of the more influential pieces composed by Marx and Engels include *Thesen über Feuerbach* (Theses on Feuerbach) in 1845, *Die heilige Familie, oder, Kritik der kritischen Kritik, gegen Bruno Bauer und Consorten* (The Holy Family) in 1845, *Die deutsche ideologie* (The German Ideology) in 1846, *Manifest der kommunistischen Partei* (Manifesto of the Communist Party) in 1848, and the first volume of *Das Kapital: Kritik der politischen Ökonomie* “*Das Kapital*” (Capital: A Critical Analysis of Capitalist Production) in 1867.

Though Marx only held trivial jobs throughout his life, the support from Engels sustained his writing endeavors. As his works were often seen as instigating revolts against states and the owners of the means of production, Marx experienced several expulsions from European nations until he finally arrived in London in 1849. Shortly after his wife’s death in 1881, Marx developed several illnesses that led to his death in 1883.

Dialectical Materialism

Dialectical materialism refers to Marx’s view that interaction with material resources is the impetus for social, political, and economic change. Within Marxism, this type of dialectics functions within a tension between two opposites, the *thesis* versus the *antithesis*—defined by class as the interests of the ruling class versus the interests of the subservient classes. As these two types of interests contradict and cancel out each other, they also preserve the foundation for their respective existences based on class. When thesis and antithesis clash, they allow for the emergence of a *synthesis*.

A historical example that demonstrates this dialectical model is found in the French Revolution of 1789. According to some Marxists, this conflict occurred because of the French monarchy’s accumulation of wealth and control (thesis) over

the resistant bourgeoisie (antithesis). As the end result of the clash between the interests of the monarchy and the interests of the bourgeoisie, the proletariat class (synthesis) emerged. With this small creation of a new class, production would also be affected. The rise of the proletariat class would increase the output from production, thereby improving the overall conditions under which society would meet future challenges and foster community.

Hegel, preceding Marx, was fully aware of the dialectical process, yet rather than emphasizing the material conditions within a given social setting, he focused on ideas. This inversion of the dialectical process from one based on ideas to one based on material is popularly known as Hegel's dialectics operating on its head, whereas the ideas of Marx and Engels placed it on its feet. In Marxism, interaction with material, not ideas, would be necessary to solve burgeoning new challenges.

Marxism and Religion

Although Marxism plays a central role in the study of religion, the original works of Karl Marx contributed less to any paradigmatic approach to studying it as such. However, a number of works by Marx and Engels indicate an extensive interest in religion, including the essay "On the Jewish Question," "Theses on Feuerbach," and brief references to the oppressive features of institutionalized religion. A rather famous example of this type of religious interest is found in Marx's (1844) "Introduction to a Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right." Though often misquoted through a paraphrased version that reads "Religion is the opiate of the masses," the original quote is as follows: "Religious suffering is, at one and the same time, the expression of the real suffering and heart of a heartless world, and the soul of the soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people." With this sweeping statement, Marx and Engels cast an underlying theme that presents religion as simply another institution that serves to undergird the false consciousness of the laborers and hold them captive to the exploits of the owners of the means of production.

On the Jewish Question

Marx's (1843) essay titled "On the Jewish Question" is one of the more misunderstood literary

pieces within Marxism as is it written in an ironic style, lending itself to misinterpretations with regard to tenor and intention. In actuality, this essay is a theoretical exercise with Marx's notion of historical materialism, where he focused on the Jews in Prussia and their mode of achieving political emancipation. Marx's piece was also a response to the works of his peer Bruno Bauer, who felt that for Jews to achieve political emancipation, they must first abandon their religion, as in Bauer's view only a secular state could offer political emancipation. Marx, however, rejected Bauer's assertions by explaining how the secular state does not abolish religion but instead considers the people who interact with religion as separate from it.

Theses on Feuerbach

Written in 1845, Marx's "Theses on Feuerbach" outlines 11 theses that analyze, and at times scrutinize, the potential uses of Feuerbach's views on religion. Where Feuerbach's overall critical model held that man's affinity with attributing the qualities of humanity to the omnipotence of God was backward, Marx sought to advance the notion of ideational concepts as the product of human reasoning and not the other way around. That is, for Feuerbach—and by extension, Marx—God did not create man but was instead a creation of man. In many ways, this grounding of the Divine provided the reinforcing means for Marx to affirm his concentration on materialist conditions while challenging Hegel's emphasis on idealism.

However, Marx not only found Feuerbach's work to be useful but also noted the shortcomings in his reasoning. Although Feuerbach poses a break with divine sacralization of royalty and thus established a realistic basis for interpreting inequality, in Marx's view Feuerbach failed to consider human activity as *objective* activity. In this way, Marx advocates for praxis in his famous statement from the 11th thesis: "Philosophers have hitherto only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it."

Marxism and Liberation Theology

Liberation Theology is a largely Roman Catholic theological perspective that locates sin within the institution of poverty and attempts to combat this sin through a synthesis of Christianity

and socialism. Within this perspective, poverty is at once an indication of God's mercy on the poor and oppressed in the face of avarice as well as the epitome of class struggle whereby the teachings of Jesus Christ and Karl Marx are complementary in achieving justice.

Marxism and Religious Eschatology

The trajectory of realizing a communist society has often been compared with a series of eschatological developments. In what has been called Marx's historical materialism model, various stages of history have been defined by the economic mode of production. As each stage experiences a dialectical contradiction between groups vying for the material means of production, history advances toward a state of improved material conditions that increase productivity. An example of this progressive trajectory can be found in the transformation from feudal states, where the means of production were the property of the aristocratic lords, to capitalist states, where the bourgeoisie seized these means and established a new economic system of production. An eschatological approach to Marxism focuses on the stages from capitalist states to socialist and communist societies. The struggle between "good and evil" would be played out in the final days before the realization of a utopian society that would be classless and thus free from inequality.

Given the progressive movement toward an ideal scenario of this magnitude, the similarities between an eschatology within Marxism and traditional Christian eschatology have inadvertently given rise to ideas about Marx as a prophet, socialists as religious practitioners venerating iconic figures and the literature of communalism, and the state of communism as an enterprise in establishing a "heaven on earth."

Marxism and Religious Movements

The general tenets of communalism found within Marxism have attracted religious practitioners, who appropriate such ideology as their own. An example of this type of appropriation can be found within The Universal Industrial Church of the New World Comforter (UICNWC), whose members have been described as "millenarian utopians."

Founded in 1973 by Allen Michael, this small movement is one of very few groups that openly avows an association with socialist-leaning tenets.

Despite the more contemporary examples of the religious uses of Marxism, there were also some groups that held similar beliefs and practices prior to the writing of Marx and Engels. These movements include the True Levelers (established in 1649), later known as the Diggers; Robert Owen's settlement of New Harmony (1814); and the League of the Just (1836), which later became The Communist League.

Influence of Marxism on Revolutions and Social Movements

The sheer immensity and far-reaching diffusion of Marx's works have inspired revolutions and major social movements in several nations, including Russia, China, Cuba, Mexico, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Bolivia, Columbia Chile, Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia, India, Israel, Cyprus, Greece, Hungary, former Czechoslovakia, Germany, Italy, France, and the United States. In conjunction with these revolutions and major social movements, Marxism has influenced popular historical figures from every corner of literary, political, social, and cultural worlds, such as Vladimir Lenin, Fidel Castro, Sigmund Freud, Mohandas Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Hồ Chí Minh, Betty Friedan, Julius Nyerere, Martin Luther King Jr., Angela Davis, and César Chávez.

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

Perhaps the most well-known and longest running experiment with Marxism emerged in Russia, just after the turn of the 20th century, with the Bolshevik movement of Vladimir Ilyich Lenin (1870–1924). The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) was created in 1922 after a series of uprisings initially against the Czar and later against a provisional government that succeeded the reign of the Romanov Dynasty. The USSR operated for nearly seven decades as the superpower in opposition to the United States of America within the framework of the Cold War. Supporting Marxist-based revolutions in a number of countries throughout the second and third worlds, the USSR was often viewed as the

ideological, economic, and political foundation for all other socialist movements.

China

In China, Marxism was most famously advanced by Mao Zedong (1893–1976). From 1949 to 1976, Mao governed the People's Republic of China as the chairman of the Communist Party of China. Marxism's influence on Mao is credited with the most drastic changes in history of China, including the introduction of sweeping social, political, and economic policies that transformed a succession of imperial dynasties and divided republics into a single-party socialist republic operating under a planned economy. After Mao's death, his successor, Deng Xiaoping, advanced the modernization and industrialization of China through a socialist market economy.

Cuba

In 1959, the Cuban regime of Fulgencio Batista was overthrown by Marxist-leaning guerillas, including Ernesto "Che" Guevara (1928–1967), Camilo Cienfuegos (1932–1959), Raúl Castro (b. 1931), and his brother Fidel Castro (b. 1926). In 1961, Fidel Castro introduced Cuba as a socialist state and in the years to come effectively employed the Soviet model of a Marxist-Leninist state.

Marxism and Communism

Although the terms *Marxism* and *communism* are often used synonymously, there is a significant difference between the two. As it would seem impossible to speak of these two terms as unrelated, their distinction is best described as a difference between theory and practice. Whereas the former refers to the broader sociopolitical theories of Marx, the latter denotes a particular enterprise of practices based on the applied theoretical concepts intended to create a communist social reality. In short, Marxism embodies theoretical notions that, when put into action, are geared toward the realization of a communist society.

Marxism and Academia

Along similar lines pertaining to the distinction between Marxism and communism that rests

almost exclusively within the practice of discursive strategies is the use of Marxism as a theoretical framework for interpreting social phenomena. Within academia, there are several paradigmatic approaches to the study of topics such as race, class, gender, nationalism, sexuality, and age that draw on the interpretive theories of inequality, exploitation, and alienation found within Marxism. Although the use of Marxism could be found within any academic discipline, its use is concentrated mainly within the social and literary sciences.

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See also China; Communism; Liberation Theology; Marx and Religion; Russian Federation

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MASHHAD

Mashhad, the capital and largest city of Khorasan-e Razavi province in the mountainous region of northeastern Iran, is considered to be Iran's holiest city. Mashhad, which literally means "place of martyrdom," has a population of more than 2.5 million and is the second largest city in the country. Located about 530 miles (1 mile = 1.609 kilometers) northeast of Tehran, Mashhad is home to many tourist attractions; but most important, it is the location of the tomb of Imam Reza, the eighth imam (head spiritual leader) of Shi'a Islam, who was martyred in 818 CE.

Following the 13th-century Mongol invasions, Mashhad underwent a period of growth and development. The Mongol raids had left many cities in the Greater Khorasan area devastated but had left Mashhad relatively intact. As a result, people in the area migrated to Mashhad and began to

expand and develop the city. Previously known as Sanabad, the city changed its name after Imam Reza was killed and then buried there.

Imam Reza is the only Shi'a saint buried in Iran; his shrine, managed by the Razavi Foundation, is one of the holiest and most visited sites in the Islamic world and is believed to be Iran's single wealthiest institution. The foundation owns vast tracts of land, hotels, and factories; has funded the building of new highways and an international airport; and has established investment banks with foreign investors. Its net asset value is estimated at a minimum of \$15 billion. The foundation also receives year-round contributions from the millions of pilgrims who visit the shrine from countries such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Turkmenistan, Pakistan, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, and the neighboring Persian Gulf countries. The total revenues generated are believed to be in the hundreds of millions of dollars.

The complex that contains the Imam's tomb also includes the 15th-century Gohar Shad Mosque, an ancient museum, several courtyards and seminaries, the Razavi University of Islamic Sciences, and the Central Library Complex. With a history dating back more than six centuries, the Central Library Complex of Astan-e Quds Razavi is one of the oldest libraries in the Middle East, shelving about 70,000 rare manuscripts and 6 million historical documents.

The city is visited by more than 20 million pilgrims annually. In the same way as many faithful Muslims travel to Saudi Arabia to complete the hajj (a pilgrimage to Mecca and one of the five pillars of Islam), becoming hajjis, many other Muslims visit Mashhad, becoming *mashtees*.

Also contributing to the city's popularity is the fact that Mashhad is the birthplace of many influential Islamic leaders, including Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei—the figurative head of the Muslim conservative establishment in Iran—and Grand Ayatullah Ali Sistani—the highest-ranking Shi'a Muslim religious scholar in Iraq.

While the city is a popular place to visit because of its religious sites, Mashhad is also known for its cultural contributions. Mashhad is dubbed the "City of Ferdowsi" after the highly revered 10th-century Iranian author Hakīm Abu'l-Qāsim Firdowsī Tūsī, known for his national epic *Shahnameh* (Book of Kings). The book is seen as a work that has preserved Iranian culture, as

Ferdowsi took care to use a pure form of Farsi in his book, which celebrates ancient Persian culture undiluted by Arab culture and the Arabic language. The city therefore celebrates a combination of ancient Persian culture and Shi'a Islam.

Grace Nasri

See also Hajj; Iran; Islam; Middle East; Mongol Empire; Shi'a Islam

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MATERIAL CULTURE

Material culture can be defined as the embodiment in various media of the impulse and ability of living creatures for survival, communication, and creativity in the world. For humans, it encompasses both mundane and artistic creation and use, and reciprocal relationships between objects and individuals, and it often reflects and influences societal values, ideas, attitudes, and assumptions.

Religion and Material Culture

Religious material culture includes artifacts, texts, interior and exterior environments or landscapes, and architecture that expresses communal and individual belief, affiliation, or faith. Material culture in the historical and contemporary perspective of global religious traditions can be further delineated using sacred, decorative (or aesthetic), and more utilitarian categories. As with material culture, generally, artifacts that are specifically religious can be observed in paintings, drawings, prints, sculpture, photography, books, foodways, clothing, bodily alterations and adornment, architecture, agriculture,

town planning, furniture, furnishings, and even machines and devices. In a country such as the United States, where, for example, many variations of European Christianity are present, religious material culture encompasses diverse traditions. A brief survey may include seemingly disparate items such as a plaster statue of St. Joseph placed in a prominent location in a contemporary Catholic's kitchen because of a promise made to the saint to honor him if the family's former house was sold; a porcelain figure commemorating the Methodist founder John Wesley, found in a church library; a rural one-room church building of an Independent Baptist congregation in the South; the red door of an Episcopal church in Chicago; the printed sign of the American indigenous sect Father Divine's Peace Mission movement found in one of his Philadelphia hotels, summarizing the religious leader's "International Modest Code"; the cast-iron plates with biblical scenes or texts adorning the "picture stoves" of German colonists in 18th-century Pennsylvania; the plain-style furniture of 19th-century Shakers; a white clerical collar of a minister; the silver crucifix of a Roman Catholic nun; a lithographed reproduction of Warner Sallman's "Head of Christ" adorning the dining room of a Methodist couple; or the seven forms of fish that constitute the celebration of the Italian Christmas Eve tradition of the "Seven Fishes."

Each culture and religious tradition articulates its own beliefs about the relationship between the sacred and the material. In terms of the world's historical religious traditions, images of deities that are a genre of religious material culture are approved in Christianity, Hinduism, and Buddhism, but such iconography is forbidden in Judaism and Islam. Religious material culture can have multiple meanings, varying uses, and dramatic effects for coreligionists within contemporary pluralistic societies: Some contemporary Catholics may keep holy corners of saintly images, but it is not necessarily an expected practice; contemporary practitioners of earth-centered religions, such as Wicca and Neo-Paganism, will vary about exactly which objects they might choose to populate holy spaces in their domestic environments. Religious material culture evokes passionate responses to its misuse or perceived desecration by members of different religious traditions coexisting in the same space,

country, or region. Significantly, religious objects, used in worship and venerated as sacred or sacramental in one community, might be treated as a mere commodity or even as a symbol of emotion, the spiritual, or moral hegemony by individuals with differing worldviews. One only has to look at contemporary online auction and shopping websites to find a lively contemporary trade in religious objects of all varieties, from pieces of the "true cross" on which Jesus died to jade representations of Gautama Buddha.

To understand the meaning of religion, one must be prepared to study not only religious institutions, doctrines, philosophical outlooks, texts, and significant leading personalities but also the faithful believers who energize those religions with their observant practices and thoughtful considerations. Religious practice, be it daily devotionals, petitionary prayer, quiet meditation, public group ritual, or committed service, can be complemented, inspired, or enhanced by religious material culture in its various forms: a sacred structure, a deity's image, a holy person's relic, a photograph of a deceased loved one, a burning votive candle, a string of prayer beads, a censer, or a musical instrument as elaborate as a pipe organ or as simple as a rattle. A multitude of material expressive forms in various shapes, sizes, colors, densities, conditions, and surfaces and—for believers—of differing spiritual energy, vibration, sacredness, and power define the world's religious traditions on both institutional and very personal levels of enactment and use. Historical narratives of religious traditions often dwell on the art, architecture, and artifacts associated with religious elites but lack documentary or ethnographic evidence revealing how individuals and communities actually used and understood material culture in everyday religious belief and practice. Such explanations are profoundly limited in scope and questionably useful for scholars, students, and believers alike working to understand those traditions.

In many nations, religious material culture, especially those objects deemed of particular historical, cultural, or aesthetic value by elites or by popular consensus have been preserved, protected, studied, and appreciated in museums, archives, and even libraries. Other objects are housed, if not continuously on public display, within the sanctuaries and collections of world religious traditions.

Still, it is not possible to appreciate fully a religious object if it is only experienced standing alone among many other objects in a display unless an institution has worked to contextualize it (as found, e.g., in the Miho Museum near Shigaraki, Japan; St. Mungo Museum of Religious Art and Life in Glasgow, Scotland; or the Museum of Biblical Art in New York City). Whenever possible, it is best to attempt to understand the context of meaning and use of religious artifacts for the individual and community through ethnographic and archaeological fieldwork within the concerned communities.

Religious material culture is also ever present in contemporary environments that may be perceived as primarily secular. Religious architecture in the form of churches, cathedrals, synagogues, temples, mosques, and shrines—formally planned or instantaneously assembled on a roadside—marks many urban and rural locales, turning even the remotest areas into destinations for pilgrimage, contemplation, or healing. Religious objects have been and continue to be made, given, and purchased for placement in workplaces, in modes of transportation, or on one's person. Even their creation and purchase as souvenirs do not necessarily undermine their religious meaning. Religious materials act as ethnic, regional, political, or religious markers. They also can be used for very personal institutionally and noninstitutionally sanctioned religious reasons. They give protection from evil or sickness, encouragement through difficult times, and specific religious witness. Thus, some Roman Catholics distribute to family and friends at the funeral of a deceased loved one "memory cards" bearing the person's name and year of birth and death, along with an image of Jesus, the Virgin Mary, or a saint, which they may also attach to their home refrigerators or keep in their pockets; Mormons have worn and continue to wear religious ritual garments after their consecration in Mormon Temples; Greek Orthodox have a tradition of wearing cloth amulets under their garments for protection from evil; Jews may wear a gold Star of David or *Chat* sign on a chain around their necks; evangelical Protestants might keep a wooden cross in their pocket or purse or have a keychain with a biblical verse on it to remind them of their personal relationship with Jesus; Muslims may wear the name of God or select Qur'anic

verses as a medallion, hang an Islamic rosary called the *subha* from their car mirror, or place a poster or sign embossed with Qur'anic verses in their car window or on its bumper or in their place of business. In India, families are apt to bring a cow or buffalo to a Hindu priest for blessings; in modern urban India, what is often blessed is a new automobile or truck.

Directions for Future Research

Remarkably, the subject of religious material culture remains among the submerged and understudied aspects of the world religious expression. The life reflected in things and artifacts, as well as the beliefs that lie behind the material, remain understudied and underused, in particular by religious studies scholars. It remains possible, for example, to take a survey course in world religious history or contemporary religious traditions, or to read a contemporary text ostensibly explaining religion and contemporary culture, and yet never see any image or touch any artifact that relates to the vernacular religion of the people who are actually living that story. The exhibition of religious material culture in museums of art and anthropology, its relevance to everyday life, and its relationship to a contemporary culture of consumption remain fertile areas for future research. Historical and contemporary ethnographic research into material culture can provide evidence of the world appetite for sacred materiality in the home, on the street, in the car, or on one's person. Such discoveries can even be made in traditions that are ostensibly against materializations of the deity. Focusing attention on religious material culture opens a student of religion to the creativity involved in the material expression of religion, to the function of sacred materiality to illustrate religious affiliation, and to the sensuality of religious imagery. The human response to embodiments of religion is especially significant evidence of the personal negotiations of religion intrinsic to its experience in everyday life.

Leonard Norman Primiano

See also Clothing; Festivals; Islam; Judaism; Local Religion; Mahayana Buddhism; Neo-Pagan Movement; Prayer Beads; Public and Private Religion; Roman Catholicism; Sacred Places; Symbol; Syncretism; Tattooing and Piercing; Theravada Buddhism; Vajrayana, Tibetan; Vodou

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MAURITANIA

The globalization of West African religion likely began nearly a millennium ago in the nation of Mauritania. Berber traders brought Islam from across the Sahara to coexist with African rituals in ancient Ghana. This coexistence is still evident in the talismans that Muslim occult experts (*marabouts*) prepare. But in the 11th century, Ibn Yasin spawned the *al-murabitun* movement—meaning “ready for battle”—and thus, the word *marabout* made its way into Europe, where

Muslims became known as the Almoravids, or Moors. Their expansion into Algeria and Spain coincided with Ghana's fragmentation. From the 1200s to 1500s, Mali (then Songhay) encompassed Ghana, spreading Islam through its Mande-speaking *juula* trade diaspora. The Bedouins arrived between 1300 and 1500, Arabizing Berbers and introducing the Qadiriyya Sufi order. In the early 1800s, the Tijaniyya brotherhood arrived, finding few followers but spreading from Mauritania across West Africa.

A lasting Bedouin legacy was Mauritania's castelike hierarchy. The Hassan oversaw war and politics, and Zwaya held religious authority. Each of these White Moor groups (*bidan*) held slaves: whether Black Moors (*haratin*) or Black “Afro-Mauritanians” (Fulbe, Toucouleur, Soninke, Wolof, Bamana/Bambara). Muslim reformists criticized slavery but mostly condemned the enslavement of Muslims as opposed to non-Muslims. The colonial French banned slavery but did little to eradicate it. They considered themselves a Muslim power, defending Islam and the social order by allying with certain Zwaya leaders while provoking resentment and resistance among others. The enslaved, meanwhile, reputedly used sorcery against their Mauritanian and French overlords. Today, Mauritania has the highest proportion of enslaved persons of any country despite slavery's illegality. In 2010, it outlawed female genital cutting, locally associated with Islam, but whether this ban will be enforced remains to be seen.

Mauritania is an Islamic Republic and the only West African country where virtually the entire population practices Islam, but it has repressed Islamism since its global emergence in the 1970s. The state fears Islamism's appeal among the *haratin*, while the non-*bidan* deplore its anti-Sufi attitudes. Many Islamists have left for the United Arab Emirates. Meanwhile, the Gulf states and Morocco finance Mauritanian mosques and non-governmental organizations; international students study Mālikī jurisprudence in the country's Islamic schools (*mahadir*); and some Mauritanians have assumed prominent positions in violent international Islamist networks. Global connections are as crucial to Mauritanian Islam today as a millennium ago.

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See also Africa; Algeria; Global Religion; Globalization; Islam; Islamism (Political Islam); North Africa; Sufism

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MAURITIUS

The Republic of Mauritius is an island nation in the Indian Ocean with a total area of 718 square miles (1 mile = 1.609 kilometers) and a population of approximately 1.2 million, half of which is Hindu. French colonial rule lasted from 1767 to 1810, when the British captured the island. Mauritius became independent in 1968. The French settlers brought slaves from Africa and India, and following the abolition of slavery, Indian indentured workers were brought in great numbers. The Chinese came to the island as traders and merchants. Mauritius did not have any indigenous population. The Mauritius constitution provides for freedom of religion, and there is no state religion in the country. Religious organizations that were present prior to independence, namely, the Roman Catholic Church, the Church of England, the Presbyterian Church, the Seventh-Day Adventists, Hindus, and Muslims, are recognized by parliamentary decree. These religious groups

receive government subsidies in the form of an annual lump-sum payment from the Ministry of Finance based on the number of adherents (the minimum required is 7).

The 2000 census showed that approximately 50% of the population were Hindu, 32% Christian, and 16% Muslim. Less than 1% of the population claimed to be Buddhist, atheist, agnostic, or of another faith. About 85% of the Christians are Roman Catholic, while the remaining 15% are members of the following churches: Adventist, Assembly of God, Christian Tamil, Church of England, Pentecostal, Presbyterian, Evangelical, Jehovah's Witnesses, and Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. Ninety percent of the Muslims are Sunnīs, and the rest belong to the Shi'a community. In Mauritius, there is a strong correlation between religious affiliation and ethnicity, whereby citizens of Indian ethnicity are usually Hindus or Muslims and citizens of Chinese ancestry practice Buddhism or Roman Catholicism. Creoles, who are of African descent and descendants of the French settlers, are Catholics. Inter-marriage between different religious and ethnic groups is rare and is discouraged. Nevertheless, Mauritian society is renowned for its high degree of religious tolerance and peace. Mauritius has more than 20 public holidays, representing the country's multireligious and multiethnic population. The country also has a number of places of worship catering to all religious groups.

Foreign missionary groups present in the country include the Baptist Church, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, and the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. There are also a number of New Age religious and spiritual groups originating from India that are operating in the country. These include the Satya Sai Centers, Swami Ramdev Yoga, the Ramakrishna Mission, and the Art of Living. There has been growing concern among the representatives of Hindu organizations that evangelical Christian churches are converting Hindus to Christianity. This has led to the destruction of the property of some of these churches by Hindu fundamentalist groups. Voice of Hindu, an extremist group, has even called for the government to pass an "anticonversion" law to prevent religious conversions of Hindus.

Ramola Ramtohul

See also Africa; Conversion; France; Hinduism; India; Roman Catholicism

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MAWDUDI, ABU'L-A'LA' (1903–1979)

A seminal figure in Islamist thought and organization, Abu'l-a'la' Mawdudi influenced several generations of Muslim activists in South Asia and beyond. He is especially well known for his rejection of Western-style modernization and insistence on Muslim societies adopting a political system rooted in Islam. (“Mawdudi” is also transliterated as “Maududi” or “Maudoodi,” and he is often referred to as “Maulana Mawdudi.”)

Mawdudi came of age in an India rife with anti-imperialist politics and heightened (religious) communal identities. After his father's death, he left school to take up journalism. Early in his career, Mawdudi wrote for nationalist publications that supported the Congress Party's vision of independence. It was his involvement with the failed Khilafat movement—a body of nationalist-minded Indian Muslims organized around a pro-Ottoman and anti-British politics—that led Mawdudi to turn away from the nationalist movement and toward an Islamic political identity. This shift brought him to the forefront of Muslim communal politics in India and set his future course of Islamist writing and activism.

In 1932, he began publication of the monthly *Tarjuman al-Qur'an*, a journal that gave voice to his developing ideas about Islam in Indian social and political life. He went on to write scores of books and pamphlets on issues ranging from jihad to human rights, Islamic economics to Muslim women. Perhaps his most lasting written legacy is

his commentary on the Qur'an, which emerged slowly over the course of decades and was eventually translated into many languages, including English. It was from his reading of the Qur'an that Mawdudi developed his Islamic political theory.

For Mawdudi, as for many Islamists, the Qur'an contains a total system of life—one that meets the same practical challenges as secular political and economic systems but is superior because it takes into consideration the spiritual dimension of humans. Mawdudi's goal was the creation of an Islamic state that would be ruled by Islamic law (Shari'a). He saw this goal, however, as the end point of a larger grassroots, social transformation of Muslim hearts and minds. Once Qur'anic values had been fully embraced by individual Muslims, so Mawdudi believed, the political revolution would come naturally and quietly.

No armchair ideologue, Mawdudi founded a movement, *Jamaat-e-Islami* (JI), in 1941, to model Islam's potential to govern modern life and to contribute to the transformation of society. Before the India-Pakistan split, JI served as a counterweight to the Muslim League's secular political agenda for India's Muslim community. After the split in 1947, Mawdudi took charge of JI in Pakistan and became a leading proponent of Islamizing society in the newly created nation. The ostensible religious nationalism that defined Pakistani politics provided Mawdudi and JI with activist legitimacy. But Mawdudi's willingness to challenge the policies of successive governments often put him at odds with the state. He and JI enjoyed special social status during the rule of General Zia al-Haq (1977–1988), a period of heightened and divisive Islamic politics.

Mawdudi's writings and activism provided a model for Islamists around the world. His diagnosis of the modern Muslim condition and his prescription for it made a deep impression on the Egyptian Islamist Sayyid Qutb, the ideologue of Muslim Brotherhood. The ongoing appeal of Mawdudi's ideas among Muslims speaks to the perceived failure of secular politics in Muslim-majority nations and to the hope that Islamic values hold the key to future success.

Jeffrey T. Kenney

See also India; Islamism (Political Islam); Jamaat-e-Islami; Pakistan; Politics and Religion; Qutb, Sayyid; Turkey

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McDONALDIZATION

McDonaldization is the process by which the principles of the fast-food restaurant and popular consumer culture in general are coming to dominate more and more sectors of American society as well as the rest of the world, extending even to the realm of religion. Max Weber argued that the bureaucracy served as the ideal type of the rationalization process; the McDonaldization thesis serves as a modification and extension of Weber's argument by replacing the ideal type of the bureaucracy with that of the fast-food restaurant, both of which facilitate widespread standardization. Importantly, the fast-food restaurant represents the extension of standardization and rationalization from the realm of production to that of consumption. The five key components of McDonaldization are (1) efficiency, (2) calculability, (3) predictability, (4) control through the replacement of human with nonhuman technology, and (5) their culmination in the irrationality of rationality.

Efficiency, by definition, is the optimal way of achieving a solution to the problem at hand. With the fast-food industry, efficiency is achieved by providing the most direct way to make the transition from hunger to satiety. This quest for efficiency is similarly demonstrated in other realms of society (hence the McDonaldization of society)—online dating offers an efficient, goal-directed means for meeting “the right one”; televised evangelical sermons afford viewers a daily religious experience without their having to leave the comfort of their own homes; standardized tests enable universities to efficiently evaluate applicants by reducing them to a series of numbers; and so on.

The second defining tenet of McDonaldization is that of calculability. At the heart of such a process is the assumption that all value has been standardized and can be quantified and reduced to variables such as size and price; as a consequence, more of that standardized unit must be better. Such an emphasis is to be found in McDonald's tactic of offering “Big Macs,” “supersizing,” to be rendered as a quality-enhancing option, and “value meals.” They invoke the idea that the consumer is getting “more food for less money.”

The third significant basic characteristic of McDonaldization is that of predictability. In the fast-food restaurant, patrons know what to expect when they order a Big Mac—because the hamburger is almost exactly the same in every McDonald's. In a globalized culture in which the number of choices continues to grow exponentially, people come to need, expect, and demand such predictability. The expectation that much the same product or service will be delivered each time one visits any McDonald's at any time or at any location has been extended to many different contexts—from clothing stores to religious sects. People develop a relationship with the brand, product, or political party and thus come to expect consistent experiences when dealing with them.

McDonaldization affords increased control through the replacement of human with nonhuman technology. Nonhuman technology (e.g., automated or semiautomated machinery) that is not subject to human fallibility helps facilitate the standardization of services and contributes to the other components of McDonaldization—efficiency, calculability, and predictability.

Such a formalized, rational process, which focuses on details rather than on the holistic product/idea, often results in a wide range of irrational outcomes—as illustrated by the dehumanizing experience of working or eating in fast-food restaurants or the obesity and poor health caused by frequenting such restaurants on a regular basis. Though Ritzer gives equal weight to each of these five components of McDonaldization, it is the final thesis that focuses on the consequences of such detail-oriented, mean-ends calculation and their culmination in the ultimate irrationality of rationality.

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See also Consumer Culture; Global Religion; Globalization; Material Culture

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MCVEIGH, TIMOTHY (1968–2001)

Though often described as a lone-wolf terrorist, Timothy McVeigh, the perpetrator of the 1995 Oklahoma City Federal Building bombing, was part of a larger right-wing culture of religious extremism in the United States that identified the secular agenda of the federal government as the enemy. In what became increasingly apparent during the 1990s, a tension between perceptions of secular activities on the part of the U.S. government and the religious principles of the loosely connected Christian Identity movement gave way to a spectacular act of terrorism in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

On April 19, 1995, Timothy James McVeigh (1968–2001) executed a plan to bomb the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building, killing a total of 168 people and injuring an estimated 450 others. He parked a rented truck carrying 4,400 pounds of ammonium nitrate fertilizer and nitromethane fuel at the front of the building, ignited the explosives on a timed fuse, and abandoned the scene. The blast effectively destroyed the building, as the remaining structure underwent a controlled demolition shortly afterward.

Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agents traced the vehicle identification number of the rental truck; the rental company employees provided information for a sketch of “Robert Kling,” the alias used by McVeigh in the rental agreement. McVeigh was later stopped and arrested by an Oklahoma State Trooper for driving with no license plates and possessing a loaded firearm. McVeigh was indicted on eight counts of first-degree murder, conspiracy to use a weapon of mass destruction, use of a weapon of mass destruction, and destruction by explosives.

In addition to citing the infamous William Pierce novel *The Turner Diaries*, McVeigh also appeared to have used the book as a blueprint for

the bombing. In a particularly uncanny resemblance to the actual events, Pierce tells a story about a fictitious character who blows up a federal building using explosives identical to those used by McVeigh. Pierce’s character was also combating the perceived evils of the government’s secular activities that encroached on what Pierce held to be Christian liberties.

In accordance with one of sociologist Mark Juergensmeyer’s characterizations of religious violence, McVeigh targeted the federal building to enact a symbolic drama that conveyed a message beyond the actual violence itself. This symbolic act was evidenced by McVeigh’s self-described motives for the bombing as retaliation for the U.S. government’s aggression at Ruby Ridge, Idaho, and at Waco, Texas, during the siege of the Branch Davidian compound. Housing regional offices for federal agencies such as the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives; the FBI; Social Security Administration; and recruiting offices for the Army and Marine Corps, the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building was an ideal target for McVeigh’s symbolic motives.

McVeigh was found guilty of all counts and received the death penalty by lethal injection on June 11, 2001. Ten years later, his act was compared with the Oslo bombing and killing carried out by Norwegian Christian terrorist Anders Brevik on July 22, 2011.

Salvador Jiménez Murguía

See also Branch Davidians; Christian Identity; Globalization; Terrorism; Violence

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MECCA

In the Islamic tradition, the holiest city on earth, Mecca (also transliterated as Makkah) is situated

in the present-day Saudi Arabian province of Hijaz about 70 kilometers east of the coastal city of Jeddah, about 280 meters above sea level. It is known in the Islamic tradition by a variety of names, each carrying its own connotation: Mecca, *Bakkah*, *Umm al-Qura*, *al-Qaryah*, *al-Balad*, *al-Balad al-Amin*, and *Ma'ad*. There is reason to believe that Ptolemy's Macoraba is Mecca. Situated in a valley surrounded by bare hills and no vegetation, Mecca's climate is hot (with temperatures regularly reaching 45 degrees Celsius in summer), and there is little rainfall. Currently, the population of Mecca is 1.71 million, which skyrockets to several million during the annual hajj (pilgrimage) season.

Muslims hold Mecca sacred for a number of reasons. First, in Mecca is situated the House of God (Kaabah), built by the prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) and Ismail (Ishmael) according to the Qur'an (other prophetic traditions [Hadith] ascribe its construction to the prophet Adam). Since then pilgrims have been visiting Mecca to perform the annual pilgrimage during the month of Dhu al-Hijja in commemoration of several rites intrinsically related to Ibrahim, Hajirah (Hagar—his first wife, Sarah's handmaiden), and Ismail. Second, it is the birthplace of the prophet Muhammad, the messenger of Islam.

Traditionally, Muslim scholars have held the belief that Mount Paran and the Desert of Paran mentioned in the Bible (Genesis 21:21) are allegedly the area surrounding Mecca, and that is where Hagar and Ismail were left by Ibrahim and where Ismail grew up. The Jewish tradition, on the other hand, situates Paran on the east coast of the Sinai Desert. There is salutary evidence on both sides, however, according to which Ismail is considered the progenitor of the Arabs.

Before the advent of Islam, Meccans were generally known to be polytheists, given to idol worship. Islamic sources mention the names of *Lat*, *Manat*, *Hubal*, and *al-'Uzza* as idols worshipped by Meccans and other Arabian tribes, to whom various kinds of sacrifices would be made. In addition to idol worship, the Qur'an alludes to occasions when the pagan practices of Makkans would give way to absolute monotheism in times of dire need (Yunus 31–32). Two other religious groups that enjoyed a distinct position in this Arabian community are the Hanifs and the Christians. The

former were a handful of individuals who were concerned with faithfully adhering to the original religion of Ibrahim, thereby upholding the absolute oneness of God. The Qur'an portrays Abraham as the ideal Hanif. There were also a few Christians residing in Mecca (some of them monks) who were tolerated, even respected, as long as they showed deference to the status quo of Meccan society.

Culturally, Arab men used to place a great deal of importance on traits such as generosity, chivalry, and honor and could get into violent confrontations when challenged on this account. The poetry of the early *Jahiliyyah* period ("Period of Ignorance") adequately vindicates this claim. There were families in Mecca that used to enjoy particular respect for catering to specific functions. These functions included, for instance, *siqayah* and *rifadah*, or provision of adequate water supply and provisions for pilgrims to Mecca, respectively; other families held the office of *liwa'*, or carrying the standard in war.

Situated in desolate desert conditions, Meccans had only one source of income, that is, trade, particularly during the season of pilgrimage. Although some prominent historians have questioned the status of Mecca as a major trade center, there seems to be ample historical evidence supporting the contrary position. Most historians are of the view that from the sixth century onward, Mecca had acquired the status of a major trade center. This was done through the grants of security that travelers received from the kings of the powerful neighboring states. As a result of this security, the *Quraysh* (the tribe in control of Mecca and its surrounding areas and to which the prophet Muhammad also belonged) could travel with their merchandise without the fear of being looted.

It was in Mecca that the prophet Muhammad started his *da'wah* (missionary) activity in the year 610 CE, and within a relatively short period of 13 years, his small band of men and women had become a threat to the sociopolitical fabric and status quo of Meccan society. As a result, they were forced to migrate to distant Medina (Madinah) in 622 CE (and earlier a group had left for Abyssinia), where after entering into a truce with local Arab and Jewish tribes, an Islamic state of a sort was formed. Eight years later, Muhammad entered Mecca with a huge army of 10,000 men, conquered it without bloodshed, and purged the

Kaabah of all idols. After proclaiming general amnesty for all, it was declared that no polytheist may set foot in Mecca thereafter. Muslims living in and around Mecca have generally maintained this declaration, and this has possibly been all the more reason for some Western scholars in modern times, intrigued by the hallowed environs of this city, to try their luck in sneaking into Mecca by disguising themselves as Muslims, though many have genuinely embraced Islam. This perilously dangerous act has paid off well, as we have a number of interesting accounts providing exotic descriptions of Mecca and its life, particularly in the 19th century, from an outsider's perspective.

In the Islamic spiritual tradition, several prophetic episodes are cited to portray the prophet Muhammad's deep-seated love for Mecca, his hometown. To have lived in Mecca and borne its climatic hardships merely for the love of this city or to have died and been buried therein is almost to have guaranteed salvation through the mercy of God. It is for this reason that Muslims generally pray and aspire to be in Mecca when death overtakes them, as this is considered extremely auspicious. Moreover, prophetic traditions regarding *al-Sa'ah*—the Hour or End Times—(more or less equivalent to the Judeo-Christian apocalyptic literature) specifically mention the area of Hijaz in general and Mecca and Madinah more specifically as the only place on earth that would be spared the ravages of the end of times. Moreover, these two cities would be the only place where *Dajjal* (the anti-Christ) would not be able to set foot.

Mecca has also been viewed as the center of the world. Much has been written on Islamic sacred geography on the basis of this assumption. Some contemporary scientists have employed the mysterious Golden Ratio (also known as Golden Mean or Divine Section) to demonstrate that Mecca is the Golden Ratio point of the world. Although the Golden Mean is well established in geometry, in works of art, and now in its various depictions even in natural phenomena, its application in the arena of religion is regarded quite suspiciously.

On a more pragmatic note, however, Saudi Arabia unfolded its plans to make Mecca the center of world time by erecting the Royal Mecca Clock Tower right next to the Holy Mosque, which presently makes it the second tallest building at around 2,000 feet and the world's largest clock tower,

which started ticking on August 12, 2010, with the start of the holy month of Ramadan. Many Muslims around the world today aspire to have Greenwich Mean Time replaced by Mecca Mean Time, as Mecca is considered the "true center of the earth."

With the introduction of satellite television and the induction of Muslim anchorpersons in many TV channels, Mecca has finally reached the homes of millions. The media now more frequently employ images of Muslims prostrating and bowing in unison around the Kaabah to create a softer image of both Islam and Muslims, after having portrayed Muslims for several decades as weapon-brandishing, bearded, and turbaned hardliners.

The Saudi government continues to pursue its cherished goal of modernizing and expanding Mecca for the ever-increasing Muslim populace that visits it every year. On the other hand, traditional Muslims the world over have started wondering whether all the modernization hype has actually deprived the environs of Mecca of some of its spirituality.

Muhammad Modassir Ali

See also Arabic; Hajj; Islam; Medina; Muhammad; Qur'an; Saudi Arabia; United Arab Emirates

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MEDINA

Medina (also Madinah) is a city of more than 1 million inhabitants in the Hijaz (western) region of Saudi Arabia. For Muslims, it is considered the second holiest city after Mecca. It was an important haven and base for the prophet Muhammad during the early formation of Islam, and its significance as a religious and pilgrimage site continues today. The term *medina* itself simply means “city” in Arabic, and the full name *al-Medina al-Munawwara* (“Radiant City”) is often used in the Arab world. The city is also sometimes known as *Medinat an-Naby* (“City of the Prophet”) or *Medinat ar-Rasul* (“City of the Messenger”) by Muslims.

Before Muhammad’s arrival, the oasis town was inhabited by a number of rival Arab and Jewish tribes. At that time, it was called *Yathrib*. Conflicts between the tribes led a delegation in Yathrib to invite Muhammad to serve as an arbitrator there. Muhammad’s new religious claims based on his revelations (inscribed in the Qur’an) had threatened the status quo of the ruling Meccan Quraysh tribe and brought persecution from them, so the move to Yathrib in 622 (the first year of the Muslim calendar) was advantageous for Muhammad as well as for the battling tribes. Muhammad’s presence indeed proved to alleviate conflict in Yathrib, as many people of the main rivaling tribes converted to Islam and unified under their identity as Muslims. Eventually, the city came to be known by its current names, reflecting Muhammad’s role there and the large-scale conversion to Islam. Although the Jews of Medina did not convert, they signed a peace agreement with the new Muslim community that allowed for coexistence within the city.

Muhammad and his followers in Medina successfully defeated Meccan attacks in a series of battles, until his opponents finally surrendered. From then on, the Muslims of Medina focused more on political and religious expansion outside the city, although it remained a crucial base and Muhammad’s home. There he continued to receive revelations until his death in 632 CE.

Medina served as the capital of the Islamic caliphate until the reign of the fourth caliph, when the capital moved to Damascus under the Umayyad caliphate, only later to move to Baghdad under

‘Abbāsīd’s rule. Although Medina was not Islam’s political capital for long, it endured as a vital religious center, and it produced the Medinan (Mālikī) school of Islamic law.

One of the city’s most important sites is the Mosque of the Prophet, *al-Masjid an-Nabawy*, the large mosque where Muhammad is buried. Prayers are said to have special weight there, and the mosque attracts thousands of pilgrims each year. Many visit Medina on their way to Mecca during the hajj pilgrimage. To accommodate these travels, the city is home to the Prince Muhammad bin Abdul Aziz Airport, which was opened in 1974.

Medina also houses the tombs of the caliphs Abu Bakr and ‘Omar, as well as that of Muhammad’s daughter Fatima. The Quba Mosque (*Masjid Quba*’), the first mosque that was built after the establishment of Islam, is another revered site. Universities in Medina include the Islamic University of Medina and Taibah University.

Kristin Tucker

See also Hajj; Islam; Mecca; Mosques; Muhammad; Pilgrimage; Saudi Arabia

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MEDITATION

Meditation practices develop mental focus, which is used for the attainment of particular states of consciousness. Meditation is most readily associated with Hinduism and Buddhism; however, it is also practiced in Islam, Christianity, Judaism, numerous indigenous traditions, and a variety of new religious movements. The global dissemination of meditation practice is traced in this entry from India through China as well as from the Middle East through Europe and the Americas.

India: Yoga, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Tantra

Among the earliest representations of meditation practice are figures sitting in what appear to be meditative postures on seals from archaeological sites in the Indus Valley civilization (ca. 2700 BCE). The first extensive recorded treatment of meditation practice in Hinduism is found in the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali (100 BCE to 200 CE). In this classic text, *dhyana* (meditation) focused on the cessation of thought. Samkhya philosophy, a dualist philosophy that sees the cosmos as consisting of two radically different forces, *purusha* (consciousness (spirit) and *prakrti* (matter), is the metaphysical foundation of the Yoga Sutras. Yoga meditation practices were designed as psychophysical disciplines to unite these two cosmic forces. The mind is understood as being continuously engaged in thoughts of past actions, and these thoughts shape the present and create the future. Yoga meditation techniques are a means for stopping this constant stream of thoughts. When the mind becomes still, it can gain awareness of the essential reality that is beyond the subject-object dualism.

Hindu Tantric practices reached maturity during the 10th century CE and focused on the acquisition and use of energy. In its classical form, Tantra is an amalgam of Samkhya philosophy and regional religious traditions focused on The Goddess and Shiva. Tantric meditation differs from that described by Patanjali in its extensive use of visualization, recitation of sacred mantras (sounds), and hand mudras (gestures). As a result of its use of erotic imagery and metaphor, Tantra captured the imagination of the early British colonialists and has generated a contemporary cultural phenomenon often quite different from the classical teachings. Classical Tantric meditation is a discipline for the transcendence of the cosmic duality via the full integration of the spiritual consciousness into the human body.

Nepal, Southeast Asia, Japan, and China: Buddhist Expansion and Chinese Meditation

At the same time when the teachings of the Yoga Sutras were circulating orally (sixth century BCE), the meditation practices of Buddhism were being developed in India. In contrast to Hindu teachings, Buddhism focused on the attainment of nirvana,

the ultimate freedom from suffering. According to Buddhism, suffering results from the misperception that appearances, sensory perceptions, and mental formulations are real. In the two major schools of Buddhism, Theravada and Mahayana, *bhavana* (meditation) focuses on creating a consciousness of *samatha* (calm) and *vipasyana* (insight or higher vision). Together these states constitute the mindfulness practice, which develops an awareness of the body and a general sensation of tranquility that prepares the consciousness for absorption in a state of *sunyata* (emptiness). Once emptiness is achieved, then nirvana can be experienced. Vajrayana or Tantric Buddhism developed as a branch of Mahayana and, like the Hindu Tantra, matured in the 10th century CE. Once Vajrayana practice entered Tibet, it underwent further development, and today, it remains at the core of Tibetan Buddhist practice. Theravada Buddhism spread to Sri Lanka, Thailand, Burma, Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam, whereas Mahayana Buddhism progressed eastward into China (second century CE) and Japan (fifth and sixth centuries CE). In both instances, Mahayana developed into Zen (in Chinese, Ch'an) and its meditative practice *zazen* by the eighth and ninth centuries CE. The goal of Zen practice is the attainment of knowledge that results from a radical change of perception (*satori*). Zen *satori*, like the attainment of nirvana, is an experience beyond subject-object dualism and results in union in absolute reality.

Outside Buddhism, Chinese traditions of meditation focus on the practice of quiet sitting and are rooted in the philosophical traditions of Daoism and Confucianism. Daoist meditation, like that of the Buddhist traditions, develops the attainment of mental focus for the achievement of absorption in the absolute reality. Confucian meditation employs quiet sitting for accessing the absolute that resides within the individual. In many of the traditions that developed from India and Asia, the states of consciousness that result from meditation are meant not only for attainment of spiritual goals but also for use in the living experience and actions of the adept.

The Middle East and Continental Europe: Monotheistic Meditation Practices

Monotheistic traditions became the primary religious practices of Europe and the Middle East by

the medieval period. In these traditions, meditation is a part of the practice of intensely focused contemplation and contemplative prayer. The goal of these practices is to bring oneself into the presence of God and into communion with Him. Once communion is achieved, the participant can enjoy a state of rapture in the divine presence and engage in conversation with God. From its earliest inception, Judaism employed intense contemplation on the Torah for the attainment of knowledge of the texts' meaning as well as a way of accessing the presence of God and knowing His mind. In Islam, the prophet Muhammad received the Qur'an during extended periods of contemplation in the desert, and meditation practice is prescribed for all Muslims in the Qur'an. Another Muslim practice for the achievement of communion with God is the trance state that can be produced by *dhikr*, or continual remembrance of God. Medieval Catholic mystics employed intense contemplation and trance states for the attainment of an ecstatic form of communion with God. Today in Catholic and Protestant sects, contemplative prayer is practiced for the attainment of knowledge as well as communion. The focus on communion with God as opposed to absorption in or awakening of absolute reality is one of the key differences between Western and Eastern forms of meditative practice, respectively.

Meditation: Contemporary Global Phenomenon

In the late 18th century, along with European political and economic expansion, a process of religious exchange was initiated by early Christian missionaries. Christian missionaries, many of whom were linguists and early social scientists, were responsible for some of the earliest expositions on non-Christian religious traditions and their practices. By the late 19th century, scholars such as Max Müller and Rhys Davis began producing the first widely disseminated translations of Hindu and Buddhist texts. These texts greatly influenced the early Transcendentalist thinkers: Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, and Walt Whitman, as well as the Theosophist Madame Blavatsky. During the 1893 World Parliament of Religion in Chicago, Swami Vivekananda introduced Hindu teachings, and the Zen priest Shaki Soen those of Buddhism, to Western scholars and theologians. Following the World

Parliament, Vivekananda lectured extensively in Europe and the United States and established the Vedanta Society. Zen teachings were later disseminated in the West by Soen's disciple D. T. Suzuki, who first came for an extended lecture tour at Columbia University in 1931. Among Suzuki's early students were several future authors who would exert a profound influence on the "beat generation" of the 1950s and the counterculture of the late 1960s: Alan Watts, Allen Ginsberg, and Jack Kerouac.

In 1959, the Dalai Lama was forced into exile in India, and Tibetan Buddhism began its movement westward. Chögyam Trungpa and Tarthang Tulku were among the first Tibetan teachers to travel west in the early 1960s. Chögyam Trungpa came to Oxford in 1963 to study Western philosophy and comparative religion. In 1968 and 1970, respectively, both Tarthang Tulku and Chögyam Trungpa arrived in the United States and established meditation centers. During this time, students from the United States and Europe began traveling to Asia in greater numbers to study meditation. Also, in the late 1960s, teachers such as Swami Sivananda (Sivananda Yoga), Maharishi Mahesh Yogi (Transcendental Meditation), and A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (Krishna Consciousness) left Asia and established centers in the Americas and Europe.

Focus on Christian meditation increased during the late 1960s, in part due to the teachings of the Trappist monk Thomas Merton and his integration of Zen practices. The rise of Hindu and Buddhist meditation in the West has resulted in increased interest in other forms of meditation practice such as those found in Islam (Sufism) and Judaism (Kabbalah). While the concepts and techniques for meditation vary, many traditions recognize the value of mental focus.

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See also Christianity; Confucianism; Daoism; Hinduism; Islam; Judaism; Mahayana Buddhism; Theravada Buddhism; Vajrayana, Tibetan; Zen Buddhism

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MEDITERRANEAN WORLD

The areas surrounding the Mediterranean Sea have seen some of the highest levels of religious activity and interaction in the world. A fully comprehensive account of the complex interplay at work over the 5,000 plus years around the Mediterranean basin is beyond the scope of this entry, but the broad strokes of the religious dynamics will be delineated. Stretching back to Egyptian and Mycenaean/Minoan civilizations founded earlier than 3000 BCE, for years the territory surrounding the Mediterranean Sea was the most sought-after real estate, due to the fertile land and avenues of trade it provided. No single religion can lay claim to dominance in the area, and the centers of power on the Mediterranean coast relocated with the different cultures that gained ascendancy. The following sections trace the chronological progression of the various religious cultures that held sway over the area, alongside the shifting political structures and movements of the centers of power.

Early Polytheism

The earliest civilizations interacting around the Mediterranean World were Egyptians and the Phoenicians in the area of Syria-Palestine. By 2000 BCE, the Egyptians and Phoenicians were trading with each other and the Minoans of Crete. The religions of the time were largely polytheistic, where the hierarchy of the gods in the pantheon was reflected and replicated in the political structure of the ruling country; the religious communities of the time were entirely continuous with the political communities. There was no state without its religion; even speaking of religion as an institution

separate from the political structure is to misunderstand religion during the period. The priests of the state religion served as members of the administration, and the head of the state was the ritual leader as well. This double status also allowed the leader to ritually enact his power, for when the sacrifices were performed the community could literally see the leader's connection with the divine.

Some syncretism occurred between the religious communities, mostly through conquest or trade. Due to the prevalence of polytheism during the period, this syncretism rarely posed a problem for the community and could present as a shared representation of similar gods or be understood as a legitimate hierarchy that presided over a different area. This highlights the importance of place to religion during this time; gods were connected to the place of their community's origin.

Henotheism became evident in Egypt in 13th century BCE. Akenhaten is generally considered the first to promote henotheistic practices, as he raised the god Aten to a status above the other gods. Sometimes classified as monotheistic, Aten's religious practices recognized the existence of multiple gods while declaring only one as worthy of worship. Often other gods were considered hostile, because the effect of henotheistic practices was generally to unite the particular god with a specific community.

The Blending of the World

In 336 BCE, Philip II, King of Macedon, was assassinated. At the time of his assassination, his army had begun the invasion of Persia, and his son and successor, Alexander the Great, continued the conquests of his father to great effect. At its height, Alexander's empire stretched from Macedon (modern-day Greece), around the Mediterranean coast through Egypt, and through the Middle East to India. One of the key power centers during this time was the newly founded city of Alexandria on the Nile Delta, a site of much religious and political importance prior to Alexander's reign.

More important than Alexandria, however, was the mixing of the "civilized" world. The military routing of Alexander resulted in a single cosmopolitan culture, at least at the levels of leadership. Widespread syncretism was evident throughout the empire; foreign gods of conquered lands were at times integrated into the Greek pantheon, and the

forms of worship were aligned with the Greek model. Besides providing uniformity with the rest of the conquered world, religion provided a means of control and reinscribed the control of the leaders.

Moreover, the political aspects of religion mentioned above were taken to new heights with Alexander, who considered himself a god. He was not the first to claim divinity; Greek heroes from Homer's epics provided precursors, and myriad Roman emperors followed this model. Alexander also made regular use of oracles and seers, and the practice of consulting the oracles continued with the Romans, who soon assumed control of the Mediterranean.

Roman Dominance

Alexander's achievements generally marked the beginning of the Hellenistic Age, which came to an end with the death of Antony and the ascension of Octavius, who became Augustus, the first Roman emperor, in 30 BCE. In that same year, Egypt was annexed to Rome, and the sea was named *mare nostrum* ("our sea"), a pond in the middle of an empire. Power became concentrated in a few cities: Rome, obviously, and also its sister cities of Antioch and Alexandria.

Roman religion took a great deal from the Greek forms preceding its rule and integrated many foreign cults into the religious milieu. These were mostly initiation cults, promising secrets of the afterlife to its adherents and claiming great numbers of Roman citizens. The foreignness of the cults was a draw to potential initiates; foreign gods and lands were thought to contain new wisdom not otherwise available. The Roman administration also inculcated religion in a number of ways, from boundary drawing to political advising to the legal system.

Like the Greeks before them, Romans believed that the gods were active and interacted with humans. Gods were approached mostly through sacrifice rather than prayer, and they were invoked to seal promises in personal, professional, and political life. The Capitoline Triad of Juno, Jupiter, and Minerva continually held the highest place in the Roman pantheon, but these gods were not understood to be essentially singular, and the god Jupiter Capitoline was both the same and different from Jupiter, who was recognized as protector of

a particular area. As with the Egyptians and Phoenicians, Roman religion was not a discrete institution that could be separated from the political body. The initiation cults were less connected to the political leadership, but the celebrations in honor of the cultic gods played a large role in the communal life and Roman identity, an identity that would change with the conversion of Constantine the Great and the institution of Christianity.

Christian Rome

Christianity was known in the Roman Empire since the first century CE but only within small groups of believers. The early centuries saw the Diocletian persecutions against the Christians, but their status drastically changed in 312 CE, with the conversion of the emperor Constantine on the eve of a decisive battle. Constantine claimed that he dreamed victory against Maxentius would come if he was to order his soldiers to mark their shields with the *chi rho*, a symbol of the Christian faith, and on his victory he issued the Edict of Milan, granting religious freedom to the Christians. The imperial power became increasingly engaged with the Christian faith, holding the first ecumenical Christian council in 325 CE and lending its power to the decision on orthodoxy.

When the empire was divided in 396 CE into east (centered in Constantinople since Constantine) and west (still based in Rome), Theodosius I declared Christianity to be the official religion of the empire. The meshing of the newly empowered Church and the political leadership continued, and the coronation of Charlemagne in the ninth century marked the beginnings of the Holy Roman Empire, which would be a major player in the Mediterranean for the next several centuries along with its sibling Byzantine Empire. However, by the time of Charlemagne's inauguration, Christianity's influence around the *mare nostrum* was being eclipsed by a new religion, Islam.

The Islamization of the Sea

With the advent of the Arabs to the Mediterranean region in the seventh century, the lands around the sea changed in a short time. The Umayyad Caliphate was the first Muslim empire to make

gains, with their center of power in Damascus (though their religious center remained in Mecca), and at its height the empire stretched from modern-day Turkey through the entirety of the south over to the southern areas of Spain and into France. Their expansion was halted in 732 by the stand of Charles Martel at Poitiers, but by that time their empire rivaled that of Rome at its peak and was attained at a much greater speed.

During this period, people were voluntarily converting to the dominant religion, but the rule of the Umayyads did not recognize converts as full citizens—an approach opposite to that of the Roman Empire, which gladly accepted foreign people into its folds as equals. Christians and Jews, known as *dhimmis* (people of the book), were the vast majority of citizens, and their religious practices were treated with tolerance by the rulers. The Umayyads had opposed Muhammad's rise, and they soon received comeuppance in the form of the 'Abbāsids, a community founded by the uncle of Muhammad, who would engage the Umayyads in battle by 747 CE.

The 'Abbāsīd rebellion was spurred on in part by religious considerations and disgust with the lascivious mode of life the Umayyads enjoyed. The 'Abbāsīds quickly claimed the lands previously under Umayyad rule and attempted to completely annihilate the Umayyad Dynasty, though the former Umayyad caliph Abd al-Rahman escaped assassination and fled to Spain to set up the caliphate of Cordoba.

The 'Abbāsīd Caliphate and the Founding of *al-Andalus*

The 'Abbāsīds embraced Sunnī Islam, and under 'Abbāsīd rule, the power center of the Mediterranean shifted for the first time away from its shores to the capital of Baghdad. The 'Abbāsīd army was created mostly from Turkish slaves known as Mamluks (Mamelukes), and outsiders who had converted to Islam, known as *malawi*, played a large part in 'Abbāsīd rule. Both of these decisions were compelled by the 'Abbāsīds' desire to bypass traditional Arab systems of kinship, and the dynasty was an attempt to replace traditional modes of identity with those of religion. The Mamluks took control of Egypt from the 'Abbāsīds in the 870s, and in the 7 years following conquered

the lands through Syria, though they were unable to retain control.

The escaped Abd al-Rahman met with the Umayyad loyalists and set up an opposing Muslim kingdom based in Cordoba in 755 CE. The al-Andalus state became a center of religious learning, and due to the prevalence of Christians in the nation, a particular syncretic form of Islam developed, a form that combined celebratory practices that Christians had taken from pagans. The often persecuted Jewish people knew 300 years of peace in the state they called Sefarad, from where the designation "Sephardic Jews" stems. The Cordoba kingdom conquered many of the surrounding lands by sea, including Crete, Sicily, and southern Italy, squeezing the Holy Roman Empire farther from the shores of the Mediterranean and up into the hinterlands of Europe. Following a revolt by the Christian convert Umar ibn Hafsun, Almanzor took control of the kingdom in the 10th century, and after a period of campaigns against tribes in the north with a hodgepodge army and a rebellion in Cordoba, the caliphate was dissolved by 1031.

The Crusades

The area known as Hungary today was converted to Christianity by King Stephen in 1000, and the Roman Catholic Church began making pacts of peace with the warring religions in the area. In 1054, the Great Schism of the Christian church occurred, splitting the Christian world into the Catholic West and the Orthodox East. The theological basis of the schism revolved around the addition of the *filioque* to the Nicene Creed, questions of the proper celebration of the Eucharist, and the requisite celibacy of the clergy.

In 1071, the Byzantine Empire lost all of Asia Minor to the Muslim armies, and the Church felt the need to regain the thrice-holy city of Jerusalem (revered by Jews, Christians, and Muslims alike). Motivated by the loss of territory to a religious enemy, Pope Urban II called for all Christians to join a holy war and promised the remission of all sins for those who perished in the attempt. Franks constituted the majority of the crusading soldiers, and after sacking Antioch in 1098 and slaughtering the Muslim and Jewish inhabitants therein, the Crusaders reached the city of Jerusalem in 1099.

On their victory over the combined Jewish and Muslim forces, the atrocities committed at Antioch were repeated within the walls of Jerusalem.

Almost 50 years after the First Crusade, Muslims conquered the Crusader territory known as Edessa County, spurring a second crusade composed mainly of European and British armies. In 1187 CE, the Sultan of Egypt, Saladin, led his armies into Jerusalem, recapturing the city after nearly a century of Christian rule. Again this resulted in a call to Christian arms, and the Third Crusade was launched, in part under the control of Richard the Lionheart of England. Neither Saladin's conquest nor the responding Crusade aimed for destruction; Saladin looked to secure the benefits of taxing the occupying Franks, and the Third Crusade looked to gain safe pilgrimage for Christians. The Fourth Crusade did aim to recapture the holy city but ceased efforts after sacking the Orthodox city of Constantinople in 1204, effectively completing the great schism started over a century ago.

Inquisitions, Turks, and the Ottoman Empire

By the 12th century, it was no longer possible to speak of a single history of the Mediterranean world. The divide between the eastern and western empires begun nearly eight centuries prior had solidified into two regions with their own destinies. The Catholic Church of the West, ostensibly to root out heresy, began a series of efforts to collect and convert masses of those practicing heretical traditions. In France, the effort was aimed at the Cathar sect, while in Italy the Waldensians were the chief target. Jews in both nations suffered during the inquisitions, and as the religious project continued, it was increasingly turned to political ends with religion as a mere cover. The Knights Templar, champions of the Crusade, were targeted, likely out of the jealousy of France's king, Philip the Fair. In 1492, the Muslims and Jews were forced out of Spain during the Inquisition, only to be given refuge by the Ottoman Sultan Bayezid II.

The Islamic Seljuk Turks had made inroads into the lands of the Byzantine Empire by the 13th century, and 100 years later, the land of modern-day Turkey underwent major civil wars, which allowed the Turks further gains. Setting their capital near

the Byzantine capital of Constantinople illustrated the extent of their influence and that of the Ottoman Empire, which soon followed them and expanded the lands under their control. The Seljuk Sultanate perished at the beginning of the 14th century, and the area it ruled was divided into independent states, one of which was ruled by Osman I, who gave his name to the empire that would dominate most of the Mediterranean coastline for centuries to come.

The Islamic Ottoman quickly expanded their frontiers, capturing the Balkans by the 16th century, and at its height dominated the entire region minus Italy, France, and Spain. The capital of the empire was eventually returned to Constantinople, and while the Muslim community was tolerant of Christian and Jews, that tolerance did not extend to perceived practitioners of polytheism. The Greek Orthodox Church was allowed to retain its institutions, but the legal system of the empire was based on Shari'a law, with different court systems for Muslim and non-Muslim citizens.

The Decline of the Mediterranean

By the 16th century, the Mediterranean Sea had lost its prominence as the lake around which civilization thrived. Increasing colonization of areas around the globe had moved the center of power to the north, and eyes turned to wander the undiscovered lands of the oceans. With the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, secular nation-states became the model, a consequence of the religious Thirty Years' War and the recognition of the power of religion in such conflicts—a lesson that took nearly 4,000 years to be learned. Even at the end of the 20th century, the lesson was still being worked out on the eastern shores of the Mediterranean, with the violence between the Jewish state of Israel and the indigenous Palestinian people, whose claims to the land on which the state was founded remain contested and unresolved. While religion did not begin the conflict, it has since become bound up in the political goals of both sides.

By the 21st century, the empires had been dismantled, and the lands of the Mediterranean were divided into sovereign, independent nations. The states on the southern shore turned their gaze south, to engage with African interests, while the

northern nations turned north to help form the European Union. The countries of the eastern shore along with Egypt look east to become involved more with the Middle Eastern nations. These statements, while broad, are meant to illustrate the fragmentation of an area that had for years been unified under banners of various ethnicities and religions.

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See also ‘Abbāsid Caliphate; Alexander the Great; Ancient Near Eastern Religions; Constantinople; Crusades; Eastern Orthodox Christianity; Greece; Henotheism; Inquisition; Italy; Manichaeism; Ottoman Empire; Rome; Umayyad Dynasty

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MEGACHURCH

The term *megachurch* has come to refer to huge Protestant congregations with an average attendance of more than 2,000 adults and children in all weekend worship services. The weekly attendance at U.S. megachurches accounts for more than 7% of all attendees at religious congregations each week. The largest megachurch in the United States, Lakewood Church in Houston, Texas, currently averages more than 40,000 in attendance at its four weekend services. The vast majority of megachurches range between 2,000 and 4,000 weekly attendees, with less than 20% (less than 300 churches) having an attendance of more than 5,000. Additionally, significant numbers of megachurches are scattered throughout the world, especially in South Korea, Brazil, Australia, Singapore, and several African countries, including Nigeria and South Africa, although no exact count exists for this worldwide phenomenon. Many of these megachurches, which generally range from 5,000 to 50,000 attendees, dwarf the U.S. ones, with several, such as Yoido Full Gospel Church in South Korea, claiming more than 100,000 attendees weekly.

Although very large congregations have existed throughout history, since the 1960s the rapid proliferation of churches with massive attendance indicates a unique contemporary appeal of this form of religious organization. The total number of U.S. megachurches has increased from fewer than 50 in 1970, to 350 in 1990, to more than 600 in 2000, and now more than 1,300. Similar, although not as dramatic, growth of large churches is evident throughout the globe. Scholars suggest that the megachurch congregational form is a distinctive response to contemporary cultural shifts and changes in societal patterns throughout the industrialized, urban, and suburban areas of the world.

Although size is the most immediately apparent characteristic of these congregations, the Protestant megachurches generally share many other traits. Virtually all these megachurches have a conservative evangelical theology, even those within mainline denominations. Roughly two thirds of U.S. megachurches are denominational, but globally, significantly more are nondenominational.

The majority of U.S. megachurches are located in the suburban areas of rapidly growing sprawl cities such as Los Angeles, Dallas, Atlanta, Houston, and Orlando, with the states of California, Texas, Georgia, and Florida having the highest concentrations. Most megachurches outside the United States can be found in densely populated urban centers such as Seoul, Korea; São Paulo, Brazil; and Lagos, Nigeria.

Megachurches often grow to their great size under the tenure of a single senior pastor within a very short time. Nearly all megachurch pastors are male and are viewed as having considerable personal charisma. The senior minister often exhibits an authoritative style of preaching and is the singular dominant visionary leader of the church. Leadership teams of dozens of assistant ministers, hundreds of staff, and thousands of volunteers often support these senior pastors.

Megachurches generally have contemporary praise-style worship, including drums, electric guitars and keyboards, huge projection screens, and robust sound systems. These churches host a multitude of social, recreational, and aid ministries. Additionally, megachurches employ intentional efforts, including home fellowships and small-group gatherings, to enhance the community. These congregations promote intense personal commitment in many attendees but also support large percentages of less committed attendees among their ranks.

Scott Thumma

See also Churches; Evangelical Movements; Korea, Republic of (South Korea); McDonaldization; Protestant Christianity; Televangelism

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MEN'S ROLES

Though much attention has been paid to women's roles in society, men's roles are equally important and are also changing in many parts of the world in the global era. Issues of gender have become increasingly important in understanding how religious traditions have developed and how they function. Although the focus on gender emerged first in Western cultures, where feminist movements of the 20th century called for rethinking traditional gender roles in every aspect of society, today it permeates virtually all cultures and religions. That concern reflects an awareness that many traditions have historically granted men the more powerful roles in overseeing religious life, from serving as religious professionals to presiding at rites, although women were more likely to engage in religious activities, especially those associated with devotion, and to avail themselves of religious services. The disparity between gender when it comes to leadership and actual involvement has in turn raised many other questions, from whether being religious has a biological basis to whether religion provides a mechanism men use to assert control and authority over women. This entry does not address issues of biology or control of one gender over the other but explores men's roles in the formation and transmission of religious traditions and the ways in which men themselves are religious.

Men as Founders and Religious Professionals

In the historic religious traditions, men emerged as major founder figures and official leaders. In some agricultural and tribal societies, women had key leadership roles; in the rest, men have dominated. For example, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Jainism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam all claim male founders—Siddhartha Gautama, Zoroaster, Mahavira (Nataputta Vardhamana), Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad, respectively.

Even in traditions with more nebulous beginnings, males have dominated. In the Hindu tradition, for example, although female sacred beings abound, males have dominated the professional priesthood, and the caste system based its religious

ideals on male experience, with a woman's status tied to that of a man (her father and then her husband). In some cases, historians have posited that men intentionally suppressed texts and alternative approaches that gave greater status to women. For example, one theory advanced for the suppression of Gnosticism(s) in the early centuries of Christianity holds that the favorable views of women in Gnostic texts and religious practice, showing women with religious authority equal to that of men, led men to attempt to eradicate them as a male priesthood and church hierarchy evolved. This action also indicates that in most traditions, men have had primary responsibility for the preservation and transmission of sacred texts and, until well into the 20th century, provided the bulk of philosophical and theological reflection.

Orthodox Judaism illustrates men's roles well. Historically, 10 males were necessary to constitute a *minyan*, or quorum, for prayer; men went to the synagogue to study the Torah and thus could become rabbis; and men marked the transition into adulthood with the rite of passage known as the *bar mitzvah*. Yet the heart of Jewish practice remained in the home, increasingly the domain of women, where Sabbath celebration began when the wife/mother lit the Sabbath candles.

In other traditions also, gender difference prevails. In the indigenous Chinese traditions, the practice of filial piety or deference made gender distinctions. If children were expected to defer to parents, the wife/mother was in turn expected to defer both to her husband and to her in-laws. Ideologically, deference did not denote an inherent superior-inferior relationship but the bipolarity (yin and yang) undergirding all reality. The practical consequence, however, was different. Lived reality generally meant that the balance between male and female became the preeminence of the male over the female within the extended family as well as within the social and political orders.

In the Buddhist heritage, some strands posited that women as well as men could attain nirvana and could form religious orders akin to those that served monks. In most cases, however, such female orders have remained subordinate to monks. In traditional Muslim practice, men are expected to attend prayer services at the mosque on Fridays, although in non-Muslim cultures where there is little social support to do so, adherence drops.

However, within the mosque, men and women are separated (as is also the case in Orthodox Judaism), not to make men superior to women but in part because the presence of women might distract men from their religious obligations. Imams and others who lead services, however, are always male.

Both the Jewish and Christian traditions long restricted professional leadership roles to men, with Roman Catholicism requiring celibacy for priests. This posture has sparked controversy in recent years; in some cases, the practice has changed. Many Protestant Christian bodies and some Jewish groups (e.g., Reform, Conservative, and Reconstructionist) have admitted women to the professional ministry, beginning in the second half of the 20th century. Among Roman Catholic Christians, a celibate male priesthood remains the norm. Recent uproars over priests accused of molesting young men or otherwise breaking vows of celibacy brought consternation and debate but not abandonment of that ideal. Perhaps the most inclusive, although still male based, is the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Mormons), in which, theoretically, standing in the priesthood is open to all male members since the 1970s without regard to race or ethnicity.

Men's Spirituality

Even though the major traditions tend to acknowledge men as founders and, at least until recently, as those suited to serve as religious professionals, women gradually became regarded as having a more spiritual orientation or an inherently more religious nature than men. In India, for example, even if Hindu men pray as an act of devotion, women for many years have been more likely to perform daily puja in the home, to visit temples to pray and to receive a blessing, and to develop a host of rituals relating to their experience as women—even if they cannot serve as priests. Hindu men are more likely to become engaged in the life of a temple in the immigrant context, where the temple helps preserve ethnic identity as a focus for prayer and devotion. In a few Hindu immigrant communities, however, women have taken on functions akin to priests and officiate at temple rites.

One reason frequently advanced to account for the presumably greater spirituality of women is

their role in bearing and rearing children. Because women give birth, they “naturally” take on the primary role of nurturing children, inculcating moral values, and providing religious instruction. That perception grew in cultures where families ceased to be working, functioning economic units and men turned increasingly to waged labor outside the home to provide support for the family.

Trends among Protestant Christians in the United States illustrate this perception. In 17th-century New England, for example, where Puritan Protestants dominated, the patriarch of the household was expected to lead daily devotions and ensure that all children and indentured servants received religious instruction. At that time, in most cases, the household functioned as an economic as well as social unit; everyone had a role to play to support the household’s well-being. By the early 19th century, as nascent industrialization brought differentiation between the family as a social unit and the economic structures that supported the family, emergent gender roles became more defined. Men, absent from the household much of the day, became less directly engaged in religious nurture and other aspects of child rearing. Consequently, men were increasingly regarded as being less religiously inclined than women.

In the West, this differentiation has meant that measures of religiosity are likely to reflect ways in which women are religious because they tend to highlight activities perceived culturally to be more feminine than masculine, although exceptions always appear, particularly when male religious professionals are included among those whose religious practice is examined. Measures such as time spent in devotional reading of sacred texts or in prayer, meditation, and other contemplative pursuits as well as attendance at religious services and formal membership in religious groups show women to be more religious than men. All such activities are also perceived to be more characteristically feminine than masculine. In 19th-century America, as this differentiation became more apparent, the clergy profession itself was widely seen as feminized, even though virtually no group then allowed women to serve as clergy. However, emphasizing positive action rather than contemplation, pragmatic results rather than devotion, suggests that men may also be religious but express that religiosity in ways different from women.

The ways in which men relate to religion, regardless of the tradition or society examined, reflect how that culture or tradition constructs models for behavior construed as appropriate to men. Gender differences remain, as do difference in religious behavior. Increasingly, though, religions and their leaders and adherents recognize that difference does not require labeling certain roles or behaviors as inherently superior to or better than others. Rather, just as men and women are biologically different, they may be religious in different ways.

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See also Gender; Globalization; Rites of Passage; Sexuality; Women’s Roles

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MESOAMERICAN RELIGIONS

Mesoamerica, the area of Mexico and northern Central America, encompasses a diverse region that developed complex societies. The civilizations of ancient Mesoamerica include Olmec, Teotihuacan, Tula, Mixtec and Zapotec, Maya, and Aztec. While these civilizations differed from one another, they shared similar polytheistic belief systems that focused on veneration of the natural world. All Mesoamerican cultures recognized the vitality of the world around them and were animistic, believing that the earth and all of the elements of the natural world had spiritual power. They understood the world as having two important components: (1) the material world that humans live in and (2) the spiritual world. Unlike Western ways of

thought, however, the two worlds were not separated; rather, they worked together symbiotically and were completely interchangeable. The Mesoamericans also venerated their ancestors and believed that they had the capacity to communicate with their ancestors and supernaturals by journeying between the worlds. Unlike the character of religion in Europe and the Old World, Mesoamerican civilizations did not have religious institutions, because the belief systems, ceremonies, and rituals were intrinsically linked with politics, economics, and kingship. Since there is no direct textual written record that reveals Mesoamerican religious beliefs, scholars use pictorial codices, alphabetic ethnohistories, and material culture to interpret ancient Mesoamerican thought.

Olmec

The Olmec, the first complex society in Mesoamerica, arose around 1200 BCE. The Olmec region includes the modern Mexican states of Veracruz and Tabasco near the Gulf of Mexico, particularly the sites of San Lorenzo, La Venta, Laguna de los Cerros, and Tres Zapatos. The truncated pyramids acted as the ceremonial centers of these cities. Olmec religion was primarily an extension of agricultural practices; the Olmec venerated ancestors and food plants, and ceremonies tended to follow hydrological cycles. A number of figurines and mosaics have been excavated in the Olmec region, suggesting the spiritual importance of the earth and the underworld.

Olmec rulers were spiritual leaders because they were likely to be shamans as well as rulers, acting as intermediaries between the human and spiritual worlds. This is exemplified in stone monuments at the site of La Venta, which depict rulers in niches that represent caves in the shape of jaguar maws that act as entrances to the underworld. These monuments are cosmological models visualizing the Olmec ruler as the interface between the natural and supernatural realms. In addition, Olmec iconography and myth indicate spiritual and ancestral ties between humans and jaguars. The artistic combinations of animal and human forms, including jaguars, birds, and reptiles, demonstrate the importance of shamanism. Ascribing human characteristics to inanimate objects, animals, or natural phenomena is known as anthropomorphism. The attribution

of animal characteristics or qualities to a deity is known as zoomorphism.

Teotihuacan

The civilization that centered on Teotihuacan flourished between 100 and 700 CE in central Mexico. The Pyramid of the Sun and the Pyramid of the Moon are the principal ceremonial structures at Teotihuacan. They echo the natural environment, and both fall along the major axis of the site, which was named the Street of the Dead by archaeologists. This street has a series of ascending and descending platforms that may have had ceremonial functions, acting as sites for various public rituals.

Religion at Teotihuacan emphasized the natural world, especially the importance of water and caves. There is a cave within the Pyramid of the Sun, and its location and form were important in the founding, planning, and ritual life of Teotihuacan. The cave was considered a religious and mythical center, or axis mundi, and was understood to be a place of creation and emergence. The offerings and evidence of ritual activity there indicate that it may have functioned as an oracle.

The most prominent deities at Teotihuacan were depicted as a feathered serpent (Quetzalcoatl), a goggle-eyed deity (Tlaloc), and the "Great Goddess." Quetzalcoatl and Tlaloc figure prominently in sculpture on the Temple of the Feathered Serpent in the complex called the Ciudadela. The Great Goddess, however, is often represented in mural painting. For example, the Tepantitla patio mural depicts this deity with droplets of water streaming from her hands and plants adorned with butterflies and spiders sprouting from her head. Below the goddess, dynamic individuals move among mountain and water imagery. Thus, the Great Goddess is associated with fertility and renewal.

Small ceramic mold-made figurines are found in great abundance at Teotihuacan. They were mass produced, and many had articulated limbs. It is likely that they were used for ritual purposes at the household level.

Tula

Tula was a site in the Central Highlands of Mexico that flourished between 900 and 1150 CE. Tula's ceremonial precinct was a rectangular plaza. The

images in and around the plaza indicate that several major deities were venerated there. As at Teotihuacan, ritual practices and visual culture at Tula provided inspiration for much of Aztec religion; thus, prevalent Tula deities are identified with Aztec names. These deities include Tlaloc, Quetzalcoatl, Tezcatlipoca, Ehecatl (“Wind Deity”), Xipe Totec (“The Flayed One”), Tlazolteotl (“Filth Deity”), Xochiquetzal (“Flower Quetzal”), and Itzpapalotl (“Obsidian Butterfly”). Deities were widely disseminated in Mesoamerica and were often borrowed, reinvented, and renamed by subsequent cultures. According to Aztec mythology, Quetzalcoatl peacefully ruled the people at Tula as a priest-king until Tezcatlipoca tricked him into getting intoxicated and sleeping with his sister. Quetzalcoatl left Tula in shame, sailing away to the east but vowing to return someday.

As at Teotihuacan, a number of mold-made ceramic figurines have been found in domestic contexts at Tula. It is possible that these figurines were used in household rituals.

Mixtec and Zapotec

The Mixtec and Zapotec flourished in the Valley of Oaxaca between 600 and 1000 CE. Mixtec historical codices recount dynastic alliances, achievements of important individuals, and conflicts. Religious images were primarily depicted in monumental sculpture and as a part of the architecture rather than in the codices. The iconography at the site of Monte Albán included a number of images of deities representing the natural elements: lightning, wind, clouds, hail, and rain. In addition, there are also a number of maize deities depicted. While it was likely that they also believed in a supreme creator deity, no visual references to this deity exist.

Maya

The Mayan region includes southern Mexico, Honduras, Belize, and Guatemala. Although the archaeological record shows that the Mayan region has been inhabited for 10,000–12,000 years, the Mayan civilization that built the renowned pyramids and stela and had elaborate calendar and writing systems began to rise around 250 BCE.

As Maya society developed into highly structured city-states, the Mayan religion became a key component of Maya culture.

In Mayan mythology, there are three domains of the world: (1) the heavens, (2) the Middleworld that humans inhabit, and (3) the Underworld in the core of the earth. These three domains are described in the colonial period written record of the Quiché *Popol Vuh*, as well as being a part of the oral tradition that has been recorded in ethnographic studies of this region. The ancient Maya believed that the Middleworld, where humans reside, floated on the back of a caiman or a turtle in a sea that had existed since the beginning of time. The Underworld, or *Xibalba*, was also known as the Otherworld; it looked like the Middleworld, with a similar landscape and structures, and could be visited in trance by Mayan rulers or spiritual leaders. These three regions were not distinct and mutually exclusive but constantly alive and dynamic because they had sacred power.

The *Popol Vuh* is the Mayan creation myth, which tells of the beginning of the Mayan world through the efforts of many humans and deities, who worked together and acted as a cohesive team. It recounts the founding gods who brought the earth into being by raising it up out of a watery place and giving it plants and animals. In the cosmogonic process, the world was created, destroyed, and then re-created on at least three separate occasions before the present time period, or the current creation. The story focuses on the adventures of the twin boys Hunahpu and Xbalanque as they venture into Xibalba to avenge the death of their father, known as First Father, who was killed by the Lords of Death. While in Xibalba, the twins use their wits to defeat the evil gods and endure a series of difficult tests. As a result of their triumph, the Mayan rulers were created. Overarching themes of the *Popol Vuh* include sustenance and cyclical patterns of death and regeneration.

The *Popol Vuh*, in describing the twins’ quest, also describes the three domains of the Mayan world. The Maya understood their world to be on an axis that included all three domains and followed the path of the sun. Each of the four cardinal directions had a bird, a tree, a color, and a god

associated with the domains. The heavens had 13 layers, and the Underworld had 9 layers, with each layer having a different god. In addition, each god had rituals associated with him or her. The four directions converged in the Middleworld, and through this axis grew the *Wakab-Chan*, or World Tree. The World Tree went through all three domains, with its branches in the heavens, its trunk in the Middleworld, and its roots in the Underworld. The most commonly used motif throughout the Mayan region, the image of the World Tree can be seen today on numerous stele, in frescos, and on architectural structures.

The World Tree could materialize in nature or could be embodied by the ruler. There was an association between the World Tree and life and renewal, as well as a tie to noble ancestral lineage. Mayan spiritual ideology, in which only the rulers and appointed spiritual leaders in a state of trance could pass between the Otherworld and Middleworld, also helped define a political ideology that set the nobles apart from the commoners. When the ruler communicated with the Otherworld, he was represented by two distinct images: (1) the vision serpent, which is the image of a serpent rising out of a bloodletting bowl with a human ancestor coming out of its mouth and (2) a double-headed serpent bar, which is the image of a bar with a serpent deity on either end. Thus, there was a direct connection between the ruler and the spiritual world.

Mayan histories, genealogies, and information about astronomy, deities, and rituals were recorded in codices, or folded books. In addition to the *Popol Vuh*, other surviving texts about Mayan spirituality include the *Annals of the Kaqchikel*, the *Rabinal Achi*, the *Ritual of the Bakabs*, and the *Books of the Chilam Balam*. Spiritual leaders were responsible for understanding the calendar and astronomy as well as ritual activity. Agricultural rites and various ceremonies took place throughout the year to ensure bounty, health, and success. These sacred rituals included autosacrifice by piercing the ears, cheeks, lips, tongue, and penis; spattering the blood onto paper; and then burning the paper. They also sometimes included human sacrifice. At Yaxchilan, the lintels of Shield Jaguar and Lady Xoc visually refer to the spiritual and ceremonial responsibilities of the Mayan rulers, especially those having to do with autosacrifice. In

the first lintel, Shield Jaguar stands over Lady Xoc as she pulls a rope of thorns through her tongue. In the second lintel, a vision serpent rises out of Lady Xoc's blood sacrifice. Sacrifices allowed rulers to maintain their authority, attain visions, and communicate with ancestors and deities.

Aztec

The Aztecs thrived between 1325 and 1521 CE in central Mexico. The Aztec religion was closely associated with the state and appropriated cultural aspects from Olmec, Tula, and Teotihuacan. This state religion likely coexisted with older vernacular traditions such as ancestor veneration, but public ceremonies, monumental public art and architecture, and a strict hierarchy of authorities helped centralize the formal religion. However, the religion of the populace and philosophical speculation were also prevalent in Aztec society.

Like other Mesoamerican cultures, Aztecs believed that time is cyclical and that the present world is one in a series. For the Aztecs, the four previous worlds were catastrophically destroyed, and the present age is the fifth world. Humans were re-created in the fifth world by the gods, who mixed the bones of human ancestors with the blood of the gods. Humans repaid the debt to the gods by offering them blood sacrifice in the form of autosacrifice or human or animal sacrifice, thereby ensuring that the sun would continue to rise.

According to Aztec mythology, the Aztec people began a mythohistoric migration from Aztlan, or the place of the seven caves, led by their patron deity Huitzilopochtli ("Hummingbird on the Left"). When they saw a sign from Huitzilopochtli, an eagle with a snake in its beak perched on a cactus that grew out of a rock, they settled on a marshy island in the middle of Lake Texcoco in the valley of Mexico. This sacred place became the Aztec city of Tenochtitlán.

Tenochtitlán's Templo Mayor was the locus of the Aztec religion and functioned as a ceremonial platform. It was also the primary site for human sacrifice. The initial stage of this building was built in 1325 CE, but it was enlarged at least seven times. Smaller twin temples capped the structure, with the southern side dedicated to Huitzilopochtli and the northern side dedicated to Tlaloc. These

dual temples indicated that the Templo Mayor was symbolically connected to the sun as well as war, tribute, and renewal. Monumental sculpture, figurines of deities, beads, animal skeletons, marine artifacts, ceramic jars, and the remains of sacrificial victims have been found at the Templo Mayor.

Aztec ideology included ideas of dualism, fluid reality, *nepantla*, and animism. Duality involved the oppositional but complementary forces of life and death, inside and outside, and ideas and representation. However, these categories existed in a fluid reality, consistent with the belief in the transitory nature of reality. The Aztecs believed that their world had dynamism, equilibrium, and ephemerality and it was their responsibility to find a balance. *Nepantla* (in the middle) was a negotiation of positions in which oppositions and complements were recognized and moderated.

The Aztecs believed that there were animating forces inside their bodies as well as in the natural world. There were different levels of animacy, with deities as highly animate entities, followed by planets and stars, the elements, humans, and animals. The Aztecs used the term *teotl* to talk about the supernatural, whereas they used the term *teixiptla* to describe manifestations or images of a *teotl*, which could be embodied by human beings in the forms of impersonators or in sculptures or painted images. The Aztecs were responsible for the ritual activities that surrounded these physical representations.

Religious specialists were appointed officials in charge of ceremonies and shamanic functions in monumental ceremonial buildings. They were also dedicated to worship and the care of specific temples. Men trained to be religious specialists at a young age, learning Aztec myths and preparing for their duties. These duties included performing of rituals, overseeing monthly ceremonies, preparing for the New Fire Ceremony that took place every 52 years, caring for idols and sacred objects, purifying temples, teaching, and reading sacred books. Like the Maya, Aztec religious specialists and diviners used illustrated texts for spiritual purposes. *The Codex Borgia* is a divinatory text in which the images and their placements are important for their understanding. *The Codex Fejérváry-Mayer* is also a divinatory text that depicts an abstract map of time and space. Religious specialists and diviners also specialized in reading and understanding the calendar of 260 days.

After the Conquest

The Spanish conquered the Aztecs in 1521 and the Maya in 1697. In 16th-century Mesoamerica, conquest and conversion went hand in hand. This was apparent by the number of missionaries, mainly Franciscans and Dominicans, who closely followed the Spanish conquistadors, and the conquistadors who took it on themselves to spread Christianity to the New World. Catholicism was deeply embedded in the Spanish cultural and political systems, and those who believed otherwise were not tolerated. Catholic ideology legitimized invasion because, in the midst of conquering and dominating the people, land, and resources, the Spaniards saw themselves as doing God's work by spreading Christianity. By 1620, the viceroy was the religious leader in New Spain, giving him a significant amount of power over the indigenous populations.

The missionaries began their work by converting the native people to Catholicism as quickly as possible. Churches were also built rapidly after the conquest, and they were often located on top of demolished platforms of native pyramids. Native idols, images, and texts were destroyed, and patron deities were often replaced by patron saints with similar characteristics. Points of convergence between the two religions were used to make Catholicism more understandable to the native converts. These similarities included a formal priesthood, sacred rites for various stages of life, and the importance of the body and blood of a sacrificial victim.

Ultimately, Catholicism was very different from any Mesoamerican religion: It was exclusive, fixed, and intolerant of other religions or thoughts. A monotheistic religion, Catholicism emphasized the difference between good and evil. Conversion to Catholicism in colonial Mesoamerica required a change in values, customs, and worldviews, as well as participation in Catholic rites and rituals. Often, conversion in the Americas was not necessarily a sign of capitulation, either political or religious; it was a survival technique, a sort of cultural self-defense, yet it developed into a reinvention of Christianity, which also accommodated traditional practices and beliefs.

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See also Ancestors; Aztecs; Indigenous Religions; Material Culture; Mexico; Mexico City; Roman Catholicism; Shamanism

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MEXICAN CONCHEROS

The term *concheros* is derived from *concha*, the name of the musical stringed instrument that Mexican dancers use. Regardless of their precise origin, *concheros* have been performing with their colorful garments for a long time in the atriums of the Catholic churches of several cities and towns in the center of Mexico. In recent decades, their costumes, musical instruments, and ideology have undergone a transformation and a great expansion within Mexico itself, in the United States, and in Spain.

The *concheros* are organized in brotherhoods called *mesas* (tables), referring to the altar around which many of their ceremonies are performed. On this altar are placed the images of their revered Catholic saints and other sacred objects. This altar, or *oratorio*, is in the home of the “captain” or leader of the *mesa*. They are hierarchically organized,

following a military pattern: captain, sergeant, *alferez*, soldiers, *malinches* or censors (a rank held only by women), and a few generals.

They have two types of rituals: (1) the dance, which is diurnal and public, and (2) the *velación* (wake), which takes place privately at the captain’s oratory, usually in the night before the dance, and which includes a ritual called the “spreading of the flower” while praises, accompanied by *conchas*, are sung. The following day, without any sleep, they go to the church to dance the whole day.

The *concheros* of Mexico City have to go to dance yearly, at least in five shrines placed at the cardinal points plus a center at Saint James’s Church in Tlatelolco. Saint James is considered the “patron of the four winds.” These four shrines are (1) the Virgin of Guadeloupe, (2) the Christ of Chalma’s (a famous place of pilgrimage), (3) Our Lady of Los Remedios, and (4) the Christ of Amecameca.

In Chalma, the *concheros* stay for several days, where they dance and take part in several other rituals. They also have a sort of assembly where they discuss matters related to their *mesas* or elect new generals.

Each *mesa* celebrates its own patron saint with a *velación* and a dance, inviting the members of other *mesas* as a net of reciprocal “obligations.”

In the past few decades, many of the *conchero* costumes have changed. The old *conchero* dress for both men and women, which is still worn by some groups, was a long skirt and a shirt and a headdress made of colored ostrich feathers. The Aztec dress, copying the ancient garment used by the Mexica, was introduced around the 1940s, and many *mesas*, especially the ones called Aztec, have adopted it. Drums have become popular instruments. Rules have relaxed. To become a *conchero*, there were very strict rules, which if not followed, resulted in severe punishment.

No longer confined to poor, uneducated people, the ideology and social composition of the *concheros* has changed; now influenced by New Age thinking and the *Mexicanidad* (“Mexican-ness”) movement, which has also appropriated the dance, arguing that it is of pre-Hispanic origin, and instead of dancing for the saints, they dance for the pre-Hispanic gods.

Yolotl González Torres

See also Guadeloupe; Indigenous Religions; Mesoamerican Religions; Mexico; Mexico City; Native Latin American Religion

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MEXICO

Mexico is characterized by a historical paradox. It is a North American country with a large Catholic majority known for the vitality of its popular religiosity and a powerful Catholic Church, which has profoundly penetrated the social and private lives of the population. At the same time, Mexico is a Latin American nation that has undergone the most radical process of laicism and of separation of church and state.

Spanish Colonization and Evangelization

The historical process of the development of Mexican Catholicism, which is rooted in the Spanish colonization, explains the paradox. The Catholic Church was one of the pillars of the colonial order, from the 16th century to the beginning of the 19th century, and expanded during this period with the evangelization of the indigenous peoples and the development of a racially mixed (mestizo) society. As a parallel development, indigenous resistance to Spanish evangelization and the clergy's structural deficit favored the genesis of a religious syncretism that articulated autochthonous elements with the Catholic faith and prospered in mestizo and indigenous society. The Catholic Church motivated the construction of this religious syncretism, which was contained by the end of evangelization and was constitutive of popular Mexican religiosity. The latter was tamed by the Catholic clergy, exceeding, nonetheless, its

capacity for social and territorial control. The most important expression of this popular Catholicism, which precisely characterizes the aforementioned ambiguities, is the cult of the Virgin of Guadeloupe. The popular and syncretic dimensions of the cult are seen to justify the perennial assertion that Mexicans are, more than being Catholics, "Guadalupanos." Nevertheless, the Catholic Church itself established the cult. According to the legend, the Virgin appeared to Juan Diego five times between December 9 and 12, 1531, which was affirmed by Bishop Zumarraga, thus symbolically sealing the pact of adherence of the indigenous population to the Catholic faith.

Catholic Church and Mexican State

Beginning with Mexican independence in 1821, the Catholic Church was challenged by demands by liberals for the separation of church and state, which culminated in the Juárez reforms of 1859 to 1860. The reform was based on the lay concept of a nonconfessional state, legitimized by the principle of popular sovereignty and guarantee of pluralism of religious and civic convictions. Despite their considerable minority status, Protestants and Freemasons exercised an important role in the development of Mexican liberalism. The Mexican Revolution of 1910 assumed the lay legacy of the liberals, which led to a confrontation with the Catholic Church in the Cristero War of 1926 to 1929. The Catholic opposition to the revolutionary state was motivated by ecclesiastical sectors but constituted an active popular movement in the central area of the country, particularly in the highlands of Jalisco, where the level of violence frightened the clergy. Subsequent negotiations between the state and the Catholic Church initiated a long period of Church exclusion from the public sphere and limitation of the clergy's civic rights, the extent of which even contradicted the lay principle of state neutrality in religious affairs. The constitutional reforms of 1992 restored some of the clergy's civic rights and sought to improve guarantees of freedom of religion, thereby reducing the schism between church and state while also responding to the increased religious pluralization of the country. However, laicism remains the distinctive feature of Mexican cultural and political institutions despite the fears raised by the ascension of the National

Action Party (*Partido Acción Nacional*, PAN), whose affinity with the Catholic Church is notorious, to the presidency in 2000.

Religion and Secularization

The Catholic Church's social importance contrasts with its political weakness. Accordingly, some observers see in Mexico a case of national schizophrenia due to the high level of laicism in its public life, which is encouraged by the political elite, and the low level of secularization of the society, particularly at lower socioeconomic levels. This idea should be relativized; there have also been processes of separation of the mundane and religious spheres as well as processes of rationalization and pluralization of social life, albeit limited, without which this laity would not have been possible. Furthermore, as some observers have noted, the Catholic Church's capacity for social control must not be underestimated. The imperfect restraint of popular Catholicism explains, in part, its political weakness.

The Pluralism of Mexican Catholicism

Finally, the pluralism of Mexican Catholicism should be considered; this oscillates between conservative, even integrationist, positions, such as the Legion of Christ and the Yunque, the latter being active within the PAN; a moderate opposition, also linked with the PAN, which attempted to reconcile their Christian ideal of society with the values of progress and democracy; and sectors identified with the social radicalism of Liberation Theology. Mexican Liberation Theologians shared the Latin American postulations of a theology that denounced the complicity between the Catholic Church and the prevailing sociopolitical order; they were also firmly situated in the continuity of the traditional Catholic opposition to the revolutionary state, demanding, in this sense, a greater political commitment. Additionally, they revived the Cristero ambition of mobilizing the popular religion but from the perspective of revolutionary socialism and in open breach with the social control of the Catholic Church. Yet they never ceased being agents of the church, diminishing their capacity for popular mobilization; furthermore, their political commitment was restricted to building civil movements,

due to the constitutional prohibitions. Nonetheless, in the intellectual tradition of Liberation Theology, the "autochthonous Church" project of the San Cristobal de las Casas diocese, active in the indigenous communities of Chiapas, produced important sociopolitical effects, contributing to the Zapatista uprising of 1994.

Religious Pluralization

The social strength of popular religion in Mexico is historically linked, but always irreducible, to Catholicism. Today, that strength exceeds the limits of the Catholic world. Contemporary religion in Mexico is marked, as in other parts of the region, by the erosion of Catholic hegemony and the growth of new churches, mainly evangelical and Pentecostal. According to the INEGI (Instituto Nacional Estadística y Geografía) Census of 2000, the Catholic population in Mexico is still officially 88%, but the erosion is more pronounced in southern states such as Quintana Roo (73.17%), Campeche (71.28%), Tabasco (70.45%), and especially Chiapas (63.87%). In contrast, Catholic hegemony remains solid in the central-northern states, such as Guanajuato (96.41%), Aguascalientes (95.64%), Jalisco (95.39%), Queretaro (95.27%), Zacatecas (95.13%), and Michoacan (94.76%). Explanations for this religious diversification are varied and occasionally contradictory. The deregulation of religion is certainly an effect of globalization, exacerbated in Mexico by migration to the United States and the effectiveness of a religious proselytism that alternates marketing strategies with contact work. Deregulation is also a sui generis phenomenon that, confronted with the effects of globalization, responds to the necessity of social solidarity and mobility within vulnerable groups. Moreover, this religious recomposition responds to the increased pluralization of Mexican society and the country's shift toward democracy. Even when many churches adopt an attitude of separation from modern values, their growth is an expression of the relative social autonomy from traditional religious control. Previously, there existed reciprocity between the hegemonies represented by the revolutionary state and the Catholic Church in the public and private spheres, respectively. Political deregulation, accentuated in Chiapas by the impact of the local conflict and the

Central American civil wars, has contributed to the loss of the Catholic Church's hegemony. Finally, the map of this religious change reflects the social dynamic of Mexican popular religiosity. Erosion has been very limited in areas where mestizo culture predominates and where the Catholic Church's social and territorial control have traditionally been the most effective; in the poorer southern states, characterized by important indigenous populations and notable structural weaknesses of the Catholic Church, the erosion is accentuated.

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See also Guadeloupe; Latin America; Mesoamerican Religions; Mexico City; Native Latin American Religion; North America; Roman Catholicism; Secularization

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MEXICO CITY

Mexico City is a global city, affected by the growing transnationalism of the world, and a vital cultural center where the history of the Americas and the expansion of Western religions can be traced. Known in Spanish as *La Ciudad de México*, Mexico City is home to more than 19 million residents throughout 14,869 square miles (1 mile = 1.609 kilometers). As Mexico City also houses the Federal District of Mexico (*Distrito Federal*, D.F.), it holds the seat of powers for Mexico's union of 31 states.

History of Mexico City

Prior to the arrival of Europeans, the area where Mexico City is now located was known as Tenochtitlán. The establishment of the city is linked to an ancient prophetic vision that held that a city would be founded on the site where an eagle devouring a snake and perched on a cactus was located. On March 18, 1325, this prophecy was fulfilled by the Mexican peoples of the Aztec Empire on the island of lake Texcoco. This prophetic vision is commemorated through an illustration of the

eagle, the snake, and the cactus on the national flag of Mexico.

In spite of the swampy terrain, the *Mexica* displayed a rather innovative show of technological ability by creating a foundation for the city through a system of floating lands that would gradually take root in shallow waters.

Though Tenochtitlán grew to become the largest thriving city in Mesoamerica, the turn of the 16th century brought about an unexpected change in the civilization of the Aztec Empire. In 1519, the Spanish conquistador Hernán Cortés de Monroy y Pizarro arrived on the shores of the present-day Yucatan Peninsula. By 1521, Cortés and his forces had successfully conquered Tenochtitlán. The new Spanish territory—inclusive of the former Tenochtitlán—was renamed the *Vierreinato de Nueva España* (“Viceroyalty of New Spain”).

It is widely accepted that the indigenous peoples of the Americas were brutally beaten and terrorized during the years following Cortés’s conquest. Despite the religious influence that followed from the Roman Catholic Church, for the next three centuries much of the native population was destroyed through disease and maltreatment.

The years that followed brought revolution and independence from Spain in 1821, a war with the United States between 1846 and 1848, a brief monarchy from 1864 to 1867, an internal revolution from 1910 to 1920, and the Cristero religious conflict from 1926 to 1929. Notwithstanding these events, Mexico City has survived well into the 21st century as major cultural, economic, and industrial city in Latin America.

Culture of Religion in Mexico City

After the Spanish conquest, the majority of the indigenous religions were suppressed. As the colonization of Mexico by the Spanish Empire expanded, the Roman Catholic Church also established its presence, which is still evident today. According to recent census data, nearly 90% of the religious population in Mexico is Roman Catholic.

The Virgin of Guadeloupe

Very few cultural icons are as evocative of Mexican identity as *La Virgen de Guadalupe* (The Virgin of Guadeloupe). As a religious symbol, the

Virgin represents the inclusivity of the indigenous ancestry nearly erased during the Spanish conquest. In contrast to a European depiction, the Virgin of Guadeloupe is often portrayed with darker, indigenous features, reflecting the ethnic, racial, and national mixture of Mexican history.

On December 12, 1531, Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoczin (or Juan Diego) is reported to have encountered a young woman whom he believed to be the Virgin Mary in the village of Guadeloupe, just outside Mexico City. According to Diego, the young woman requested that a church be built on the site where she appeared, and when Diego conveyed the request to the local bishop-elect, Juan de Zumárraga, he responded by asking that Diego provide certain proof of the apparition.

Diego returned to the site and conveyed Zumárraga’s request to the Virgin Mary. The Virgin directed Diego to collect a bouquet of rare and out-of-season Castilian roses and take them to Zumárraga, and before doing so, the Virgin arranged the flowers in Diego’s *tilmàtli* (or cloak, an apron-like piece of cloth made from maguey cactus material). When Diego presented the *tilmàtli* to Zumárraga, an imprinted image of the Virgin appeared on it.

Over time, the apparition was scrutinized as an event with unofficial recognition because of Zumárraga’s status as bishop-elect. In addition, further criticism ensued about framing the event as a conversion ploy on the part of the Spanish. This argument held that the story of the apparition was manufactured to convert indigenous peoples to Catholicism, citing the similarities between the appearance of the Virgin and the local Aztec goddess *Tonantzin*—a goddess who was associated with the site where the Virgin appeared to Diego.

Regardless of the subsequent interpretations, the Virgin of Guadeloupe has been memorialized through two architectural constructions. From 1531 to 1709, construction of a shrine named *Templo Expiatorio a Cristo Rey* (“Church of Expiation to Christ the King”) took place to commemorate the apparition. After Pope Pius X bestowed the title of basilica on the shrine in 1904, the site soon became an unofficial place of pilgrimage for many Roman Catholics. However, due to the gradual submersion of much of the Mexico City basin—a consequence of the original foundation having been built on the swampy area near

the 14th-century Lake Texcoco—the basilica was closed in 1974, to make way for the construction of a new basilica. In 1976, the new basilica was completed, and some 471 years after the apparition, Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin was canonized as a saint in 2002.

The Day of the Dead

The Day of the Dead (*El Día de los Muertos*), a cultural celebration honoring the deceased, embodies two distinct religious traditions that emerged prior to the first interactions between the Americas and Europe. In the indigenous tradition at the time of the Spanish conquest, the Aztecs observed a monthlong celebration for the dead through the worship of the goddess *Mictecacihuatl*, Queen of the Underworld. Similarly, in the European tradition, the contiguous 2-day celebration from All Saints' Day to All Souls' Day honors the passing of beatified saints and nonbeatified souls, respectively. Celebrated on November 1 and/or 2, the Day of the Dead coincides with All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day, thus integrating a synchronization of these two traditions and thereby making their original forms much less discernible.

The Day of the Dead is truly a global event. The synchronization of pre-European culture and the religious practices of European arrivals demonstrates how the history of the Day of the Dead celebration encompasses an intergeographical and cultural merger, where both original forms of celebrating death and dying have given rise to a new tradition within a global context. In addition, the cultural maintenance and movement of this new tradition, due in part to the political remapping of Mexico's borders in the late 19th century and the migration patterns of Mexicans during the 20th and early 21st centuries, the Day of the Dead event suggests further transnationalization.

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See also Aztecs; Global Cities; Guadeloupe; Indigenous Religions; Latin America; Los Angeles; Mesoamerican Religions; Mexico; North America

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MICRONESIA

Micronesia (formally called the Federated States of Micronesia) covers an area within what is known as Oceania and includes a number of islands within the western Pacific Ocean, including Saipan, Guam, the Marshall Islands, the Caroline Islands, and others. Melanesia lies to its south, while to its east is Polynesia. To the west lie the Philippines.

Christianity is the most practiced religion in Micronesia. A number of Protestant and Roman Catholic churches are found in each Micronesian state. The majority of Protestants are direct descendants of the original American Congregationalists who came to Micronesia to engage in missionary activities. For example, in Kosrae, one of the islands within the chain, the population is around 8,000, with 95% Protestants. In Pohnpei, there are 35,000 inhabitants, with an even split between those calling themselves Protestant and those stating that they are Roman Catholic.

On the islands of Chuuk and Yap, approximately 60% of churchgoers are Roman Catholic, whereas the remaining 40% attend Protestant services. Religious organizations with adherents in Micronesia include the Protestant groups, Baptists, the Pentecostals (primarily found within the Assembly of God), and the Seventh-Day Adventists, as well as other beliefs not classified as Protestant or Roman Catholic, that is, Jehovah's Witnesses, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, and the Baha'i Faith (a monotheistic faith founded in

Persia during the 1800s). One can also find a minor enclave of Buddhists on Ponhepi. Members of the various churches often attend ceremonies; thus, the churches perform a crucial function in Micronesian society.

During the last decade of the 19th century in Ponhepi, quarrels arose between the various faiths and their missionaries, which caused religious partitions that are still visible today. For example, individuals living in the western side of Ponhepi tend to be Protestant, whereas Roman Catholics primarily inhabit the eastern side. In today's world, missionaries from a number of denominations are free to travel and spread their faith anywhere within Micronesia. One primary reason for this freedom comes from the Micronesian constitution, which permits personal autonomy for religious beliefs. While Christianity is the majority religion, indigenous religious beliefs are still adhered to in Yap and in several of the Coral Islands found within the central Carolines.

Before the importation of nonnative religious beliefs, Micronesians worshipped a small number of "high gods" and felt that a great number of spirits performed explicit tasks while protecting particular locales. In addition, they believed that it is possible for dead ancestors and deceased neighbors to make contact with living progeny and friends.

The native islanders believed that there were a varying number of heavens—a common belief throughout Oceania at that time. Ancient myths and folk tales state that the islanders descended from a group of individuals who either were the first to find the islands or took them from the natives originally living there. The Micronesians never believed that supernatural beings were the creators of anything—that is, "God" or a number of "gods" did not create humanity or the world.

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See also Guam; Marshall Islands; Northern Mariana Islands; Pacific Islands/Oceania; Philippines

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MIDDLE EAST

The Middle East refers to the "fertile crescent" between the Nile River basins in the west and the Euphrates and Tigris in the east and historically consists of one of the world's most important regions for the emergence of settled life, cities, state institutions, and civilizations. It is the birthplace of three of the most significant global religions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, all monotheistic. The Middle East has thus had a global impact on human culture and society and has been influenced by global trends and powers from ancient times. The Nile and its fertile floodplain gave rise to Egyptian civilization beginning around 3500 BCE, which created the world's first imperial orders; and Mesopotamia—which literally means "the area between the two rivers" (Euphrates and Tigris)—became the cradle of the great empires of the Acadians, Sumerians, Babylonians, Assyrians, and Persians. The Middle East has been called the crossroads of the world: Relations between the early civilizations involved wars, crises, treaties, colonies, and trade, producing social, cultural, and religious interactions and influenced from ancient to modern times by imperial expansions from Mesopotamia to Egypt.

Egypt

Egypt is located in the fertile lands of the Nile Valley, surrounded on both sides by deserts. The land along the Nile is divided into two regions: Upper Egypt, in the south, covers the area where the Nile flows from the highlands of East Africa north to the Mediterranean. Lower Egypt is the area of the Nile Delta on the Mediterranean coast. "Egypt is the gift of the Nile," says an Egyptian proverb, marking the Nile's importance for life in this valley. Ancient Egyptian civilization started around 3000 BCE with the Old Kingdom, when phonetic pictographs (hieroglyphs) were first seen. The Pharaoh Menes united the two kingdoms of Upper and Lower Egypt under his central authority in 2900 BCE and made the city of Memphis the capital of his empire. Historians divide ancient Egypt into three ages, ruled in turn by 31 dynasties. The Old Kingdom started in 2660 BCE and ended in 2160 BCE; kings such as Djoser, Snefru, Khufu,

Khafre, and Menkaure created an empire of social stability and high achievement in the arts, architecture, literature, mathematics, medicine, and astronomy. The power struggle among principalities dissolved the unity of the Old Kingdom and resulted in a period of independent provincial administrations. After this interval, the Middle Kingdom began circa 2040 BCE with the reunification of Egyptians and lasted until 1785 BCE when the Indo-European Hyksos hordes from the east ended the 12th dynasty's rule in the capital city, Thebes. The Hyksos's domination in Egypt ended in 1552 BCE, followed by the New Kingdom period under the rule of the pharaohs Tutmosis I, Tutmosis III, Queen Hatsephut, Amenhotep IV (Akhenaten), his wife Nefertiti, Tutankhamen, Ramses I, and Ramses III. The New Kingdom's rule expanded to the Levant, and the Kadesh Treaty was signed with the Hittites in 1285 BCE. In the beginning of the first millennium BCE, the New Kingdom was beset by economic crises, social problems, rebellions of subject populations, and attacks by seafaring peoples. From 1070 on, Egypt was ruled by the military in the Lower regions and by the priests of Amon in the Upper regions. In the seventh century BCE, the Egyptians became the vassals of the Assyrian and Persian rules. The Persians were rulers of a disunited Egypt until Alexander the Great conquered it in 332 BCE and brought the Ptolemaic Dynasty to power. Egypt remained under Hellenic culture until 30 CE, when Marcus Antonius and Cleopatra lost the country to the Roman armies.

Ancient Egyptian society organized its social affairs around observances in honor of a number of gods. The belief in Amon-Ra was the center of belief, but numerous other gods also had their places in the afterlife. Because the Egyptian religion focused strongly on ideas of the afterlife, the Egyptians built monuments for their dead and sent the deceased to the afterlife with elaborate rites that included mummifying the corpses and interring with them the belongings they would require in the world beyond. The pyramids were built as elaborate tombs for the kings the Egyptians believed to be earthly gods. Various animal-shaped gods and goddesses embodied ideals of justice, order, and truth. Only the pharaoh Akhenaten, who reigned as Amenhotep IV in the 14th century BCE, embraced a monotheistic religion. Akhenaten's worship of the sun god Aten gained the enmity of the Egyptian

clergy, and after his death polytheism returned, aided by the fact that the religion of Aten had produced no body of holy scripture.

Sumeria

Contemporary with the establishment of the Old Kingdom in Egypt, the Sumerians settled in Mesopotamia at the other end of the Middle East and built their civilization of city-states. Unified in and centralized by the first kingdom in 2800 BCE, the Sumerians organized an advanced irrigation system on the Euphrates and Tigris rivers for agricultural development. Mesopotamia was also called *Aram Naharayim* in the Hebrew Bible, which like its Hellenic-Roman equivalent, meant "the land between two rivers." Trade also developed among the Sumerian cities Ur, Uruk, and Lagash and with neighboring Assyrian and Babylonian cities. The Sumerians also engaged in seafaring commercial activity from their Basra port to the coastlines of the Indian Ocean. Cuneiform writing, perhaps the earliest form of record keeping, originated in the Sumerian city-state Uruk, ruled by the legendary king Gilgamesh. Sumerian society had strong hierarchical differences and was formed by the ruling elite, the clergy, and the producers. The wealthy Sumerian civilization sustained attacks by Akkadian and Elam forces in 2100 BCE, who then took over the rule of Sumerian cities. Northern Mesopotamia was settled by the Assyrians and Babylonians, who established their own warring empires around 1850 BCE. In the first half of the 18th century BCE, the monarch Hammurabi ruled the Babylonians and oversaw the first codification of law, which was named after him. The Assyrians and Babylonians were rivals until Babylonia won over the Assyrians in the seventh century BCE, and Nebuchadnezzar II became king in Babylonia in 605 BCE. The Babylonians reached the Mediterranean in 586 BCE, conquered the indigenous Jewish kingdoms, and exiled the Israelites to Babylonia as slaves. Babylonia was militarily defeated by the Persians in 539 BCE.

Persia and Syria

Northern Mesopotamia was dominated by local kingdoms as well as by the Persians and the

Romans in the first millennium BCE. The Persians were Indo-Europeans, or Aryans, including the Parthian, Persian, and Mede masses who had migrated to the Iranian plateau around 1500 BCE. The Medes were the first to establish a kingdom, Media, in the Zagros region. The Parthians and Persians settled in Parsis, along the Persian Gulf. The Achaemenid ruler Cyrus the Great unified the Persian communities under his empire in 550 BCE, making Persepolis its capital. Cyrus, Darius, and Xerxes were the most noteworthy rulers of ancient Persia, expanding the imperial order to Mesopotamia, Anatolia, the Caucasus, Greece, and Egypt. Darius invaded Greece in 490 BCE; the Mede-Greek wars over hegemony in the Eastern Mediterranean lasted for decades. Zoroastrianism, the set of guidelines of the semimythical teacher Zoroaster, was the religion of the ancient Persians. The basic teaching of Zoroastrianism was the cosmic struggle between Ahura Mazda, who represents good, and Ahriman, who represents evil.

The forces of Alexander the Great overcame Persia in 324 BCE; but the Roman Empire became the long-standing rival of the Achaemenids until the third century CE. The Macedonian Alexander died in 323 BCE, and his empire was dissolved, but he left behind Greek culture and language and a Hellenic civilization—the Seleucids in Mesopotamia and in the Fertile Crescent, the Antigonid Dynasty in Asia Minor, and the Ptolemaic Dynasty in Egypt—until it was superseded by Roman rule. Concurrently, the Sassanids succeeded Persian rule in Iran and became the main challenger to the eastern Roman Empire over trade routes to the East.

Mesopotamia was also part of Syria, which geographically extends from the Taurus Mountains in the north to the Sinai Desert in the south, from the Mediterranean in the west to Arabia in the east. The Amorites and Canaanites were among the Semitic masses who settled in Syria in 3000 BCE, and they established city-states and commercial centers such as Byblos and Ugarit. The Palestinian and Aramaic communities came in around the 13th century BCE. The Phoenicians established their port-cities in the 9th century BCE and created a web of land and naval commerce covering the Mediterranean, the Atlantic, and South Africa. The most important Phoenician cities were Tripoli in Lebanon, Phoenicia in Anatolia, and Carthage in Tunisia. Living in Egypt as migrants and emigrating

due to social pressures, the Hebrews, or Israelites, were united under King Saul in 1020 BCE and fought against the Canaanites settled on the shores. The peak of Israelite success came during the rule of King David in 1004 BCE, when the kingdom extended from Mesopotamia to the Red Sea and Jerusalem became the capital. David's son, Solomon, came to power in 971 BCE, built the Temple in Jerusalem, and established close political and cultural contacts with the Phoenicians and others, but his tolerance of other religions and cultures created discontent among his own people. After his death in 926 BCE, the kingdom was divided into two—Judah in the south (the capital of which was Jerusalem) and Israel (Samaria) in the north. Samaria fell to the Assyrians in 722 BCE; Judah survived a little longer until the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar II's conquest in 586 BCE. The Temple, central for the Jewish identity and faith, was destroyed. When the Persians invaded Babylonia, Cyrus the Great permitted the Hebrews to return to their lands and ordered Solomon's temple to be rebuilt with finances from the Persian treasury. Having discovered similarities in their faiths, Judaism and Zoroastrianism, the Persians and Israelites acted as allies against the pagan Roman and Orthodox Byzantine interests in the eastern Mediterranean. Some historians have pointed out that on the return of the Israelites from Babylonia, the Jewish religion was influenced by the Zoroastrian dualism between good and evil and the idea of the return of the savior.

The religious map of the Middle Eastern civilizations is more complex than their ancient political histories. The centralized rules and the city-states required the division of labor between the producers and the rulers, the military and the artisans. The top of the sociopolitical hierarchy was generally occupied by men of religion, since they were the intermediaries between the gods, the living gods (kings), and the public. The temples they built everywhere in the ancient Middle East became not only the house of faith but also the treasury for taxes, the storehouse for products, and the seat of knowledge. Given the priestly monopoly of establishing relations with the gods to protect the social order, the men of religion provided legitimacy to political rulers' affairs; thus, the political rulers depended on religion and the temple to protect their power.

The Sumerians developed mathematics and astronomy; they also had multiple natural gods and a belief in an afterlife. The Sumerian kings erected enormous temples and constructed enormous stepped pyramids (*ziggurats*), and the priests wrote numerous religious tablets. The Sumerian goddess Inanna (Ishtar) was believed to animate nature and to cause creatures to live and die. Inanna was the owner of the skies; her symbol was Venus, the evening star. As *Magna Mater* (the mother goddess), Inanna provided fertility and was represented in statues as breastfeeding a child in her lap. As a young shepherd, Dumuzi was believed to go underground each summer because of the heat and drought and to return six months later. Inanna and Dumuzi (Tammuz) were believed to marry each spring, Dumuzi (later Adonis) represented by the king and Inanna by the head priestess in real life. From this marriage, nature was made fertile again and again. The belief in fate was important in the Sumerian religion; the gods An and Enlil would order men to come into existence and to die. The Sumerians believed that even the other gods could not challenge the power of these two primary gods. Therefore, the Sumerians had to build temples to the gods, devote themselves to worship, ask for blessings, and give sacrifices to gods. The gods of land and later of war (Nergal), of fertility (Abba), of grain (Ashnan), and of the land of the dead (Ershkigal) and the goddess of rivers and order (Nanshe) were part of the Sumerians pantheon. Enki, the god of deep waters, told Ziusudra, the king of Shuruppak, to build a ship, take his family and couples of each kind of living thing, and save them from the flooding sea. The divine trinity of An (Uranos), Enlil, and Enki represented the sky, the land, and the underworld. The Sumerian dependence on Mother Nature heavily influenced the belief systems of other civilizations, including the monotheistic religions.

The Monotheistic Religions

Judaism

The religion of the Hebrews differed from the religions of other ancient peoples by being monotheistic, despite some similarities in other respects. The Hebrew unification in the 13th century BCE in the Fertile Crescent started as a theocratic formation; the Hebrew scriptures focus on the events

surrounding the three patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Abraham and his teachings became the foundation of the so-called Abrahamic religions, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. The founding fathers Moses and Joshua not only were the leaders but also ruled the homeland as prophets on behalf of one God. This was the monotheistic revolution in the religious history of the Middle East, since the Hebrews believed that the single, supreme God had created and was the ruler of the whole universe according to a divine arrangement, which also placed ethical and religious responsibilities on individuals and communities. And it was a small community, the Hebrews, not the great Sumerian, Babylonian, or Egyptian civilizations, that produced monotheism.

Abraham is credited with initiating the seminomadic Hebrew tribes' move westward from the city of Ur; some of the tribes settled in Palestine, and some went further to Egypt. Later, Moses delivered his people from slavery and took them away from Egypt; he received the Ten Commandments from God on the journey to Canaan. The Exodus, which lasted several decades, united the Hebrews around a common identity formed by a common faith. Joshua, Moses' successor, led the Israelites to the Promised Land. The Israelite faith was also different from its contemporaries in that the community did not select their gods from nature; rather, God chose them, with Moses as intermediary, to receive the foundation of their religion. The Jewish texts, the Torah (the *Pentateuch*, or "five books": Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy), *Nevi'im*, and *Ketuvim* together make up the Hebrew Bible, or Old Testament. The Scriptures commanded human beings to believe in only one God, who is eternal, is sovereign over human affairs, and knows people's thoughts and deeds. The Talmud, the other central text of mainstream Judaism, is a compilation, dating to the first millennium CE, of rabbinic discussions pertaining to Jewish law, ethics, philosophy, customs, and history.

The strict religious discipline of Jewish culture emerged out of a long history, and the monotheistic belief that God is a unitary and invisible entity became a threat to Roman paganism in the first century BCE following the Roman commander Pompey's conquest of the Middle East in 63 BCE. The Hasmonean king Herod ruled the region of

Judah as a Roman vassal. Herod repaired the Temple but could not achieve the integration of the Jews under his rule. The Jewish rebellion in 70 CE was violently suppressed by Emperor Titus Flavius, the temple in Jerusalem was destroyed, and the Israelites were exiled from their land. Again, the Roman emperor Hadrian exiled the Jews from Jerusalem in 132 CE following the Bar-Kochba popular revolt.

Christianity

Jewish ethical monotheism strongly influenced the religious doctrines of Christianity and Islam. Christianity emerged from the plurality of faiths of the Roman Empire, which included various sects of Judaism ranging from the strict orthodoxy of the Sadducees and Pharisees to the more liberal teachings of the Essenes. Influenced by the idea of the ideal king and savior of Egyptian religion, the Jews, forced to live under Roman occupation and persecution in the first century CE, believed that the Messiah would appear and establish the glorious kingdom of David. Jesus, or Yeshua, of Nazareth was born in Galilee, worked as a carpenter in Nazareth, and when he was about 30 years old began his 3-year public ministry after he was baptized by John in the Jordan River. Jesus, as a Jewish teacher, started his teaching in villages and towns and taught that people should abandon worldly concerns and follow the moral code of the Sermon on the Mount. His divine mission found a tremendous following among the poor. His teachings were seen as harmful to the religious establishment, however, and in 30 CE, he was accused by the Roman governor of the province, Pontus Pilate, of creating a rebellion in Jerusalem, and his crucifixion was ordered. The new faith was expanded by Paul of Tarsus to the Fertile Crescent and to Asia Minor, and soon the new religion extended beyond the Roman Empire and was organized by the religious leaders, bishops, within its institutional structure. As the Christian religion was thought to pose a threat to Roman paganism, its adherents became subject to Roman persecution, which in turn developed a greater unity among the believers. In the second century, the Catholic Church was organized as the central (universal) faith with its canon that included the Hebrew Bible, the Gospels, and the Epistles of

Paul. Christianity expanded rapidly to the Roman cities Antioch, Alexandria, and Rome. The church in Rome became superior to the others, since the apostles Peter and Paul were martyred there in their work to expand Christianity to the pagan world. While Rome fell under the barbarian invasions in the fourth century, Emperor Constantine, in his power struggle with Rome, consolidated his power in the east by providing liberty to the Christians, taking Christianity under his protection and helping the church become institutionalized in his new center, Constantinople, built on the ancient city Byzantium. The Eastern Roman Empire was made by him a unique formation of Christianity, Roman law, and Greek culture. When, in 325, Constantine congregated the Council of Bishops at Nicea to bring a solution to the theological controversy created by Arius of Alexandria concerning the Trinity, the council decreed the Nicene Creed, which put forward the bases of the Orthodoxy of Eastern Churches. Emperor Theodosius prohibited paganism and made Christianity the state religion in 394 CE.

Islam

The Orthodox Byzantines and the Zoroastrian Persians were rivals for the hegemony of the trade routes from India and China to Byzantine domains and Europe. Manufactured goods, textiles, and spices moved from east to west throughout the Middle Ages, and Byzantium wanted to found its sovereignty on the trade routes. The fifth century was a long peace period, but the struggle between the two empires started in the sixth century. The Middle East, as one of the main routes, was subject to wars between the Christian Abyssinians, Rome's allies, and the Jews settled in the Red Sea area and Yemen as Persian allies. In 507, the Christian Abyssinians won over the Jews and Persians in southern Arabia, but they could not succeed in taking over Mecca (Makkah). The Persians took control of Aden. Both empires weakened and lost their interest in the region in the sixth century; the Byzantine Empire had crises within the church, and the Persians had conflicts within Zoroastrianism. The Arab Peninsula was either under foreign occupation or ruled by local dynasties. However, the Arabs by then had developed a rich culture due to intensive commercial

activity, developed their own alphabet, and learned military techniques and the religious practices of their neighbors. Paganism and disorder did not fit in with the requirements of their age; Islam brought not only a religion to believe in but also a state and political order to unite the people.

Muhammad was born in 571 in Mecca, an important center on the trade route in the Aden-Aleppo line. In 610, he received the first messages, and the new religion developed secretly among his family members. The Arab faith was pagan before Islam, and though the Arabs believed in a superior, transcendental entity, their belief depended on polytheism. Divine entities like Lat, Menat, and Uzzah were thought to rule the earth on behalf of the superior God, and the power rested on the tribal leaders, notables, and the wealthy. Muhammad preached that he was the last of the prophets, Islam was the last monotheistic religion, and the Qur'an was sent to him by God. Conversion to Islam was uncomplicated: Before two witnesses, the initiate asserted his acceptance that there is no god but the one God and that Muhammad is his messenger, and thereby the believer became a Muslim. The leaders of Mecca considered the new religion, which required complete submission to God, as a threat to their powers and to Mecca's social and economic relations. Their oppression and persecution led the believers of Islam to migrate from Mecca to Yathrib in 622, the first year of the Muslim calendar. Yathrib, another commercial center in competition with Mecca, became Medina (the city of the Prophet) and the new religious and political center for the Muslims. When Muhammad died in 632, Islam had already spread to Mecca and other Arab cities in Hejaz. Ebubekir, Osman, Omar, and Ali in turn succeeded Muhammad as caliph, but economic competition, political opposition, and leadership crises caused wars among the believers. The main split occurred during Ali's caliphate. The believers of the teachings and sayings of Muhammad (the Sunnī Muslims) wanted the power to rest in them, whereas the followers of the Prophet's cousin and son-in-law Ali (the Shi'i) demanded that the caliphate remain within the family. Ali lost the war in 661. Despite the power struggle, Islam extended its borders to the Fertile Crescent, North Africa, Iran, and Central Asia during the time of the first four caliphs.

Islam realized its greatest expansion during the reign of the Umayyad Dynasty (650–750). The capital was moved to Damascus, which had been conquered in war with Byzantium. Egypt was taken in 639; Cairo was built near Memphis and Kayrawan in Tunisia early in the eighth century. The Arab armies moved toward Spain in 712. The Muslim expansion was halted in 717 by Byzantine armies in Anatolia and in Europe in 732 by Charles Martel's Frankish cavalry troops in the Battle of Poitiers. When the 'Abbāsids came to power in 751, the new religion and the Islamic empire covered an area from Mesopotamia to Andalusia in the Iberian Peninsula and from the Byzantine Caucasus to India. The 'Abbāsids were the descendants of Muhammad's uncle, Abbas; as the caliphate moved to Baghdad, the only Umayyad rule was the one in Andalusia. During the reign of the 'Abbāsīd sultan Harun al-Rashid (768–809), the empire expanded geographically, so that it was difficult to rule it from one center, Baghdad. In the ninth century, the semi-independent local dynasties established their sovereignty in the frontiers. The Berbers set up their rule in North Africa in 801, the Buyids established their authority in the Caspian in 945, and the Fātimids founded a Shi'ite state in Egypt in 969. The 'Abbāsīd caliphate's power barely extended beyond Baghdad; in 1055, 'Abbāsīd rule was replaced by that of the Seljuks.

Christians and Jews were accepted as peoples of the book in Muslim empires and granted *dhimmi* status: Their faith and communities were assured of protection, provided certain conditions were satisfied. Therefore, millions of Christians (Coptic Christians in Egypt and Arab Christians in the Middle East) and Jews could survive in the Middle East and continue to do so until the present day. The Sassanid Persians accepted Shi'ism, while protecting their unique Persian identity and defending themselves against Arab expansion.

The Ottoman Empire

Starting from the ninth century, the Central Asian nomadic Turks arrived in the Middle East and established the Great Seljuk Empire. In the 11th century, the Seljuk imperial power extended from Anatolia to Central Asia. Centered in Baghdad, the Turks provided a new spirit and power to Islam and were victorious over the Byzantine armies in

1071. Anatolia, Mesopotamia, and Syria came under Turkish rule, and Jerusalem became a Muslim city. The Byzantine emperor Alexis Comnenius called for help from the west, and Pope Urban II organized the first Crusade against the Muslims to save the Judeo-Christian holy city. The Crusaders took western Anatolia and Syria back for the Byzantines and established Latin kingdoms in Antioch, Urfa (Edessa), and Jerusalem in 1099. Salah Al-Din Ayyubi reestablished Muslim authority in the city in 1187, and the Third Crusade was organized by Philip Auguste of France, Richard the Lionheart of England, and Frederick Barbarossa of Germany. Another Crusade was organized in 1204, but the Latin Crusaders ended by invading the Orthodox Byzantine capital and establishing a Latin kingdom there until 1261. The Mongolian Empire established in 1206 on the Silk Road, the trade route to Asia, and led by Genghis (also transliterated as Chinggis) Khan, weakened the Seljuk empire, and the Seljukids moved their center to Konya in Anatolia to establish the Anatolian Seljuk state. The Mongolian army ended Anatolian Seljuk rule in 1243, invaded Mesopotamia, ended the 'Abbāsīd rule, and sacked Baghdad in 1258.

The Ottoman Empire emerged as a small principality in western Anatolia around 1300 amid the sociopolitical chaos created by the Mongolian invasion. The Ottoman state took Islam to Europe with the conquest of Kosovo in 1389. After a short interval following Tamerlane's invasion of the Middle East and Anatolia in 1402, Constantinople was taken by the Ottoman Empire in 1453, and the Byzantine Empire came to an end. The Ottomans established control in Bosnia in 1463, Belgrade in 1521, and Buda in 1526, and the empire's borders reached almost up to Vienna in 1529. Eastern Anatolia and Mesopotamia were ruled by the Akkoyunlu Turcoman ruler Uzun Hasan, who lost the war against the Ottoman Empire in 1473 and left most of his domains under Ottoman control. Uzun Hasan's grandson Shah Ismail was to establish the Safavid rule in Iran in 1501. In 1514, the Ottoman sultan Selim defeated the Shi'i troops of Shah Ismail and conquered the Iranian capital, Tabriz. After the 'Abbāsīd fall in 1258, the Mamlukes (Kölemen, the slave soldiers) ruled Mesopotamia, Levant, and Egypt, the main trade route to the east through the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea. As the last great Muslim state,

the Ottoman Empire established its hegemony in the Middle East against the Mamluk sultanate with the conquest of Baghdad and Syria in 1516 and Egypt in 1517. Thereafter, the southern trade routes, including the Horn of Africa, were ruled by the Ottomans. In the 16th century, Ottoman power extended from the Indian Ocean in the east to the Red Sea, East Africa, and Morocco. The Mamluks remained as vassal rulers of the Ottoman Empire until Napoleon's invasion of Egypt.

The 19th century was the reform age for the Ottoman Empire and an age of revolt, invasion, and change for its Arab territories. The Ottoman Empire was the declining power, the "Sick Man of Europe," and the Great Powers determined the fate of the eastern Mediterranean. The Ottoman sultans appointed the members of the Mehmet Ali Paşa's dynasty to rule Egypt in the 19th century, but in 1882 the British occupied this important passageway to its Indian trade. France invaded Algeria in 1830 and Tunisia in 1880. Iraq and Syria remained under Ottoman control until World War I, and British and French mandates ruled in both countries in the interwar years. The establishment of the Israeli nation-state led to four Arab-Israeli wars, in 1948, 1956, 1967, and 1973. The intercommunal conflict created a civil war in Lebanon in 1975; Iran and Iraq fought from 1980 to 1988 for regional hegemony. The last two Gulf wars, in 1991 and 2003, changed the Iraqi political system.

The Middle East in the Present Day

The modern Middle East has a population of about 300 million, with the majority living in three large but ethnically and religiously different countries: Egypt, Iran, and Turkey (each about 70 million). Of the 15 states, 12 are Arab, and Sunnī Muslims constitute two thirds of the Middle Eastern population. Most of the Shi'i live today in Iran, Iraq (the Twelvers), Yemen (the Zaydis), Oman (the Ibaidis), and the Levant (the Ismailis). The Jews of Israel number about 6.5 million. The Christian population numbers about 15 million. There are a variety of Christian denominations affiliated with the Phanar Orthodox Patriarchate in Istanbul and the Orthodox churches in Antioch, Alexandria, and Jerusalem. Eastern Orthodox churches, the Coptic Orthodox Church (Alexandria), the Armenian

Orthodox Church (Beirut), the Armenian Gregorian Church (Istanbul), the Syrian (Jacobite) Orthodox Church (Damascus), and the Nestorian Church (Baghdad) have the biggest Christian communities in the Middle East. The Roman Catholic Church and the Armenian, Coptic, Chaldean, and Syrian Catholic churches have less than 1 million members throughout the Middle East.

Recep Boztemur

See also Ancient Near Eastern Religions; Christianity; Coptic Christianity; Eastern Orthodox Christianity; Egypt; Gilgamesh Epic; Iraq; Islam; Israel; Jordan; Judaism; Lebanon; Monotheism; Saudi Arabia; Syrian Arab Republic

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MILLENARIAN MOVEMENTS

The terms *millenarianism* or *millennialism* are used by scholars to refer to movements expecting an imminent transition to a collective salvation (i.e., a condition of permanent well-being enjoyed by a group), which may be believed to be earthly and/or heavenly. Millenarians believe that the transition to the collective salvation will occur as the result of the intervention of a divine or superhuman agent, perhaps using human assistance. Many millenarians expect the transition to occur via a cataclysmic destruction of the current order so that the “millennial kingdom” can be created—this pattern can be termed *catastrophic millennialism*. Other millenarians have a strong belief in “progress” and therefore believe that humans working under divine or superhuman guidance can create the millennial kingdom—this pattern can be termed *progressive millennialism*.

Millenarian movements have been found all over the world and in all historical periods. Protomillenarian ideologies as far back as the second millennium BCE supported the authority of Egyptian and Mesopotamian rulers in consolidating their power and extending their kingdoms. The global dissemination of the Christian Bible has contributed to the formation of millenarian movements in different parts of the world. Millenarian movements have inspired oppressed peoples to revolt against colonial governments and socioeconomic forces. Millenarian movements can provide hope that injustice will be corrected, the perpetrators of injustice will be punished, and the faithful will be vindicated and rewarded with permanent well-being. Millenarian movements can stimulate social work to create the millennial kingdom on earth. They have motivated people to migrate to new locations to build their millennial kingdom by creating new communities, settling new territories, and founding new nations. They can also inspire millenarians to commit acts of terrorism (when the movement is not socially dominant) or fight revolutions and even world wars (when the movement has gained a sufficiently large number of adherents). All millenarian movements seek a condition of permanent well-being (salvation) for a designated group of people, often called “the Elect” by the believers or by scholars.

Related Terms

The terms *millenarianism* and *millennialism* come from the assertion in the Christian New Testament Book of Revelation (Apocalypse) that the Kingdom of God on earth will last 1,000 years (a millennium) (Revelation 20:2–7). Scholars have applied these terms to movements found in diverse religious traditions, not just Christian ones. The term *apocalypticism* can be used as a synonym for *catastrophic millennialism*.

A millenarian movement may or may not have a “prophet” or a “messiah.” It is possible for millenarian movements to be inspired by scriptures interpreted by people who do not claim to be prophets or messiahs. This can be seen in the millennialism associated with British Israelism, which contributed to the development of the American Christian Identity movement. Most millenarian movements do have prophets and/or messiahs.

A *prophet* is someone who is believed to speak for God or some other divine or superhuman source. Thus, a prophet can be said to have *charisma*; he or she is believed to have access to an unseen source of authority. Charisma is always socially constructed. If no one believes an individual's claim to have access to an unseen source of authority, then that person does not have charisma. A prophet is not necessarily a messiah.

The Hebrew word *messiah* has been used by scholars to refer to a person who is believed by millenarians to be empowered by the unseen source of authority to create the collective salvation. Thus, a messiah is a prophet, but a messiah has a more powerful status than a prophet. Millenarians believe that the messiah will actualize the millennial kingdom.

Catastrophic millennialism, in particular, is associated with a radically dualistic worldview in which good is seen as being locked in a battle with evil. Thus, catastrophic millennialists believe that humans are called to support the good and the divine side or else perish in the imminent destruction and/or be judged and sentenced to eternal punishment. The phrase *radical dualism* indicates that this can be a rigidly held dualistic outlook. This perspective expects, and may create, conflict.

Progressive millennialism is often linked with movements for social reform and nondualistic worldviews. But not all progressive millennial movements are peaceful. Some progressive millennialists are revolutionaries who seek to speed up progress by violent means. At the revolutionary end of the progressive millennial spectrum, a radically dualistic perspective is found. The German Nazis, the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia, and the Maoist Great Leap Forward in China can be seen as revolutionary progressive millennial movements.

Range of Behaviors

A range of behaviors is associated with both catastrophic millennialism and progressive millennialism. Catastrophic millennialists, such as Jehovah's Witnesses, Seventh-Day Adventists, and many other Christian millenarians, may wait in faith for divine intervention to destroy the current evil order. Catastrophic millennialists may be pacifists who actively put themselves in harm's way, expecting to achieve salvation by martyrdom, such as

some early Christians and some practitioners of Falun Gong in the People's Republic of China. Catastrophic millennialists may arm themselves for protection and fight back if attacked, as did the Branch Davidians residing at Mount Carmel Center near Waco, Texas, in 1993, and Black South Africans calling themselves "Israelites," who were massacred by the police at Bulhoek in 1921. Catastrophic millennialists may be revolutionaries carrying out violent acts, such as participants in the international radical Islamist (Jihadist) movement or the Taiping Rebellion in 19th-century China.

Progressive millennialists manifest a similar range of behaviors. They may engage in social work and/or proselytizing to build God's kingdom, as in the Protestant Social Gospel movement and the Catholic "special option for the poor" emerging from Vatican II. They may arm themselves for self-defense and fight back if attacked, for instance, Israelis seeking to establish and protect the state of Israel. Progressive millennialists may become active revolutionaries, as in the movements mentioned above.

Nativist Millennial Movements

A nativist millennial movement consists of people who feel under attack by a foreign colonizing government or socioeconomic political order, which is taking their land and destroying their traditional religion and way of life. Frequently, nativist millennialists identify with the stories of the oppression and deliverance of the people of Israel, which they learn about from the Christian Old Testament. Members of such movements might identify themselves as being the "true Israelites," as in the cases of the Black South Africans at Bulhoek and contemporary White American believers in a racist and anti-Semitic expression of Christianity called Christian Identity. Identity Christians are part of what may be termed a "European American nativist millennial movement" in the United States, which also includes Christian Patriots, Neo-Nazis, and Odinists. This movement's participants regard the federal government as being the satanic oppressor. Nativist millennialists long for a restoration of their land, prosperity, and an idealized conception of their former way of life.

Nativist millennialism may manifest in catastrophic or progressive patterns. A range of behaviors

is also associated with nativist millennial movements. Nativist millennialists may await divine intervention to remove their oppressors in response to their faith expressed in concrete actions, as in two 19th-century movements—the Ghost Dance movement among Native Americans and the Xhosa cattle-killing movement in South Africa. Nativist millennialists may become revolutionaries bent on eliminating their perceived oppressors to establish their idealized ancestral way of life, such as the German Nazis. The international radical Islamist movement, of which al Qaeda is a part, is an interesting example of a transnational nativist millennial movement. It seeks to restore the idealized *umma* (community, conceptualized as being a “nation”) (Qur’an 3:110), ruled by a restored (and idealized) *khilafa* (“caliphate,” a pious state), which will enforce Shari’a (Islamic law) in the manner the believers desire. Jihadists see Western social, political, and economic forces as disrupting the traditional Muslim way of life. They accuse Western nations of removing Muslims from their lands, stealing Muslims’ natural resources and wealth, desecrating Muslim holy lands and places, and propping up puppet Muslim regimes. They are particularly angry at American support for the state of Israel, which has displaced Palestinian Muslims from their homes and land. Radical Islamists wage jihad with the goal of defeating the foreign powers considered to be *al-ahzab* (“the Confederates”), removing false Muslim regimes, and reinstating the pious *umma* under the authority of the *khilafa*.

Millenarianism and New Religious Movements

Intense millenarianism is often found at the beginning of new religious movements. Catastrophic millennialism stresses the need for conversion from the old, corrupt religion and way of life to the new faith in order to be “saved” from imminent destruction and judgment. Thus, catastrophic millennialism can motivate people to adopt a new faith and religious practice even in the face of persecution. Catastrophic millennial ideas were prominent in the early Christian movement and in the early revelations given to Muhammad. Catastrophic millennial concepts were also found in the 19th-century Babi movement in Iran, which

saw its founder, the Bab, executed and his followers attacked, besieged, arrested, tortured, and killed.

Catastrophic millennial movements are often viewed as a challenge to the established social order and government because they envision the imminent establishment of a new order under the rule of God’s agent(s). Thus, it is not unusual for these prophets and messiahs to be attacked and put to death—as happened to John the Baptist, Jesus, and the Bab—or, alternatively, forced to flee and fight for their lives—as did Muhammad.

Progressive millennial movements also expect imminent change to occur in society, but if the believers do not resort to revolutionary violence, progressive millennial movements are less threatening to the status quo and current government. The Baha’i founding prophets, the Bab (of the Babi movement), and Baha’u’llah, were progressive millennialists, but it took some time for these new views to permeate the Baha’i movement since it emerged out of a Shi’ite Islamic context, which was oriented toward catastrophic millennialism.

Contemporary progressive millennial movements include those among the New Age movements expecting an imminent transition to the Age of Aquarius through a change in human consciousness, as well as different UFO (unidentified flying object) millennial groups, who look to extraterrestrials as being the superhuman agents and unseen source of authority. UFO millennialists may also be oriented toward catastrophic expectations, for instance, the 39 members of the Heaven’s Gate “class” who committed group suicide in 1997 to “beam up” to the mothership before the expected cataclysm.

As a new movement becomes established and comfortable in the wider society, it is common for millenarian expectations to diminish. The leaders of the movement will seek to control and dampen the antisocial enthusiasm and challenges to institutions that often accompany catastrophic expectations. Diminished millennial expectations coming under control of the institutionalized religion’s leaders has been termed “managed millennialism.” However, the intense millenarian ideas, including of the apocalyptic variety, will be preserved in the scriptures and thus will be rediscovered and emphasized by subsequent new religious movements in that tradition.

Millenarianism and Violence

Millenarianism is often, but not necessarily, related to violent episodes in complex ways.

The radical dualism associated with much of millenarian thought can stimulate opposition by members of mainstream society, leading to millenarians' belief in confirmed prophecies when a group becomes an *assaulted millennial group*. The radically different values and lifestyles adopted by millennialists can contribute to their being assaulted, as with the Mormons in 19th-century America and the Branch Davidians at Mount Carmel Center in 1993.

When millenarians are assaulted or feel threatened, they can in turn initiate violence. Such appears to have been the motivation for the attack by some Mormons of approximately 129 settlers traveling across Utah in a wagon train in 1857 in the Mountain Meadows massacre.

Some millenarians commit violence—against themselves, perceived enemies, or both—because they have become *fragile millennial movements*. Their group is suffering from internal stresses and weaknesses and often from pressures originating from outside the group, which cumulatively threaten the group's "ultimate concern," their religious goal—which in millenarian groups relates to the collective salvation. The members of Peoples Temple who committed murder and group suicide in 1978 at Jonestown, Guyana, resulting in more than 900 deaths, and the 39 members of Heaven's Gate are examples of fragile millennial groups. It is possible that the Branch Davidians, in the final moments of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's tank and CS gas assault against their community on April 19, 1993, became a fragile millennial group, with some members starting the fire to convey the Branch Davidians to heaven, in anticipation of being resurrected, and initiating the violent events of the end-time predicted in the Book of Revelation.

This entry has already mentioned several examples of *revolutionary millennial movements*, whose members carry out violent acts to destroy the old order and establish the collective salvation on earth for the elect.

These three categories of millenarian movements involved in violence are *not* mutually exclusive. For instance, Aum Shinrikyô in Japan had revolutionary aims when its scientists were exploring the

acquisition of weapons of mass destruction. But at the points in time when the Aum devotees carried out violence—against defectors and perceived enemies of the movement, by releasing sarin gas in the town of Matsumoto in 1994 and on the Tokyo subway in 1995—they were seeking to protect their guru, and hence the ultimate concern based on his authority, from disconfirming failure, thus making Aum Shinrikyô a fragile millennial group. The Mormons in the 19th century and the Branch Davidians in 1993 were assaulted on multiple occasions, but they may have been responding to a sense of fragility if and when some of them initiated violent acts in the Mountain Meadows massacre and the fire at Mount Carmel Center, respectively.

Violent incidents involving millenarians typically occur in interactive contexts. Law enforcement agents and the policy makers of nations need to give consideration to how the quality of interactions with believers may increase or decrease these movements' potential for volatility.

Millennialists may change their methods to achieve the collective salvation if particular methods fail to produce the desired result. Ian Reader has termed this phenomenon the "pragmatics of failure." Peaceful millennialists may resort to violence to preserve their millennial goal, as in several of the cases described above. Violent millennialists who suffer a resounding defeat may become pacifists, such as the Nichiren Buddhists, who supported Japanese militarism and imperial expansion through World War II but changed after atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki and subsequently contributed to the formation of pacifist movements working for peace.

Conclusion

The millenarian patterns that may be termed *catastrophic millennialism* and *progressive millennialism* are not mutually exclusive. Believers may shift from one to the other in response to events. Catastrophic expectations may increase if believers experience intense opposition or repeated disasters, perhaps including colonial oppression. Catastrophic millennialism involves a pessimistic view of humanity and society. People are seen as getting so bad that the old order has to be wiped out in a cataclysm so that the new order may be created. Progressive expectations may increase when

believers feel more at ease in society but still wish to remove evidence that contradicts their optimistic belief in human nature and progress. They will then be motivated to engage in social work and proselytization to create the collective salvation, believing that they work under the guidance of a superhuman agent. In extreme cases, progressive millennialists come under the sway of revolutionary ideologies and resort to murder to speed up progress. Even apparently secular revolutionary progressive millennialists have believed that they were called to carry out violent actions by a superhuman agent, ranging from God to “Nature” or “history.”

Millenarian movements are responses to the human desire to establish a condition of permanent well-being, which drives all religious expressions. Millenarians dare to dream large in their anticipation of imminent salvation for a collective elect.

Catherine Wessinger

See also al Qaeda; Anti-Semitism; Apocalypticism; Asahara, Shôkô; Aum Shinrikyô; Bab, Sayyid ‘Ali Muhammad; Babi; Baha’i; Baha’u’llah; Bible; Branch Davidians; Charisma; China; Christian Identity; Cultural Revolution (China); Falun Gong; Ghost Dance Religion; Heaven’s Gate; Islamism (Political Islam); Jihad; Killing Fields (Cambodia); Mormons; New Age Movements; New Religions; Taiping Rebellion

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MISSIONS AND MISSIONARIES

Missions and *missionaries* are related terms referring to the organizations (missions) and people (missionaries) who communicate their religion in words and actions across cultural and linguistic boundaries with the aim of encouraging the adoption of the religion by people unfamiliar with it. Missions are the agencies in particular times and places that send out the communicators of religious messages. Missionaries are the ones sent to articulate those messages in words and actions, in the form of witness and embodiment, what is believed to be the universal truth of their religious tradition. Undergirding missionary action is the belief that the religion they represent does indeed have answers to the ontological, physical, and spiritual problems of human beings and, more

broadly, that it encompasses and addresses environmental and cosmic disharmonies. Although many scholars of religions commonly classify the “missionary religions” as chiefly Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam, any religious tradition claiming to possess universal truth can function as a missionary religion, since followers of those religious traditions affirm that their religion offers a way—some might say the only way—to alleviate the problems that plague the human condition. Even so-called nonmissionary religions, such as Hinduism or Sikhism, can be missionary in nature as followers of those traditions communicate the universality of their religion with the intent of changing others’ worldviews.

The history of the global expansion of religions is the story of the uneven collusion with, sometimes collision against, missionaries and state power, cultural and social forces, and nation-making schemes. Nowadays, however, the term *missions* applies broadly to both religious and secular activities, exemplified by the requirement of most businesses, educational institutions, and nongovernmental organizations to have a “mission statement” defining their purpose of existence. Even governments employ the term *missions* when referring to their military strategies (e.g., “Our [military] mission in X country”). Although missions can be understood in this broad sense of providing a standard vision for diverse groups such as revenue-generating multinational corporations, nonprofit organizations, or cottage industries, the origin of the English term *missions* has an explicitly religious meaning, originating within Christian circles. And it is crucial to note that there were both missions and missionaries sent out by other religious traditions prior to the emergence of Christianity. Nevertheless, because “missions” and “missionaries” are associated so heavily with Christianity and are themselves English words, we begin with the English origins of the terms.

Distinction Between Mission and Missions

The English term *missions* is the plural form of *mission*, a term coined by the Jesuits in the 16th century to refer to the Trinity’s action of sending. In the context of the Protestant Reformation, the Jesuits used the term *mission* (Latin *missio*) in a twofold sense. First, “mission” (sending) referred

to the Trinity’s movement of the Father sending the Son (Jesus Christ), who sends the Holy Spirit, who sends the church into the world. That is, the Jesuits affirmed that the church was sent into the world to do the business of the one who sent it. Second, the Jesuits employed the term *mission* to refer to the sending of Roman Catholic missionaries into regions of the world that were either not Christian (e.g., heathen) or Protestant, which in both cases required conversion to Roman Catholicism to obtain salvation. Since the Protestant Reformation (16th century), it was common for Protestant churches to employ the term *missions* instead of *mission*, referring to the outreach activities of the various Protestant churches. However, in the mid-1960s, many Protestants began to distinguish between *mission* and *missions*, with the intention of demonstrating that the identity of the Christian church is based on its relationship to the Godhead (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), who sends the church into the world, missions being the particular outgrowth of the single mission of the Godhead (Latin *missio Dei*). Despite the distinction between *mission* and *missions* recognized by scholars and leaders of Christian missions, most Christians fail to distinguish between the two terms.

Missions refers to the particular agencies, organizations, and practices of Christian church work in specific times and places. As such there are countless “missions,” since every year more Christian outreach agencies are established all over the world. Missions are often directed toward particular groups, such as those defined along ethnic lines (e.g., Batak, Dinka), religious communities (e.g., Muslims, Christians, Hindu), ideological perspectives (e.g., secularists, atheists), age groups (e.g., children, youth, the elderly, post-Gen X), economic status (e.g., affluent, poor), education level (e.g., scholars, uneducated), social location (e.g., recent immigrants to urban centers, students, Brahmins), occupation (e.g., scientists, artists), or world region (e.g., the West, Asia, Africa). The particular foci of missions are equally quite broad, for they can entail humanitarian efforts (e.g., establishing health care centers, improving living conditions of communities) or educational endeavors (e.g., teaching literacy or computers). Yet the work of (religious) missions is distinct from the efforts of secular humanitarianism by their intention of communicating a divine message, truth, or wisdom through the words and

actions of their representatives (missionaries). Some scholars of Christian mission further distinguish between the broader category of mission and the narrower concept of evangelism, which is the verbal proclamation of the Christian message that Jesus Christ is God's Son who died for the sins of the world. That is,

God showed how much he loved us by sending his one and only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through him. This is real love—not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins. (I John 4:9–10)

The South African scholar of Christian mission David Bosch asserts that mission without evangelism is humanitarianism, since verbal proclamation of the distinctives of Christianity (i.e., evangelism) is what animates Christian mission worldwide. Furthermore, many scholars of Christian mission have noted that the term *missions* implies the presence of a sender, one sent, and a message. In the Christian perspective, God is the sender, the missionary is the one sent, and the message consists of the communication in word and deed that in Jesus Christ something radically new has occurred for all creation that can provide the reconciliation of human beings with God.

Missionaries

Missionaries are human actors who communicate in word and deed a universal divine message to specific people and communities. Missionaries believe that they possess the answers to the problems of the human condition. Although there are similarities between missionaries and other religious workers, such as priests, pastors, monks, and nuns, there are also vast differences that make the work of missionaries quite unique and that have necessitated the establishment of a wide variety of missionary orders, which, for example, in the Roman Catholic Church include orders such as the Benedictines, Augustinians, Marists, Divine Word Missionaries, Sacred Heart Missionaries, Dominicans, Franciscans, and Jesuits, each with different emphases of ministry and service. Perhaps the most universal characteristic of missionaries is that

they are boundary crossers in their attempt to communicate to new audiences. Since missionaries are, like all human beings, embedded in social, cultural, economic, and religious systems, their activities are far from neutral. Given that missionaries are sent into new regions with their message, they are usually religious and cultural minorities, a social position requiring that they learn new languages and cultures to be able to communicate. Yet it is instructive to note that missionaries can be religious minorities while being members of the cultural majority, such as those within a given culture who adopt a religion and then proceed to communicate that religion to people within their own culture. Since missionaries have learned new languages and cultures, they often become knowledge brokers, bringing fresh knowledge of distant places, cultures, beliefs, practices, and values into discourse within their home culture. Consequently, the history of the expansion of religions across cultural and linguistic borders is a story of mutual encounter, which in some cases has led to greater appreciation of various peoples and cultures and in other cases to increased conflict between communities, in part because of the transformation or reinforcement of social and religious identities by the new knowledge introduced by missionaries or as a result of the reinterpretation of local religious perspectives as an identity-maintaining strategy. The transformation of individual and communal identities occurs in all directions, with some people becoming more fervently committed to their first religion, while others find the new religion so compelling that they follow its religious tradition. The trajectory of the global expansion of religions is marked by continuity and discontinuity between religions and local cultures. As social carriers of new knowledge, values, and spiritual and religious insights, missionaries occupy a crucial role in individual and communal identity formation and, thus, through time have helped transform the world as they have often been among the first ones to enter territories and engage local people in a sustained way.

Constraints on the activities of missionaries reveal the struggles many religionists experience globally, especially if they are religious minorities. As a consequence of their boundary-crossing activities, missionaries have encountered countless obstacles that can be categorized broadly as structural

and personal constraints. Structural constraints include obstacles such as legal prohibitions enacted by local or national governments forbidding the communication or practice of religions not sanctioned by the powers that be; ideological resistance, when the local people refuse to accept the message of the missionary; and the logistical challenges of getting from a missionary's home country to his or her intended destination. Other constraints on missionary work include the personal and physical costs involved. Most missionaries reside outside their home country and can experience feelings of personal isolation from their home culture and language. Many missionaries have paid for their work with their lives, becoming martyrs respected for the ultimate sacrifice they made to further their religion.

Missionary Activity Today

Christian

Christian missions are divided broadly into denominational and "faith mission" groups. Missionaries who are sent out by particular Christian denominations (e.g., Presbyterian, Southern Baptist, Lutheran, Roman Catholic) are considered denominational missionaries and receive most or even all of their financial support from the sending denomination, whereas missionaries sent out by para-church organizations (e.g., Wycliff Bible Translators, New Tribes Mission, InterVarsity) raise their funding by "faith," from friends, family members, and colleagues, believing that the successful garnering of financial support is an affirmation of the validity of their missionary call. Additionally, each Christian missionary organization has its own set of emphases that may include goals such as starting new churches, translating the Bible into vernacular languages, or caring for orphans. Such societies span Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant branches of Christianity.

In the midst of the diversity and competition among Christian missions, Christian ecumenism commenced with the convening of the Edinburgh Conference of 1910, beginning a new movement of large Christian mission conferences that sought to bring unity to the burgeoning of Christianity around the world. Today, the larger ecumenically oriented Christian bodies include the Roman Catholic Church (i.e., *Servizio de Documentazione*

e Studi); the World Council of Churches (i.e., Commission on World Mission and Evangelism), which includes mostly Protestant and some Orthodox denominations worldwide; and the Lausanne movement, consisting primarily of evangelical church denominations. Although Christianity is the largest religion in the world, the terms *missions* and *missionaries* apply equally to a host of other religious traditions as well, some of which are much earlier traditions than Christianity. While most scholars refer to Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam as the great missionary religions, such a narrow reading of religious history overlooks the fact that most religions, particularly the so-called world religions, claim that they contain universal truth and that truth is for everybody. That is, while a religious tradition may not articulate itself as missionary in nature, the fact that religionists seek to express a meta-truth, principle, or insight applicable to all people throughout time, with the aim of having the hearers adopt the perspective, makes them function like a missionary religion.

Buddhist

Buddhism was the earliest missionary religion of the world religions. Following Prince Siddhartha Gautama's experience of enlightenment, when he became "The Buddha" (lit. "The Awakened One"), as though waking from a dream, the Buddha gathered male and female disciples and sent them on a mission to teach the truths he had discovered, instilling a desire in them to show compassion and love to all living beings. The truth was not of a personal god or deity, as in Christianity, but the Four Noble Truths that enabled followers to penetrate the world of appearances in order to experience deeper realities of the transitory nature of all things and reach a state of "awakeness," or enlightenment. *Metta* ("lovingkindness") is a concept that should animate Buddhist action in the world, where the faithful demonstrate Buddha dharma, or dhamma (Buddha's teaching). One of the most important early converts to and proponents of Buddhism was King Asoka (304–232 BCE), the emperor of the massive Mauryan Empire in the Indian subcontinent, who sent out missionaries who functioned as emissaries to several outlying regions, including Nepal, Thailand, and Sri Lanka. King Asoka sent his son, Mahinda, as a

Buddhist missionary to Sri Lanka, thereby founding the religion in that region and establishing a base from which Mahinda sent his sister, Sanghamitta, as a Buddhist nun to begin a female Buddhist monastic order (*Bhikkhunis*). Today, Buddhism is one of the fastest growing global religions, its attractiveness due in part to the seriousness with which it analyzes and seeks to remedy suffering, a putatively universal experience.

Hindu

Hinduism, although a so-called nonmissionary religion, does claim to possess ultimate truth that transcends the insights of other religious traditions. From the perspective of some Hindus, Hinduism, in fact, is the pinnacle of all religions. During the British Raj, Hindus were misunderstood by the British colonizers, who, taking an evolutionary perspective on religion, saw them as followers of the animistic and polytheistic religions of South Asia and not as “advanced” as the monotheistic traditions. It was the great Hindu missionary to the West, Swami Vivekananda (1863–1902), who proclaimed at the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893 that behind the many deities stands the One, “the common centre to which all these widely diverging radii [religions] converge.” On the relationship between the religions, Vivekananda followed the insights of his teacher, Ramakrishna Paramahansa (1836–1886), who claimed to have discovered through deep meditation that all religions are paths to the same ultimate reality, a perspective that Vivekananda himself promoted so articulately at the World Parliament of Religions that Hinduism came to be seen as an intellectually stimulating and spiritually vibrant religion, not the substandard religious tradition that some had supposed it to be. Vivekananda’s visit to the West put Hinduism on the intellectual map of many who had not thought of the religion as a serious tradition, compatible intellectually and spiritually with the monotheistic faiths. As a mission outreach, Vivekananda established numerous Ramakrishna Missions worldwide, which provided charity, education, disaster relief, health care, and worship as a form of outreach and service. New Hindu movements that have been active in the West, such as the Hare Krishna movement, Transcendental Meditation, and Radhasoami, may

also be considered a form of Hindu missionary activity.

Muslim

Islam is a missionary religion, with explicit scriptural and theological warrant to advance its teaching and presence globally. Islamic *da’wa* (Arabic “invitation” or “mission”) is a theological and practical call to Muslims to propagate their faith worldwide, with the aim of encouraging people to submit to God. Those who explicitly seek to propagate the teachings of Islam are referred to in Arabic as either *muballigh* (“preacher”) or *du’at* (plural *da’ee*, “missionary”). The communication of *da’wa* is often through humanitarian projects, such as health care, welfare, and educational endeavors, as well as preaching, but the history of the global expansion of Islam is a story in which Islamic mystics (Sufis) often acted as missionaries by being the first to communicate Islamic ideals, with some having political and others spiritual ends in mind. The robust growth of Islam from its emergence in the Arabian Peninsula, a region that by the time of the death of Prophet Muhammad (632 CE) had nearly entirely submitted to the religion, to becoming the second largest religion in the world testifies to the success of its global mission to see human beings live under submission to God.

Conclusion

It is practically impossible to be neutral about the topic of missions and missionaries, since by definition the endeavor to win over the commitment of human beings to new values, relationships, perspectives, and spiritual realities has weighty personal, social, and cultural implications and, some would say, tremendous divine or cosmic repercussions. Furthermore, it is important to acknowledge that the presence of missions and missionaries always blends with social, political, and ideological forces. The space limitations of a summary article do not allow a more detailed exploration of the complex nature of religious missions; therefore, it is recommended that the reader who wishes to pursue the topic further should engage the following queries. First, what is the relationship between missions, missionaries, and political power? The history of

the global expansion of religions reveals an uneven story of collusion, competition, and resistance between missionaries and political forces, but with little uniformity or predictability. How have missionaries provided a countervailing force against other forms of power or domination (political, spiritual, or otherwise), and how have they used those powers to propagate their faith? Second, what is the relationship between missions, missionaries, and culture? Each religion has a variety of perspectives on culture that are embodied by their representatives (i.e., missionaries) whether they oppose or embrace, either selectively or in total, the cultural elements of the recipients. Why are certain cultural elements embraced (and what are they), while others are rejected? Third, how does the translatability or nontranslatability of the religion's message into local vernacular languages and cultural idioms affect the transformation of an individual and communal self-understanding? For instance, Christian advance worldwide succeeds by translation, where its fundamental affirmations (e.g., the Bible) find their final destination in the local languages of its recipients, whereas Islam's mission success is the result of bringing people under the word of the nontranslated Qur'an, thus valorizing the Arabic language as the supreme vehicle of Divine truth. What are the social and cultural implications of a religion's ability or inability to be translated into vernacular languages and cultures? Fourth, what carries the religion of the missionary? Some religious traditions believe that God speaks through people or scripture to communicate a divine message, whereas other traditions suggest that a cosmic law or set of principles can be intuited, such as through a mind-to-mind transmission. How do recipients receive the message—through written or spoken words, intuition, or actions? What role do missionaries play in the transmission, interpretation, and maintenance of the religion through time?

Astute students of religion cannot skirt the complicated nature of missions and missionaries in the context of wider globalizing forces that have changed the social, economic, political, and religious face of the world. These organizations and representatives believe that they know and communicate truth. As such they have been vilified aggressively, tolerated passively, and even venerated enthusiastically. What is clear is that religions

have expanded globally in large part because of religious representatives who have moved across cultural and linguistic boundaries convinced that they have something unique to say and do that benefits all human beings. As social carriers of new knowledge, missionaries have introduced transformations in the understandings of self, community, the natural world, cosmos, and the divine that have in an unparalleled way affected the world.

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See also Christianity; Conversion; Global Religion; Globalization and Conversion; Hinduism; Islam; Mahayana Buddhism; Postcolonialism; Theravada Buddhism

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MITHRAS CULT

The cult of Mithras was an initiation cult extant from the first to the fourth century CE in the Roman Empire. The eponymous cult god, hailed as *Sol Invictus* ("The Unconquered Sun") has roots in the Persian god Mitra, the god of loyalty and guarantor of pledges. Centering on the god's

sacrifice of a bull, which promised salvation to initiates, and strongly astrological in nature, the Roman cult was extremely popular with soldiers, who disseminated it throughout the empire.

The Persian cap and trousers of the god hearken to its past and remain the cult's most recognizable referent. Believed to have been introduced to the Roman world by Cilician pirates, the first mention of the cult comes from the time of Nero, when the god was invoked during a pledge of loyalty to the emperor.

It was a cult that celebrated no public rites and excluded women entirely from its ranks. Members would meet at temples known as *Mithraea* (singular *Mithraeum*). Meant to represent caves or crypts and designed as an area for devotees to share the principal ritual meal, the temple's focal point was the glyph known as the tauroctony, which illustrated Mithras's sacrifice and important characters in the cult's myth.

Mithras was believed to have been born from a stone on December 25. His first miracle was obtaining water from a stone by shooting it with an arrow, an event ritually remembered by his disciples. The central event was the slaying of the bull, preceded by a hunt where Mithras overcomes the beast through great feats of strength and drags it by its hindquarters into a cave. The bull's death is associated with transformation, and the magical force released turns the wounds and tail into food, which certain creatures of astrology ingest. As the bull is also linked to the moon and death, with this act Mithras is seen to defeat death and offer new life to those participating.

The torchbearers of the tauroctony, Cautes with his torch raised and Cautopates with his torch lowered, continue this depiction. They have been linked with various dualities: the rising/setting sun, life/death, and the higher/lower worlds, among others. Scholars such as Manfred Clauss have interpreted them to locate Mithras as the intercessor after death who brings the initiate into new life.

For his believers, Mithras clearly had a prominent place within the Roman pantheon, separate but related to *Sol*, the Sun. The sun and the moon are regular features on cult images, and some scholars believe along with David Ulansey that Mithras was seen as the greater sun, abiding behind the universe we know.

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See also Ancient Near Eastern Religions; Christianity; Hybridization; Manichaeism; Mediterranean World; Rome

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MODERNISM

Modernism is a set of ideas about individual and public life that emerged in 17th-century Europe and spread around the world, ideas that clashed with nonscientific traditions, religion, and superstition. Apart from representative events and periods that mark its onset and conclusion, there are no clear dates that define the period of modernism. As early as the Renaissance, which gave way to the Age of Enlightenment, premodern intellectualism was gaining momentum for the thrust toward technological, economic, cultural, and industrial revolutions that would bring advanced societies into the Age of Modernism. The sociologist Anthony Giddens (b. 1938) has described the emergence of the modern era as resulting from the development of the nation-state as well as the rise of industrialism. Within this notion of modernism lies a tenor of belief in (the attainability of) progress, objectivity, rationality, and truth, running through the gradual development of ideas that would provide a foundation for modern societies.

The features within the transition from premodern to modern were well noted within the social sciences. Ferdinand de Tönnies's (1855–1936) analysis of the societal shifts associated with modern life drew out the distinctions between the social groupings known as *Gemeinschaft* and *Gessellschaft*. Where the former refers to a community generated by close bonds of affect, the latter describes a society bound by mutual agreements tied to local or national organizational

structures. Although Tönnies's ideas have been met with criticism on account of their reductionist character, they nevertheless illustrate a transition from traditional communities to modern societies.

Georg Simmel (1858–1918), a pioneering sociologist, also wrote extensively about the culture that arose out of modernity. In his 1903 essay titled “The Metropolis and Mental Life,” Simmel commented on the ecological effects of large urban settings on the minds of the individuals who inhabit them. Simmel emphasized a culture of individuality that was often mistaken for impolite behavior yet in actuality was more of a self-defense mechanism that sustained one's independence within the harsh environment of modern city life. Although the burgeoning individualism that Simmel described appeared to be an entirely personal phenomenon, he also commented on the broader social constraints of rationalization that contributed to this modern milieu. For Simmel, the modern city had perpetuated a technical rationality that would move toward dismal ends.

Simmel's assessment of modernity was not unlike Max Weber's (1864–1920) bleak outlook of a world confined to unyielding rationalization. Weber criticized the functions of bureaucracies within modernity as institutions organized around hierarchies and goal-oriented operations. Using his famous metaphor, Weber believed that this type of rationality would leave individuals trapped within an “iron cage.”

Criticisms of the modern age would continue through the 20th and 21st centuries, leading to the debate about whether modernity had adapted to the emerging challenges and transformed into something new or ended entirely. The postmodern theorist Jean-Francois Lyotard (1924–1998) certainly recognized a distinctive phenomenon that grew out of the 20th century, characterized by skepticism toward modernity. Lyotard referred to this phenomenon as the “postmodern condition,” which constituted a break with knowledge building and the legitimization of logic found within the grand narratives of modernity.

In an insightful essay, the architecture critic Charles Jencks suggested a symbolic end to modernity when he zeroed in on the controlled demolition of the Pruitt-Igoe public housing project in St. Louis on July 15, 1972. Initially considered an emblematic example of the promise of prosperity

within modernity, the Pruitt-Igoe complex had overcome initial plans as a segregated building and was promoted as fostering community values in a futuristic vision of social wealth and productivity. Yet, as Jencks's observation suggests, the U.S. government's attempt at urban renewal failed to live up to any such utopian promise. Although Jencks's comments refer more to the end of modern architecture and the beginning of postmodernity, the example of the literal rise and fall of this symbolic building offers insight into the futility of the project of modernism.

Enlightenment

The term *Enlightenment* refers to any number of intellectual and cultural changes associated with the period beginning in the late 17th century and ending in the late 18th to mid-19th centuries. The Enlightenment designates a break with traditional forms of reasoning based on the influence of superstition, religion, and repressive governing bodies.

The work of the early-modern philosopher René Descartes (1596–1650) symbolizes this transition through his discourse on existence. Concerned with arriving at truth, Descartes famously developed the dictum of *Cogito ergo sum* (“I think, therefore I am”), wherein he is said to have evidenced the existence of the individual as a thinking being. The methods through which Descartes arrived at his conclusions changed the course of philosophy and reasoning for modern thinkers to come.

Isaac Newton (1643–1727) advanced scientific discourse, establishing a contemporary foundation for which logic could be used to direct inquiry. As an innovator of new ideas within a host of natural scientific disciplines, Newton established new research ground for the most advanced modern thinkers to explore.

Well after the death of Descartes and during the later years of Newton's life, François-Marie Arouet (1694–1778), known by his pen name Voltaire, contributed to Enlightenment ideas that would inspire future thinkers to question precepts entrenched within the institutions of authority. An ardent critic of the French monarchy and the Catholic Church, Voltaire scrutinized the constraints imposed on civil liberties and the freedoms of religious expression. In this way, Voltaire's

influence added extensively to the modern processes of reasoning.

In addition to Descartes, Voltaire, and Newton, the influence of Enlightenment thought on modernity can be attributed to a host of European intellectuals, including Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679), John Locke (1632–1704), George Berkeley (1685–1753), Charles Montesquieu (1689–1755), Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778), Denis Diderot (1713–1784), and Immanuel Kant (1724–1804).

Religion

Though it was the poet Friedrich Schiller (1759–1805) who first introduced the phrase *Die Entzauberung der Welt* (“the disenchantment of the world”), it was Max Weber who popularized this idea as a consequence of formal rationalization. Weber pessimistically foresaw a world of overarching rational systems characterized by the devaluation of magic and religion in favor of secular forms of reasoning, ingenuity, and technological advancements. According to Weber, the emphasis on rationality would lead to the secularization of religious traditions and the gradual eradication of the irrational beliefs and practices of the premodern era.

In contrast to what Weber foresaw, religion has prevailed—albeit in a characteristically different fashion. The emergence of new global religious movements associated with mystical New Age beliefs, a media-oriented consumer culture tied to a cult of commodities, and the aggrandizing of religious venues of worship are just a few examples of how religion has made a significant resurgence and reinvigorated the irrationalism of the premodern traditions.

Industrialism

The French sociologist Émile Durkheim (1858–1917) examined theoretical explanations about the formation and continuity of social communities. In his 1893 book *The Division of Labor in Society*, Durkheim introduced two forms of social cohesion that he referred to as “mechanical solidarity” and “organic solidarity.” Mechanical solidarity describes a type of organizational structure of labor associated with premodern societies where participants were capable of performing a variety of tasks. For Durkheim, this form of solidarity

fostered a highly competitive environment as workers were independent of one another and thus less interactive in attaining their specific needs. In contrast, the organic form of solidarity describes a type of organizational structure of labor associated with modern societies where participants are more interdependent in obtaining their needs. As laborers become more specialized, Durkheim suggested, this organic solidarity would cultivate cooperation between laborers of different trades based on needs that could not be met by one person’s skills alone.

Durkheim’s division of labor provides a model for illustrating how modern societies have come to operate under extremely complex and interconnected organizations. As the development of communication and transportation technologies increased and the space within which interaction took place decreased, industrial settings intended to produce mass output began to emerge. The capitalist mode of production drew heavily on labor forces to meet the demands of a burgeoning consumer class; at the same time, work management schemes that served to maintain order and cultivate certain ideal notions about production were devised.

Taylorism and Fordism

Fredrick Winslow Taylor (1856–1915) is considered a fundamental contributor to the methods of operation found within modern industrialism. Working under the premise that the routines of modern life were highly inefficient, Taylor sought to minimize unnecessary steps and digressions from the production process by streamlining movement within the workplace. Seeking to arrive at an ideal method for producing goods, Taylor actually timed physical operations and weeded out unnecessary stages as well as any needless activities in the production line. In his 1911 essay *The Principles of Scientific Management*, Taylor illustrated how the workplace could undergo this transformation toward organizational efficiency. Ultimately, Taylor believed that his type of production arrangement could be applied to any venue of social activity.

Sharing a vision similar to Taylor’s, Henry Ford (1863–1947) created an industrial automotive empire through the development of his Model T automobile. With the creation of fast and efficient

production, Ford is considered the founder of the modern assembly line. Although Ford's objective has been said to be the creation of an inexpensively produced and affordable automobile, admirers of this organizational structure carried it over into endeavors well beyond automobile production. Today, this emphasis on rational schemas of operation can be found within just about every modern social institution.

McDonaldization

The term *McDonaldization* refers to a global rationalization process associated with modernity whereby the world becomes more and more accustomed to adopting the organizational structure of the fast-food industry. Developed by George Ritzer (b. 1940) during the late 1980s and early 1990s, the McDonaldization thesis applies a Weberian model of bureaucratic organizations to the system of production and marketing of output by McDonald's fast-food chain restaurants. Ritzer illustrates this rationalization process through the following four dimensions: (1) efficiency, or the ideal means by which to achieve a given end; (2) calculability, which refers to the privileging of quantitative objectives over qualitative ones; (3) predictability, which describes the standardization of production and the product regardless of the setting; and (4) control, or the use of modern technology to replace the daily functions of the employee. Ritzer draws connections between McDonaldization and other institutions that have adopted this model, including education, politics, health care, tourism, entertainment, professional athletics, and recreation.

In spite of the advantages that accompany the McDonaldization process, there are also several disadvantages to operating under this model. These disadvantages can be found within a fifth dimension referred to as the "irrationality of the rational process." This fifth dimension reveals the extent to which the other four dimensions create counterproductive and disenchanting outcomes, ultimately associated with Weber's outlook on modernity and his metaphor of the iron cage.

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See also Durkheim, Émile; Enlightenment; McDonaldization; Modernism; Modernization; Postmodernism; Weber, Max

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MODERNIZATION

Modernization involves a complex set of political, economic, technological, and cultural developments originating in Europe and now operative, in varying degrees, throughout the world. The key characteristics of modernization include the formation of nation-states, the development of capitalist economies, the differentiation of social spheres, and the transformation of religious life. Throughout the 20th century, modernization was thought to be closely tied to secularization, or the decline of religion, but major events of the past few decades have forced scholars to reconsider this assumption. Although modernization often involves a set of forces that are hostile to traditional religion, the link between modernization and religion is complicated for at least two reasons. First, modernization is in many ways a product of religion, and second, the idea of "traditional" religion as the counterpart to "modernity" is itself a product of modernization. In addition, disagreement continues as to what constitutes modernity and how religious traditions encourage, accommodate, or resist the logic of modern life.

There is no commonly accepted period in which modernization began, but there is a general agreement that modernization developed in Europe. At the most basic level, modernization begins with the problematization of a society's relationship to time. For a community to understand itself as "modern," it must construct its identity in distinction from its past, such that the past appears as an antiquated origin, even if it also figures nostalgically as an ideal utopia to which to return. Scholars

have located the problematization of time as far back as the experience of ancient Israel, which is distinguished by its unique idea that it was called by God to leave its homeland and seek God's providential future. This distinctly historical understanding of religious experience is common to Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, and in this sense, each of these religions may be understood to have modernizing characteristics.

Medieval Europe

The development of an explicitly "modern" identity in contrast to an antique and outmoded past, however, can be located fairly precisely in late-medieval Europe. In the 12th and 13th centuries, twin developments in popular religiosity and in theological reflection gave rise to the sense that European culture was "modern" and had distanced itself from its past. First, the movement known as *devotion moderna* ("modern devotion") fostered a renewed sense of religious interiority and emotional forms of religious practice. Second, the theological movement known as the *via moderna* ("the modern way") encouraged a break with church tradition and emphasized the use of human rationality for making judgments about empirical realities. These movements combined with a heightened sense of historicity, thanks to the millennialism surrounding the year 1000, to create the foundations of the modern West. The distinctive characteristics of this modernity include a heightened sense of individual human subjectivity in the context of an inert, objective world, alongside a new appreciation for the possibility of manipulating the empirical world so as to achieve an idealized future.

The late-medieval period therefore laid the groundwork for a revolutionary shift away from a sacred cosmos to an empirical world increasingly available for use and calculation. The rejection of the "ancient way" was also a significant step toward the equalization of individuals and a new appreciation for human liberty. The poverty debates of the Franciscans in the 13th and 14th centuries gave way to the first invocation of the human "rights" discourse, and the retrieval of ancient Roman law in the 12th and 13th centuries became the foundation for political systems based on the right to own property. At the same time, the Catholic Church was undergoing significant transformation as it began to rationalize its administrative and legal systems.

The bureaucratic expansion of the Church came into conflict with the nascent experience of human individuality, rationality, and the "modern way," however. These conflicting tendencies reached a breaking point in the Protestant Reformation of the 16th century.

The Protestant Reformation

The Reformation is significant in the history of modernization for a number of reasons. For one, the reformers rejected the authority of church tradition. Instead, they argued that Scripture alone is a reliable source of God's revelation, and they used Scripture to defend the doctrine of salvation by faith alone. According to this doctrine, all individuals stand alone before God and depend entirely on God for salvation. Salvation was understood as a gift of God, independent of one's participation in the sacraments and the life of the church. Therefore, the reformers' soteriology posed a fundamental challenge to the role of priests, since the reformers believed that the individual confronted God directly and that there was no difference between the priest and the layperson. This reinterpretation of the relationship between God, the self, and the world had two consequences. On the one hand, it heightened the role of internal spirituality, for the individual believer was understood to confront God directly through prayer, Scripture, and the sacraments. On the other hand, the reformers' emphasis on God's sovereignty, otherness, and transcendence meant that the world was stripped of sacred value. The world was no longer a place where God was immanent everywhere; rather, the world became a profane object, subject to control and manipulation by human activity.

Although the Reformation was in essence a theological controversy, it had profound political and economic consequences as well. First, the reformers' emphasis on the equality of all humans, the human capacity for reason, and the value of human freedom contributed to the development of liberal political theory. By circumscribing the role of the church in the everyday affairs of individuals, the Reformation also emancipated aspects of social life from church regulation. This process is known as differentiation, in which spheres of life that were formerly under the control of the church came to be organized according to their own principles. This process made possible a new conception of state

sovereignty in which the state was founded not on religious authority but on principles of contract, the rational self-determination of the individual, and the guarantee of human liberty. As political institutions were differentiated from religious structures, there were widespread movements to emancipate property from church control as well. Secularization, or the seizure and redistribution of church property, along with the transfer of economic regulatory powers to political leaders, laid the foundation for liberal, free-market economies.

Enlightenment Rationalism and Christian Pietism

The political, economic, and theological upheavals of the 16th century also had important ramifications for the development of the empirical sciences. Whereas the medieval church cautioned against the overextension of human curiosity, early-modern Europeans were beginning to experience the benefits of a this-worldly, instrumental rationality. Breakthroughs in science and technology in the 17th and 18th centuries, such as the development of a uniform, multigenerational scientific method, culminated in what Hans Blumenberg has called the “triumph of theoretical curiosity.” In turn, technological developments contributed to the expansion of trade and exchange around the globe, especially during Europe’s colonial period. Colonialism enabled a massive transfer of wealth to Europe, and with it an unprecedented accumulation of power, which radically transformed Europe’s position in world politics. The 18th and 19th centuries saw two major adaptations to these changes: Enlightenment rationalism and Christian pietism. These movements celebrated the role of reason and the possibility of progress, on the one hand, and the centrality of the individual, on the other. Both movements bolstered the transformations already under way in politics, economics, and science, and together with Europe’s colonial endeavors, they contributed to the marked accumulation of wealth and power in the West.

Secularization, Progress, and the Self- Contradictions of Global Modernization

By the 19th century, the European experience of cultural, political, and economic development created a distinctly “modern” notion of historical

progress. Technological development, economic growth, and scientific advances such as Darwin’s theory of evolution all contributed to the organization of human consciousness around a linear notion of time, pointing toward an ideal future of human liberation. Debate about the origins of the notion of progress is ongoing. Some scholars have located variants of a teleological, progressive vision of history as far back as St. Augustine around 400 CE, while others have related the origins of linear time to the development of clocks in the 14th century and the rationalization of labor time. Regardless of the precise origin of the notion of progress, however, scholars agree that the ideology of progress is one of the hallmarks of the “modern” world, and the 19th century is distinguished by the formation of progressive philosophies of history, such as those of G. W. F. Hegel and Karl Marx. Both Hegel and Marx expected that history would result in an era of human liberation once humanity had overcome its servitude to religion and superstition.

Europe’s cultural successes and its confidence in the triumph of secular rationality over religion led to its profound expectation that world history would follow its example. The founders of modern social theory (Karl Marx, Max Weber, Émile Durkheim) generally believed that modern rationalization, bureaucratization, and the spread of the Enlightenment principles of reason and democratic liberalism would lead to a worldwide decline of religion. Weber, perhaps the most influential thinker on the relationship between modernization and secularization, argued that modernity was the denouement of a tendency latent within Christianity, especially within Calvinist Protestantism. Weber argued that Calvinism fostered what he called “inner worldly asceticism,” or a thrifty work ethic that shares an “elective affinity” with capitalism. In turn, capitalism encourages the rationalization of the world and the privatization of religiosity, with the result that religion in modernity is forced to adapt itself to capitalist modes of organization and exchange. Religion becomes just one more commodity for private consumption, and a plurality of religious traditions compete for religious adherents. Hence, pluralization and privatization of religion constitute the structural features of modernization as secularization, and both processes are commonly understood to result in a decline in the social significance of religion.

The reality has proven much more complex, for several reasons. First, modernization can engender religious resistance, as evidenced by the recent increase in politicized religion across the globe. Even in the absence of such historical examples, the very concept of modernity depends on the continued existence (real or imagined) of its “other,” which it construes as a reactionary and traditional mode of life that belongs in the past. The same dynamic is operative within the idea that modernity offers a uniquely secular future. For example, Talal Asad has argued that the concept of “the secular” must be understood as part of a political project of *secularism*, in which the modern world positions itself over and against a religious “other” so as to purify itself from it.

Second, modernizing tendencies can be found in different combinations in religious traditions worldwide. Scholars have shown that, for instance, Buddhism encourages resistance to desire, interiority, and personal discipline, and the period of Buddha’s preaching is marked by urbanization, the appearance of a monetized economy, and the spread of contractual relations across society. All of these are aspects of modernization, even though they do not result in the same constellation of political, economic, and scientific institutions as in the West. Similarly, Confucianism helped stabilize and rationalize the bureaucratic systems of ancient Chinese empires, which in some cases rival modern bureaucracies. Thus, modernization is not entirely unique to the West, and modernization may proceed in many different ways.

Third, modernization has self-contradictory tendencies. For example, one of the most important processes of modernization is “polity secularization,” or the separation of religion from the state. However, modernization also involves extending political power to individuals who often have religious motivations. This means that polity secularization can coexist—albeit problematically—with the politicization of religion. Examples of politically active religions within the context of modern states include the resurgence of Protestant fundamentalism in the United States in the 1980s, the socialist agitation by the Catholic Church in Latin America in the 1960s and 1970s, and Hindu nationalism in the 1990s and early 2000s. Thus, modernization proceeds unevenly and unpredictably, with different consequences around the globe.

What differentiates the global experience of modernization from the European experience is that while Europe’s modernization was immanent within its own history, non-European cultures are experiencing modernization as an external and often unwanted process. Currently, the stakes of modernization are being contested most urgently within the context of Islam in the Middle East. In the past two centuries, Islam’s history has been marked by its experience with colonial Europe. Europe’s colonizing presence in the Middle East engendered two responses within Islam: moderate reform movements among Islamic elites and intellectuals, on the one hand, and resistance movements, on the other. Examples of the latter include the formation of organizations such as the Muslim Brotherhood and the Islamic Society, which emphasize the self-sufficiency of Islam. This categorization of Islam into accommodating and resisting tendencies is complicated, however, by events such as the Iranian Revolution of 1979, which wed modern political forms with Islamic fundamentalism. Since then the Middle East has been marked by increasingly virulent forms of politicized religion that explicitly oppose “Westernization,” although this phenomenon must be compared with the growing presence of Islam *in* the West, as the presence of Islam has increased dramatically in Europe, the United States, and Africa and around the globe.

The revitalization of Islam after the colonial period can be compared with the resurgence of Hinduism in India. India also experienced a long period of colonial influence, followed by a nationalist effort to revive the core of “Hindu-ness.” Historically, Hinduism is marked by flexibility, multiplicity, and the absence of any one priestly or authoritative class. It has proven remarkably adaptive, mixing new forms along with a traditional core, thereby contradicting secularist expectations that modernization would diminish religious participation. For example, Hinduism has proven remarkably adaptive to technology and has used the mass media quite successfully for religious renewal. Hinduism has also accommodated modern political forms; the success of the Hindu nationalist party, the Bharatiya Janata Party, is the best example. Hence, India is experiencing a religious resurgence alongside political liberalization, economic growth, and technological development,

belying the Western model of modernization as secularization.

Buddhism and Confucianism have their own experiences of modernization as well. Neither conforms to the European model, but both are affected by the colonial and neocolonial democratic policies of Europe and the United States. Following World War II, political leaders across Malaysia, Vietnam, Korea, and other parts of Southeast Asia tended to view Buddhism as backward and superstitious and attempted to achieve modernization by revolution and reform from above. The failures of political reform led to popular resistance, however, which was largely informed by the Buddhist ideal of compassion. Although Buddhism has ascetic tendencies that otherwise encourage withdrawal from worldly life, its emphasis on compassion has provided a platform for nonviolent political response to trauma. Buddhism has also achieved worldwide influence, particularly since World War II, when great numbers of Southeast Asian peoples were displaced around the globe.

The modernizing ambitions of revolutionary campaigns in Buddhist countries could be compared with the rise of secular nationalism in China after the revolution of 1911. Throughout the first half of the 20th century, secular elites blamed Confucianism for a spate of cultural, economic, political, and geological disasters. Since the rapid expansion of China's economy starting in the 1980s, however, scholars now argue that China's Confucianism may be responsible for its rapid modernization. The strength of the Confucian tradition, strong family ties, the value placed on education, and the state's commitment to welfare and economic growth have brought China to the forefront of economic and political power in the 21st century. Once again, China's example undermines the idea that modernization is inimical to religious life.

In conclusion, modernization cannot be understood as a uniform, linear, or singular process. In fact, this model of history and development is itself a fantasy produced by modernization. Instead, modernization has multiple origins and contradictory tendencies, and it produces its own enemy so as to cleanse itself from it. The last words on modernization might just be those of Bruno Latour's provocative thesis: "We have never been modern."

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See also Enlightenment; Fundamentalism; Global Religion; Globalization; Internet; Modernism; Postmodernism; Religious Nationalism; Secularization

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MOLDOVA

In ancient times, what we call today the Republic of Moldova, located in southeastern Europe between Romania and Ukraine, was part of Dacia, which became a protectorate of the Roman Empire. During the Middle Ages, the majority of what we call Moldova was part of the Principality of Moldavia. The eastern section of the principality was taken by Russia in 1812 and renamed Bessarabia in 1812, and it is this area that is the present-day Republic of Moldova.

Moldova allows freedom of religion and has this basic civil right written in its constitution. However, religious groups might find themselves unable to carry out daily activities due to constraints imposed by the authorities. Usually, the assorted religions throughout the country treat each other with tolerance, and relations are basically harmonious, but disagreements abound between the diverse groups of Christian Orthodox believers. In addition, accounts from several sources indicate that members of the Jehovah's Witnesses have experienced persecution, as have the priests and followers of the Orthodox Church.

The principal faith throughout Moldova is Christianity, with up to 90% of the people stating their adherence to the Eastern Orthodox Church. Within the umbrella of the Eastern Orthodox Church two independent churches exist that are members of two autocephalous (the hierarchical practice where the church head need not answer to anyone else, including bishops) structures. The sovereign Metropolis of Chişinău and Moldova (both are Russian Orthodox) possesses almost 1,200 churches, whereas the Metropolis of Bessarabia (Romanian Orthodox) has 124 churches. Almost 4% of the Moldovan population adhere to the religious tenets of the Old Rite Russian Orthodox Church, which is composed of what is called “Old Believers” (an allusion to the churches and its members that did not acknowledge the reorganization and restructuring started in the 1600s by Patriarch Nikon). It is sometimes hard to pinpoint where the Eastern Orthodox religious customs and practices begin and end, as they pervade Moldovan culture. Following traditions is considered highly important throughout the entire country; for instance, many atheists genuflect and kiss icons as though they believed in God, because it is what is expected. If they abstained, social pressure would likely force them to do so.

Other Christian groups include Roman Catholics, Baptists, Holiness (primarily Pentecostal in nature: speaking in tongues, charismatic preachers, etc.), Seventh-Day Adventists, Muslims (judged to be around 3,000), Jehovah’s Witnesses, Baha’is (a monotheistic group that originated in Persia during the 1800s), Jews (approximately 32,000), Unification Church members, Molocans (a Protestant group that refused to abide by the dictates of the Russian Orthodox Church during the 1600s), Messianic Jews (those who believe the doctrines of Judaism but also believe that Jesus was the promised Messiah as foretold in the Hebrew Bible), Lutherans, Presbyterians, and Hindus (primarily Hare Krishna followers). Mormonism has also made headway in Moldova as there are 250 members comprising two different congregations.

The constitution states specifically that if a church wishes to organize and function in Moldova, it must inform the government and register itself. If the church does not acquiesce, it is impossible for it to own any property, have employees, or acquire burial plots in cemeteries. In addition, the

constitution says that anything told within the walls of a confessional is considered sacrosanct and may not be violated by the government.

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See also Eastern Orthodox Christianity; Global Religion; Romania; Russian Federation; Ukraine

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MONACO

Monaco is located in the northern coast of the Mediterranean Sea, surrounded on three sides by France. Monaco is divided into five different areas: (1) Monaco-Ville, the old fortified town; (2) the Condamnie, the harbor area; (3) Monte Carlo; (4) Fontvieille, a man-made waterfront area; and (5) Moneghetti, which shares a border with Cap d’Ail.

Monaco has been ruled by the Grimaldi family since 1297, when Francesco Grimaldi disguised himself as a monk and seized the fortress of Monaco. He led an army into the fortress, retrieving it in the name of the pope. In 1793, French Revolutionary forces captured Monaco, and Monaco remained under French rule until 1814. The Franco-Monagasque Treaty of 1861 granted sovereignty to Monaco; despite Monaco being a sovereign state, France is still responsible for Monaco’s national defense.

Monaco has been a constitutional monarchy since 1911, with the sovereign prince of Monaco as head of state. The head of the government is the minister of state, who presides over a five-member Council of Government. The parliament, the National Council, is unicameral, and the sovereign prince shares power with this body of government. Each member of the National Council is elected to 5-year terms. The local affairs of the principality are presided by the Communal Council, whose 15 elected members are led by the mayor.

Monaco is the second smallest country, by size, in the world. The Monagasque constitution allows for religious freedom, and in this small principality of 485 acres, six religions are represented.

The official religion of Monaco is Roman Catholicism, and approximately 95% of the population are Roman Catholic. There is one cathedral and five Roman Catholic churches. An archbishop presides over the official duties of the Roman Catholic diocese in Monaco. Roman Catholic celebrations hold a special significance in Monaco and are observed in the principality.

The holy festivals and feasts celebrated in Monaco are Holy Week and Easter Sunday and the feast days of St. John, observed on June 23, St. Roman, observed on August 9, and St. Devote, the patron saint of Monaco, celebrated on January 27, when there is a torchlight parade, which signifies St. Devote's arrival at the principality.

Other religions are also practiced in Monaco. There is one Anglican church in Monaco, St. Paul's. The church is a member of the Anglican Dioceses of Gibraltar in Europe. One hundred and thirty-five Monagasques are members of the church, but church membership varies, serving Anglicans who come to the church as parishioners but those who come to the principality as tourists.

Monaco has one Jewish association, *The Association Culturelle Israelite de Monaco*, founded in 1948. The association has a synagogue, a community Hebrew school, and a kosher food shop, all located in Monte Carlo. The Jewish community consists of Jews from Britain and northern Africa, with one third being Ashkenazi and two thirds being Sephardic.

Religious beliefs also practiced in Monaco are Greek Orthodox (one temple), Protestantism (two churches), and Islam.

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See also France; Roman Catholicism

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MONASTICISM

Monasticism is a way of religious life, typically in the form of an institutionalized practice that involves separation from the rest of society and various rules and ascetic disciplines, adopted by individuals who seek a higher level of spiritual attainment or religious experience than they deem possible by ordinary participation in the world. Etymologically, monasticism is derived from the Greek *monachos* ("living alone"), yet monastic lives, although commonly celibate, may be conducted either in an eremitic mode (as a hermit or an anchorite, hence a religious recluse) or in a cenobitic mode (living in community). Monastic systems developed primarily in two faith traditions: Christianity and Buddhism. Jainism also has a monastic tradition similar to that of Buddhism but less influential, and Hinduism has its own monastic component, which is in some ways similar to Buddhist monasticism.

Christian Monasticism

Christian monasticism is a consecrated form of life, neither clerical nor lay, pursued by men or women voluntarily to engage in loving God above all else through active and contemplative disciplines. Living ascetically, they seek renunciations corresponding to the three evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity, and obedience.

Cenobitic monasticism includes monastic communities proper (observing liturgical hours and living together in enclosed compounds), mendicant orders or friars (centered on poverty, mobile preaching, and service), and apostolic communities (focusing on good works as a social ministry). Eremitic monasticism typically emphasizes solitariness and contemplation rather than codified behavior, while semi-eremitic *lavras* consist of a loose structure of eremitic or anchorite cells and huts, providing a degree of community yet without ties to an external hierarchy.

The first person to structure a cenobitic community was Saint Pachomius (ca. 290–346). Saint Anthony of Egypt (ca. 251–356) is, however, largely considered the founder of organized monasticism, primarily because his rule was the first model for a monastic life of austerity and penitence.

The rule of Saint Augustine (354–430) followed thereafter as a code of monastic rigor. Saint Anthony himself lived as a hermit and is credited with being the model for the Desert Fathers—fourth- and fifth-century quasi-eremitic monks in Egypt and Palestine who sought individual accountability with a spiritual elder and practiced celibacy, asceticism, and separation from family and society. Desert Mothers also existed, yet their asceticism occurred in more cenobitic settings. In spite of this broad common root, monastic developments occurred differently in the West and the East.

Western monasticism developed primarily after a model established by Saint Benedict of Nursia (ca. 480 to ca. 550), whose famous Rule remains archetypal for cenobitic monastic life in the West even today. Its adaptability to novel settings as well as its accent on moderation and a family spirit ensured its longevity. The Rule's two vows focus on stability, consisting of tying oneself to a monastic community till death, and conversion of life, whereby one seeks lifelong perfection under the explicit call to obedience and the implicit call to poverty and chastity. Toward the end of the first millennium, Benedictine monasteries became central to the intellectual and ecclesial life in Europe. Prayer, work, and *lectio divina* ("meditative reading of the scriptures") made up a balanced monastic day. A major movement starting at the abbey of Cluny in Burgundy in the 10th century disrupted this balance, skewing the monastic preoccupation toward extended community prayer and creating a centralized monastic confederation known as the Cluniac system, with a vast hierarchy of monasteries scattered throughout Europe. Vigorous reactions against it appeared as a resurgent pro-eremitic monasticism, especially among Carthusians and Cistercians, who desired to return to the solitary poverty of the early Egyptian monks. A further change started around the 13th century, when the rise of urbanization occasioned the need for fewer stable, self-enclosed communities; friars appeared on the monastic stage, most notably Franciscans, Dominicans, and Carmelites, serving as itinerant preachers and, with the advent of universities, as professors. Women had been part of the monastic tradition from its inception, either as nuns attached to double houses or in female-only monasteries. However, a thoroughly women's movement had not originated until around 1200s in northern

Europe; known as the Beguines, these were Catholic laywomen living a monastic life yet without taking permanent vows or establishing a monastic order. Once the Reformation spread on the European continent, monasteries of all kinds were often closed, especially in the areas where Protestantism dominated. However, in the 20th century some Protestant denominations, such as the Anglicans and the Lutherans, founded several monastic communities; an ecumenical contemplative center was also established at Taizé, France.

Eastern monasticism developed differently from its Western counterpart. The writings of Saint Basil (ca. 330–379) provided a foundation, while the later work of Saint Theodore of Studios (759–826) added a Byzantine reinforcement. Eastern monasticism grew and thrived during the Byzantine Empire, and it further spread in the Orthodox Slavic countries, especially Russia; yet it came to a halt there in 1917 during the Bolshevik Revolution. It revived again throughout eastern Europe after 1989. Eastern Christian theology and monasticism grew as two sides of the same coin; the ascetic and contemplative character of this theology calls for a purification and conversion of life that coincides with the monastic ideal. Monks or nuns do not have different moral obligations from other Christians; poverty, obedience, and resisting worldly thinking are common duties, although monastic life opens up the possibility of achieving perfection in these virtues. Eastern Orthodoxy does not include monastic orders or a centralized rule. Monks and nuns live either in cenobitic and idiorhythmic monasteries, or in *lavras* (or *sketes*) as hermits to various degrees. Eastern eremitic monasticism is sometimes referred to as *Hesychasm*, although this term also denotes a dynamic mystical experience of silence and a psychosomatic practice known as the "Jesus prayer." Each ethnic group where Orthodox Christianity found a home also has women's monasteries. One significant Orthodox site from which women are excluded is Mount Athos in Greece, which has housed Orthodox monks since 961 and which has every national Orthodox Church monastically represented.

Buddhist Monasticism

Buddhist monasticism is the oldest known monastic system in the world, with cenobitic and eremitic

forms having coexisted from the very beginning. Monks (*bhikkhus*) and nuns (*bhikkunis*) do not seek isolation from society. Since monastics depend on donations from lay people for survival, while the laity receives the teaching that only monastics can provide, monasteries have typically been established in the proximity of other settlements.

The movement began in India in the sixth century BCE with Siddhartha Gautama (586–483 BCE) seeking salvation from human suffering and finding enlightenment and a salvific path, and with both men and women consequently joining the quest. This path, both monastic and lay minded, is a “middle way” between ascetic and self-indulgent extremes, and it presupposes an allegiance to the “triple jewel,” which includes (1) the dhamma or dharma (Buddhist doctrine), (2) the sangha (the monastic community and, by extension, all who call themselves Buddhist), and (3) Buddha himself. Monasticism is paramount for the survival of Buddhism because monks and nuns provide the continuity of dhamma by teaching it to others as Buddha himself did. Their lifestyle alternates between wandering in order to preach and being stationed in monasteries. In addition to following the same precepts as lay Buddhists, monks and nuns must take vows of chastity and celibacy. The rules of daily monastic discipline are contained in the *Vinaya-pitaka*, which has historically functioned as a textual support for the sustenance and systematic growth of the sangha. Buddhist rules tend to be flexible, however, allowing for emendation when regional conditions require it.

While there are no monastic orders in Buddhism, the three main Buddhist schools gave rise to rather different monastic institutions. Theravada, the oldest monastic school and the most enduring form of Hinayana Buddhism, is described in the Pāli canon as “the way of the elders,” emphasizing self-reliance, personal experience, and one’s own enlightenment and reaching of nirvana. It is predominant in Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, and Cambodia. The Mahayana school, or the “great vehicle,” has spread in India, China, Korea, Japan, Vietnam, and Tibet as a reform against solitary enlightenment, suggesting that one delays it to teach and offer compassion, hence acting as a bodhisattva so that others may attain nirvana too. Whereas the Theravada sangha includes only monastics, the Mahayana community has made room for lay followers. On the other hand, the ordination of nuns died out in the

Theravada tradition, while Mahayana preserves it. To become a Buddhist monk or nun, one must receive a lower ordination into the novitiate, then a higher one for full inclusion. However, no Buddhist ordination is necessarily permanent: A monk or a nun may voluntarily return to lay life. The third Buddhist school, the Vajrayana, or the “thunderbolt vehicle,” although of Indian origin, is especially known among the monastics of Tibet, who practice the visualization of deities and repetition of mantras and believe that they have insight into the best teachings of Buddha. Heads of Tibetan monasteries or important teachers are known as lamas, of whom the highest is the Dalai Lama.

Jain monasticism is highly similar to its Buddhist counterpart. Its founder, Vardhamana Mahavira, was Buddha’s contemporary and, like him, pioneered a movement in which monastic communities were central from the start. The code of behavior for Jain monks and nuns is close to the Buddhist one, yet the ascetic severity of Jainism is stronger. Jain monasticism is practiced today chiefly in India. Hindu monasticism is primarily practiced in sadhu sects and by individual holy men seeking after ultimate truth. In Hinduism the first stage of life—the student stage—is one reserved for celibacy, as is the fourth stage of life, in which the elderly search after truth.

Natalia Marandiuc

See also Asceticism; Christianity; Dalai Lama; Eastern Orthodox Christianity; Gautama, Siddhartha; Hinduism; Jainism; Mahayana Buddhism; Mysticism; Protestant Christianity; Roman Catholicism; Sexuality; Theravada Buddhism; Vajrayana, Tibetan

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MONGOL EMPIRE

As the largest land empire in history, the Mongol Empire (1206–1260) embraced an immense diversity of cultures and religious traditions throughout Asia and Europe. The vast religious pluralism that characterized the Mongol Empire enriched the Mongolian indigenous culture and influenced the vocabulary of the Mongolian language. Genghis (also transliterated as Chinggis) Khan, the father of the Mongol Empire, and his successors believed that his ruling lineage was given sovereignty over the earth by the mandate of Eternal Heaven (*Möngke Tenggrī*), which destines all things. He and his successors regularly worshipped Eternal Heaven and consulted it at times of need through their chief shamans. A tent for the chief shamans always stood in front of the khan's palace, while the tents of other shamans who performed various functions stood behind his palace. Shamans had an important political role at the khan's court; they made astrological observations and predictions, presided over calendarical ceremonies, performed magic in times of war or to control the weather, and so forth.

The Mongols' interest in religion centered primarily on the pragmatic concerns of pastoral and nomadic life and on immediate goals. This facilitated their receptivity to any religious practice that could potentially yield desired results.

Despite the fact that shamanism was a dominant religion at the court of the Mongol Empire, the Mongol rulers never imposed shamanism or any other unified religion on their empire. The religious pluralism that characterized the Mongol Empire was due to the policy of religious tolerance first espoused by Genghis Khan and later upheld by his ruling heirs. Out of respect for other religious traditions, Genghis Khan spared religious buildings from destruction during his military campaigns. His policy of religious tolerance was rooted in the Mongolian civic religion revolving around Eternal Heaven, which the Mongols considered

unitary and thus the same as Allah for Muslims, God for Christians, and Heaven (*tian*) for the Chinese. Once the Mongols came into contact with Buddhism, they also thought of supernatural entities (*deva*) from the Buddhist religion as *tenggrīs*. For this reason, the Mongol rulers viewed the major religions of their empire as converging on the same God and therefore as deserving equal status and support. Starting with Genghis Khan onward, the Mongol emperors exempted the clergy and scholars of Islam, Christianity, Daoism, and Buddhism from military service and taxes, and in turn, these religious scholars were expected to serve the empire and pray for the well-being of their Mongol rulers. However, such religious egalitarianism was by no means all-inclusive or free from sectarian intrigues—the supported religious groups were limited to the major orthodox traditions and to religious authorities who held state power within the individual territories of the empire. At times, the Mongol rulers suppressed and even eliminated religious groups (e.g., Isma'illīs, Dhutaists, or “heretical” Ch'an Buddhists) that were subversive to the empire or were deemed heretical by the religious authorities of the recognized traditions. Prior to 1260, the Mongol khans also denied Jewish, Zoroastrian, and Manichean priests the status and privileges of the recognized clergy; however, they never attempted to persecute these traditions.

Vesna A. Wallace

See also China; Islam; Ismailis; Mahayana Buddhism; Manichaeism; Mongolia; Shamanism; Shi'a Islam; Silk Road; Vajrayana, Tibetan; Zoroastrianism (and Parsis)

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MONGOLIA

The Central Asian region of Mongolia has had a diverse and significant religious history. From the

formation of the Mongol state in the 13th century until the second conversion of the Mongols to Tibetan Buddhism in the latter part of the 16th century, the religious landscape of Mongolian territories was characterized by religious pluralism, which resulted from the Mongols' contact with other cultures through their military campaigns, diplomatic relations, and trade.

Although shamanism was the predominant religion among the Mongol tribes prior to the formation of the Mongol state in the early 13th century, Nestorian Christianity was also practiced. According to a letter of the 11th-century Nestorian metropolitan of Marv to the Patriarch in Baghdad, about 200,000 Turks and Mongols had converted to Christianity by 1009. The mother of the famous 13th-century Mongol khans—Möngke, Qubilai, and Hülegü—was also known to be a Nestorian Christian. Catholic and Russian Orthodox missionaries competed in their conversionary activities among the Mongols; and when Pope Innocent IV sent a letter to Güyük Khan, calling for the Mongols' conversion to Catholicism, Güyük Khan scorned him for claiming Catholicism as the only true form of Christianity.

Berke Khan of the Golden Horde (the latter part of the 13th century) was the first Mongolian ruler to become a Muslim, but by the end of the 13th century, many ordinary Mongols and Mongol lords in Il-Khanate had converted to Islam.

During the reign of Qubilai Khan, Tibetan Buddhism exerted an important influence on the Mongol court and peacefully coexisted with shamanism. The Mongols' conversion to Tibetan Buddhism in the 13th century was limited to Qubilai's court and the Mongolian nobility. The second conversion of the Mongol khans to the Gelugpa (*dGe lugs pa*) school of Tibetan Buddhism, which began in 1575, was accompanied by the persecution of shamanic practices and those who performed them and by the burning of shamanic *ongghon* figurines. Mongol khans used Buddhism to consolidate their powers and enforced it on their territories. This resulted in the widespread conversion of the Mongols to Buddhism and to the systematic destruction of shamanism as an organized religion. Owing to the support of the Manchu Qing Dynasty, which ruled Mongolia from the latter part of the 17th century until 1912, Buddhism became Mongolia's predominant religion. By the

middle of the 18th century, shamanism was almost entirely extinct in Mongolia. During the theocratic period of the Bogd Khan state (1911–1921), ruled by the Eighth Jebtsundamba Khutukhtu, the religious and political head of the Buddhist community, the power of Buddhism reached its peak in Mongolia.

With the formation of the Mongolian People's Republic in 1924, which adopted Soviet communist policies, Mongolia was declared a secular state, which resulted in the subsequent suppression of religious expression, the destruction of Buddhist institutions, and the persecution of monks. After 70 years of religious suppression, in the late 1980s, the democratization of Mongolia facilitated a revival of Buddhism and shamanism and the inflow of diverse religious traditions from Europe, America, and Asia. Once again, the Mongolian landscape is characterized by religious pluralism, in which Buddhism stands out as the most dominant religion.

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See also China; Eastern Orthodox Christianity; Islam; Mahayana Buddhism; Mongol Empire; Roman Catholicism; Russian Federation; Sangha; Tibet; Vajrayana, Tibetan

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MONOTHEISM

The concept of monotheism characterizes various religious traditions throughout the history of humanity. No boundaries have banned the interaction between religions around the globe, whereby diverse characteristics and cultural components are transferable. The term *monotheism* comes from the Greek *mono* (μόνο) meaning “only” and *theos* (θεός) meaning “god.” Hence, monotheism is the belief in the existence of a single God or in the oneness of God or simply that God is one. Monotheism is contrasted with polytheism, which is the belief in the existence of many

gods, and with atheism, which is the denial of the existence of any god. In its recognition of God's presence and activity in every part of creation and its belief in a conscious, free God distinct from the physical world, monotheism is opposed to the religious philosophies of deism and pantheism.

The term itself was coined in fairly modern times by Henry More in 1680. In its contemporary use, monotheism designates the belief in the one supreme God, the Creator and Lord of the world, the eternal Spirit, almighty, all-wise, and all-good, the rewarder of good, and the punisher of evil.

As an ancient religious concept, it is argued that monotheism is a generalization that cannot be reduced to any modern category. Also, it always carries with it political constructs. This can be felt through the struggle for ideological and economic domination and for political legitimacy and power. In this world of differences, religious, political, and scholarly factors have furthered the dominance of a monotheistic system of belief, which has enabled humans to unite and mobilize in pursuit of great causes and, also, has forced them into brutal conflicts.

When, how, or even where the belief in one God first occurred will probably never be known, but the remarkable results are apparent in almost every aspect of the cultures and histories of the great monotheisms. In ancient Middle Eastern and Mediterranean religions, monotheistic elements are found. The monotheistic idea may have been derived from the centralized power of ancient empires, where everything seemed to flow from a single source. It can be said that one of the earliest instances of monotheism occurred in ancient Egypt in the 14th century BCE, during the rule of Akhenaton, who declared the one God. However, it did not long survive his death. Whether this reform is judged positively or not, it is apparent that Akhenaton's theology, if not fully monotheistic, strongly tends toward monotheism.

At the beginning of the sixth century BCE, and continuing into the early centuries of the Christian Era, Judaic monotheism developed in the same direction, as did Christianity and also later Islam under the influence of Greek philosophy, becoming monotheistic in the strict sense of the word and affirming the one God for all humans everywhere. Judaism, Christianity, and Islam are the three most significant religions from the Middle East, which are

called the Abrahamic faiths because they trace their origins to Abraham. Though these three are known as the monotheistic faiths, there are monotheistic dimensions to Buddhism, Hinduism, Sikhism, and other religious traditions of Asia as well.

Some theologians and philosophers believe that monotheism evolved from polytheism, holding that monotheistic faiths are more advanced ethically, culturally, and philosophically than polytheistic faiths. Also, as a system of belief, many scholars consider monotheism as a higher form of religion than polytheism, and they consider the former as a later development of the latter. But the difference is not just a question of many gods as opposed to the one God; it is more related to the attributes of God, such as His "uniqueness" as the embodiment of divine might and power.

It is perhaps debatable whether the terms *monotheism* and *polytheism* are helpful in thinking about divinity both in ancient cultures, with their systems of beliefs and practice, and in our time. In recent years, this distinction has been recognized as limited, reductive, and, thus, inadequate to accommodate the beliefs of the many spiritual practitioners around the world, with all the complexities involved.

We find exclusive monotheism at one extreme and unlimited polytheism at the other. Judaism, Christianity, and Islam adopt in the main exclusive monotheism, where only one God exists—the one and only true God. On the other hand, there is the extreme position of unlimited polytheism as, for instance, in the classical religions of Greece and Rome, where the number of divinities is large, and in principle unlimited, and the deities vary in their status, power, function, and influence.

Between the extremes of exclusive monotheism and unlimited polytheism are the middle positions of inclusive monotheism and "henotheism." According to inclusive monotheism, which is related to the ancient Hellenic religions, there exist a great number of gods, but all gods are essentially one and the same. *Henotheism* is the belief in the worship of primarily one God, though the existence of other gods is acknowledged. The term *monolatry* is also used to refer to the worship of one God, whether or not the existence of other deities is posited. As a religious concept, henotheism was especially prevalent in some periods in the history of Babylonia and Egypt.

To regulate their experiences and their lives, people may adopt different positions regarding the transcendent reality. They can be theists, if they believe that there is such a transcendent reality, or they can be atheists, if they deny such existence. They can be monotheists, if they believe that there is only one such reality, or they can be polytheists, if they believe that there are many. They can be gnostics, if they believe that this transcendent reality is knowable, or they can be agnostics, if they believe that this transcendent reality is unknowable.

The monotheistic mentality is not limited to adherence to one of the three major monotheistic religions. Its most important aspect is the belief in absolute truth, which may be retained by people who are detached from any formal religious affiliation.

New forms of spirituality have emerged in the modern world, in which the revolutions in communication and information, migration, and globalization have all contributed to increased pluralism and religious interaction. This has affected all religions, which, in turn, has had a significant impact on globalization within the context of the diverse cultures of the world.

At various levels, religion and globalization share the concern for the meaning and purpose of human life. Both raise fundamental questions concerning self-identity and focus on our shared humanity. Spirituality, as an alternative to religion, has been characterized as transforming the tenets of religion into matters of personal opinion and has therefore been regarded by some as a threat to “authentic” religion.

World religions advocate both a worldview and a code of morality. They embody dissimilarities that reduce the possibility of finding common ground for cooperation as well as similarities that enhance it. Constructive dialogue among religious followers leads to greater tolerance and comprehension and brings greater peace and justice into our globalized world. The philosopher of religion John Hick argues that the ideals of interfaith dialogue correspond to their respective models of religious pluralism. He argues that all religions reflect the same ultimate reality and aspire to arrive at a fuller vision of the same reality. Hence, to achieve the best possible response to the reality is the principal condition of interfaith dialogue. Hick further claims that this may lead to the establishment of a

world ecumenism, where differences between religious traditions appear less significant. However, he realizes that such a world ecumenism cannot be a single world religion. Rather, it should be a global theology of religions, which would consist of theories or hypotheses designed to interpret the religious experience of mankind.

Wilfred Cantwell Smith, a major contributor to interfaith dialogue and the field of comparative religion, regards different religious traditions as having “faith” in common, which is an essential human quality. In his view, what distinguish the various religions from each other are the respective forms the common faith takes. In this sense, monotheism and polytheism are simply different expressions of this common faith.

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See also Christianity; Global Religion; God; Goddess; Henotheism; Hinduism; Islam; Judaism; Mahayana Buddhism; Polytheism; Sikhism; Theravada Buddhism; Vajrayana, Tibetan; World Theology

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MONTENEGRO

Montenegro is a small southern European nation situated in the Balkans along the Adriatic coast, named after the black basalt-tinged mountains that dominate its landscape. Montenegro has a unique historical identity. Unlike their neighbors in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Albania, Serbia, and Kosovo, the Montenegrins were largely successful in thwarting substantial Ottoman influence from

the 13th century onward, when the Ottomans began to advance on the Balkans. This has had the effect of uninterrupted Eastern Orthodox influence, to the point of the area having been ruled by the regional bishops of Cetinje for 300 years from 1516 to 1815 (while paying tribute to Istanbul) and by a secular government from 1815 to 1918. After World War I, Montenegro was a part of Yugoslavia in its multiple incarnations, with varying degrees of contentment over the arrangement, first under the Pan-Slavic state of Yugoslavia, then under the communist state of Yugoslavia, then in 1992 in the post-Cold War state known as the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (which consisted of Serbia, Montenegro, and Kosovo), then in 2002 as a federation of independent states with a combined military and foreign service known as Serbia and Montenegro, and most recently in 2006, autonomously as Montenegro. Montenegrins have traditionally felt an affinity for their Serbian neighbors mainly due to their common ethnicity and religious identity and have retained union with them until recently. The break was predominantly over increased Serbian nationalistic rhetoric and action, mostly under the tutelage of Slobodan Milošević. This has had the effect of making many Montenegrins nervous about their partner in the federation and suspicious of its activity on behalf of both nations. The bonds are strong between the two despite the recent schism, as both are Slavic and Eastern Orthodox countries. Montenegro has joined Slovenia in escaping the religious and ethnic bloodshed that has been the price of independence in the region since the fall of communist rule. Montenegro is staunchly Eastern Orthodox, with estimates ranging from 85% to 95% of the population. There are small minorities of Bosniaks (Muslim) and Albanians (Orthodox, Catholic, and Sunnī Muslim), yet the country's religious identity is thoroughly dominated by the Orthodox Church.

If Kosovo is the birthplace of Serbian Orthodoxy in regional Slavic mythology, Montenegro is its preserver. After the defeat of the Albanian and Slavic forces at the Battle of Kosovo in 1389, Slavic Christian culture and its various aristocratic lines were preserved in the remote monasteries of Montenegro. There has been dissatisfaction in recent years within the Orthodox community that has given rise to the proclamation of the

Montenegro Orthodox Church (MOC) in 1993, claiming that the Montenegrin diocese operated autonomously prior to World War I. As it stands, Montenegro remains under the Autocephalous Serbian Orthodox Church, which has denounced the MOC as heretical and schismatic. The Serbian Patriarchate maintains control of the majority of Montenegro's church property and the official appointments of bishops and priests; the MOC, on the other hand, has been unable to gain control over the ever-important Cetinje monasteries despite several attempts to do so.

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See also Eastern Orthodox Christianity; Kosovo; Russian Federation; Serbia; Yugoslavia

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MORMONS

Mormons are people who, through membership or ethnicity, are connected to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS), a religious tradition that came into existence in the United States in the 19th century. Its founder, Joseph Smith Jr., published a book in 1830 that, according to its title page, was a history of tribes from the house of Israel who settled in the Western Hemisphere centuries before the birth of Christ. Said to have been written by an ancient warrior named Mormon, who inscribed the text on golden plates, the work, according to Smith, had been buried in western New York. An angel called Moroni directed Smith, a young farmer who lived near their burial place, to take possession of the plates in 1827. This still youthful adult deciphered Mormon's engravings, dictating what he read to a series of scribes, particularly Oliver Cowdery.

In the Bible-like volume the young seer filled with words he dictated to his scribes, the third and

fourth chapters of the second book reveal that the coming forth of this work would be accompanied by the coming forth of a prophet—one whose name, like that of his father, would be Joseph. This revelation in a text that appeared to be as sacred as the Old and New Testaments meant that the young “seer and translator” who produced it would become the initiator of the movement that became Mormonism.

Origins and Early History

When Mormons describe the beginning of their faith, they are apt to tell the story of the prophet’s “First Vision,” which he had in 1820 when he was 14 years old. In it, he saw two anthropomorphic beings dressed entirely in white, whom he identified as God the Father and God the Son. As they were separate personages, the youngster concluded that the doctrine of the Trinity was a theological fiction. In addition, he learned from them that the true church was not then on the earth. Because the prophet did not describe this vision until 1832 and his full account of it was not published until 1838, it is obvious that for his early followers, the *Book of Mormon* legitimated Smith’s prophetic status. The signal import of the proclamation that a prophet called Joseph Jr. would arise when the prophetic *Book of Mormon* would speak out of the ground to the children of men came in 1829, when the first revelation addressed to anyone other than the young prophet himself was addressed to his father. The novice seer foretold to Joseph Sr. that “a marvelous work [was] about to come forth.” The “field was white to the harvest,” and those who thrust in their sickles with all their might “may stand blameless before God at the last day,” thereby bringing salvation to their souls.

Virtually identical revelations were addressed to several other religious seekers, including additional members of the Smith family, some neighbors from the Manchester area where the family lived, and a few others who traveled there when they heard about the religious events occurring at the western end of the Erie Canal. The revelation recipients, all members of a tiny group of followers who came together to await the completion of the “marvelous work,” were told that they were all called to embark on service to God. Most of them did so, first by becoming the salespersons who

marketed the *Book of Mormon* from door to door with the result that, as charged to do so in the final chapter of the last book of the work, a surprising number of readers of the text asked God if the content of the work they had just finished was true. If, according to Moroni 10:4, they asked “with a sincere heart and real intent, having faith in Christ, he [would] manifest the truth of it . . . by the power of the Holy ghost.”

Because the “truth of it” included the promise that along with the book, the prophet would come forth, these *Book of Mormon* converts became some of the most dedicated of all the followers of the prophet. Others who had no opportunity to read the *Book of Mormon* were nevertheless convinced of its scriptural character by family members or friends who had read it. Yet others who met the young farmer who claimed to have found the plates and deciphered the engravings thereon became believers because they heard the revelations that came pouring through him and accepted the claim that he was a prophet. In particular, these followers heard of the establishing of Zion and warnings about the coming of the end-times.

Those who gathered around the prophet were also introduced to the concept of *restoration*, the first event of which had occurred as the dictation of the new Scripture to Oliver Cowdery was moving toward completion. On May 15, 1829, John the Baptist, a resurrected messenger from God, who said he was acting under the direction of Peter, James, and John, the apostles who held the “keys to the priesthood,” conferred the ancient Priesthood of Aaron on the two men. A month later, a revelation through the prophet disclosed that the Council of the Twelve Apostles would likewise be restored. Both of these were, respectively, restorations of organizational units of Israel and the Church of Christ in earlier dispensations, before they were removed from the earth at the time of a “great apostasy,” when humanity departed from the pure Christianity that had been restored in what the Mormons call “the meridian of time.”

The restoration that would connect Mormonism more fully to understanding the great apostasy occurred in the spring of 1830, when the restored Church of Christ was again organized on the earth. It differed from other Christian bodies in that it was led by a prophet, its members had access to a new scriptural work, and it claimed to

be the only Christian institution that was the actual restoration of the New Testament Church, returned now to the earth after an absence of nearly 19 centuries. Although the formal documentation of this event refers to a new church with only six members, in light of the growing size of the following congregating around the prophet, in all likelihood the number of actual members was much larger. In any event, the new church was regarded as ecclesiastical competition by the members of other Christian churches and other Christian ministers especially. As a consequence, Smith's followers were subjected to ridicule—they were called Mormonites, for example—and they suffered a fair amount of genuine persecution.

The Move Westward

One of the first actions of the newly restored church was the sending of missionaries westward to find and reveal to Native Americans that they were of the house and lineage of Israel. Traveling westward along Lake Erie, the first missionaries stopped in Kirtland, Ohio, a small town east of Cleveland. There they preached in a Campbellite church a restoration message of such power that they converted the minister, Sidney Rigdon, and many of his church members to the new faith. This more or less mass conversion led to an invitation to the prophet, his family, and his followers to move to Kirtland, an invitation that was gladly accepted by the leaders and many of the members of the new Church of Christ, which was beginning to call itself the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, in order to differentiate itself from another new Christian restoration body also organized in 1830, the Disciples of Christ.

In Kirtland, many of the radical ecclesiastical, doctrinal, and theological innovations that separated (and still separate) Mormons from other Christians were put in place in response to revelation. Many of these were a part of the extension of the concept of restoration. Here, the reality for believers of the restored New Testament Church became more the church of the apostle Peter than that of the apostle Paul. A critically important innovation was the gathering that, in accordance with a September 1830 revelation, called for Mormons to settle together, creating congregations that would be true communities headed by

the swiftly emerging church hierarchy. Of equal significance was the calling of Joseph Smith Sr. to be the patriarch of the church and the initiation of the practice of giving patriarchal blessings, in which, among much else, the LDS were informed of their lineage in the various tribes of Israel.

Perhaps even more important, the construction of a sanctuary proposed by the prophet differed from other Christian churches in that the LDS built their first temple in Kirtland. Unlike most other Mormon temples, this one served as both temple and meeting house, but its dedication as a temple in the Solomonic style proclaimed the Mormon movement's understanding of itself as the restoration of Israel. The restoration of the Melchizedek priesthood, which came about in Kirtland, required that the internal architecture of the temple provide specific places for the quorums of the Aaronic (or lower) priesthood and the Melchizedek (or higher) priesthood, while a unique system of pulleys and heavy canvas curtains made it possible for veils to be lowered or lifted. During the temple dedication, the prophet and his first counselor, Sidney Rigdon, went behind the veil, where they saw Christ, who accepted the temple and said his name would always be there. In a second vision, Moses appeared and committed unto them the keys of the gathering of Israel, while Elias appeared and committed to them the dispensation of the gospel of Abraham, saying that in them and their seed, all generations would be blessed.

Kirtland, however, was only one of the "stakes," or geographical units. The other, more noteworthy theologically and important historically, was in Missouri. The Mormon colony that was established in that state's Jackson County came not in answer to an invitation from people already settled there but instead was organized pursuant to a revelation about the proper location of the city of Zion. In the summer of 1831, the prophet identified Independence as Zion's "center place" and a place west of the town as its temple site. The extent to which Mormonism was becoming the restoration of Israel was illustrated when 12 Mormons, representing the 12 tribes of Israel, laid the foundation for the temple by starting to construct a building on the spot that revelation affirmed as the place the prophet envisioned as the New Jerusalem. While this particular structure was never completed, so many LDS settled in the area that the old settlers, overwhelmed by

their numbers and their industry, rose up and drove them from Jackson County, the nucleus of the new Mormon Zion.

The opposition faced by the Mormons in Ohio and Missouri often shaded over into persecution, which resulted in their being driven out of the state. In Ohio, the failure of a Mormon bank in the 1837 financial crash, combined with the old settlers' fears of being overrun by the gathered LDS, led to the tarring and feathering of the prophet and other leaders. Escaping the wrath of the Ohioans by fleeing to Missouri, the leaders were accompanied by the great bulk of their followers. In Missouri, the pattern was more complicated. When the Mormon settlers were driven from Independence, they first settled in a nearby county. But as increasing numbers of followers gathered in the area they regarded as Zion, the old settlers who governed Missouri set aside a county for the Mormons, called Far West, on the western edge of the state.

The Missouri Mormons flooded into the new county, where they were joined by their leaders, their Ohio brethren and their families, and an astonishing number of new converts. Sidney Rigdon, Smith's first counselor, preached an Independence Day sermon that warned non-Mormons (Gentiles) that persecution of the LDS would result in their extermination at the hands of God's Chosen People. A subsequent election-day fracas among Missourians and the LDS instigated so much violence that the state's governor issued an order decreeing that because of their open and avowed defiance of state laws, the Mormons must be exterminated or driven from Missouri. The ensuing state of war was the occasion of a horrid massacre (at Haun's Mill), the imprisoning of the Mormon prophet and other Mormon leaders, and an entire population of Mormon refugees being driven back across the Mississippi River to Illinois.

The Nauvoo Settlement

Commerce, a struggling town on the banks of the Mississippi River, was purchased by the Mormons, who renamed it Nauvoo. There the first (more or less true) LDS kingdom came into being. Once the gathering truly got under way, Nauvoo became—at least for a time—the largest urban settlement for Mormons in Illinois. Granted a city

charter by the Illinois State legislature, Nauvoo was empowered to pass any laws not repugnant to the U.S. Constitution or the Illinois constitution. This essentially made the town a state within a state, a city with its own administration (nine alderman, four councilmen, and a mayor), its own court system, and a military organization known as the Nauvoo Legion to protect it. A temple site was selected, and construction was started. As liberal as was the Illinois legislature with its Mormon citizens, it did not concede their desire to separate Nauvoo from the rest of Hancock County. Consequently, the LDS' effort to turn their gathering place into a kingdom on the Mississippi miscarried.

As in Kirtland, Independence, and Far West, the "old settlers" took offense at the growing political power of the Mormons within the county, offense that was exacerbated by the LDS' block voting patterns. At the same time, rumors that the LDS leaders were practicing polygamy were spreading rapidly in the non-Mormon areas of the county. Although the LDS denied that polygamous relationships were being instituted, in fact the practice of what the Mormons called plural marriage had begun. It was a part of a third restoration layer, the restoration of the "Ancient Order of Things," which sought to re-create the world of ancient Israel by practicing marriage as was the custom in the days of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and other Old Testament patriarchs.

Unlike the restoration of the Church of Jesus Christ and the restoration of Israel, this third restoration layer included not only an esoteric practice such as plural marriage but also temple ordinances such as Endowments (in which LDS learn about exaltation in the world to come), marriage for time and eternity, sealings of children to parents, as well as baptism for the dead. Because most of these ordinances took place in private sacred space and generated no obvious change in the social order, plural marriage, which did generate change in the social order, initiated the greatest anxiety about what was happening both within and outside the Mormon community. The people the Mormons called Gentiles saw this alteration in the Mormon movement as ominous, especially since the Mormon leaders believed that, if needed, the well-armed and trained Nauvoo Legion would protect the community. Additionally, a significant number of LDS were likewise so disturbed by the situation that

they launched a newspaper, the *Nauvoo Expositor*, that denounced the actions of the prophet Joseph Smith and called for the “unconditional repeal of the Nauvoo Charter” and the abolition of polygamy.

As mayor, Joseph Smith summoned the city council and, after 14 hours of deliberations, concluded that the *Expositor* was a public nuisance and should be destroyed without delay. This action—seen as extinguishing freedom of the press—so sharpened anti-Mormon sentiment that it, in turn, led to the murder of the prophet by the county militia, who wore disguises when they attacked the county jail where the prophet and his brother were being held, supposedly under the protection of the state’s governor.

Following the prophet’s death, the Mormons remained in Nauvoo for 3 more years until they were driven out by Hancock County’s old settlers. During that 3-year period, a struggle for the role of Mormon leader occurred that has taken on a mythical character. The story goes that on a Sunday soon after the prophet’s death, all the contestants for the prophetic role were given an opportunity to speak to the Mormon multitude. Every speaker had a claim to the prophetic post. Brigham Young, for example, was the president of the Council of the Twelve; William Smith was the brother of the prophet; Sidney Rigdon was the prophet’s first counselor, and so on. As they spoke, each one had a particular position on the level of restoration that henceforth should be the Mormon way, no matter what the prophet’s position at the end of his life. Brigham Young held that the church should be the restoration of the Church of Jesus Christ, the restoration of Israel, and the restoration of the Ancient Order of Things. Others believed that rather than being Nauvoo Mormonism, the movement should go back to being Kirtland Mormonism—without the restoration of the Ancient Order of Things, while some of the LDS were so worried that the gathering had led to so much non-Mormon opposition that they preferred to go all the way back to Mormonism when it was simply the restoration of the Church of Jesus Christ.

A good number of the Mormons who were in the audience as the various leaders spoke reported that when Brigham Young went up to speak, they saw (or felt) the prophet’s mantle settle on his shoulders. The future he held out to the LDS devastated by

Joseph Smith’s murder was a Mormonism that re-created the movement as it had been when it was first led by Smith. This position appears to have appealed to many—or perhaps most—of Smith’s followers who had lived in Nauvoo. It was this group that followed Young across Iowa and onto the pioneer trek to the Great Salt Lake Valley. Because this group’s numbers were increased by the addition of converts who had joined the church in England, Scandinavia, and elsewhere in Europe, it became the largest group of Mormons to become institutionalized after the prophet’s death. The history of Young’s followers in the intermountain West has so dominated LDS history that many people assume that the entirety of the movement relocated to Utah.

Schisms and Migration

The reality is that at the time of Smith’s death in 1844, the tradition fragmented. The formation of multiple configurations of the tradition followed, each one holding on to some, but not all, of the theological, doctrinal, and ritual elements of the original. The two largest groups are the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, headquartered in Salt Lake City, and the Community of Christ (long known as the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints), headquartered in Independence, Missouri. Now almost a shadow of its former self, the Community of Christ is a small body that holds onto various parts of the Mormon tradition, especially its history, but neglects other parts, especially the *Book of Mormon*. When it was “reorganized” in 1860 under the leadership of the prophet’s eldest son, Joseph Smith III, the plan was that the church would always be led by a direct descendant of the first Mormon prophet, Joseph Smith. But that pattern was broken in 1996, when W. Grant McMurray became the president of the church. Even before 1996, dramatic change came to the church; in 1984, the ordination of women was adopted by the Reorganized Church. In that same year, another change, perhaps not equally important, but important enough, was a revelation that came through the church president that the Reorganized Church should build and dedicate a temple—something the “Saints who never practiced polygamy,” as they thought of themselves, had never had. These changes led to a schism that

created the Remnant Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.

In the years since its formation, a variety of factions have separated from the “Utah Church,” as it is often called. Thus, it has also had to deal with schisms. In most cases, the groups that have broken away from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints have been groups whose leaders and followers are convinced that the church’s decision to give up plural marriage in 1890 (at the behest of the U.S. government) was wrong. Consequently, most, if not all, of the schismatic groups that have left the church in Utah have been “fundamentalists,” who reinstated the practice of plural marriage.

Mormonism Today

Despite these schisms, the largest and most well-known clerical institution to come into being as a constituent part of Mormonism is the church headquartered in Salt Lake City, Utah. In 2010, this organization’s 14 million members were administered through 28,109 congregations in 166 different nations of the world. But this extraordinary diversity was undercut by the reality that 16.5% of the institution’s entire formal membership resides in the intermountain West (which students of the tradition call the Mormon Culture Region). In addition to those who have been active enough at some point in their lives to be included in the official count of church membership, residents of the intermountain area also include an undetermined, yet significant, number of inhabitants who have an adequate genealogical and/or cultural attachment to the tradition to call themselves Mormon or to be regarded as Mormon.

Even if only the church headquartered in Salt Lake City is considered, looking at Mormonism alongside the Shakers, the Oneida community, the Seventh-Day Adventists, and the Christian Scientists, this is, by far, the most important of the indigenous American religions.

Since World War II, this, the largest Mormon body, has changed dramatically. Before the war, the church, which had barely less than 1 million members, had no bureaucracy. The church’s records were maintained by volunteers, lay members of the church kept virtually all its programs going, and a huge majority of the church members

resided either in the Mountain West, southern California, and the Pacific coast or in a few large cities in the nation. The church’s Word of Wisdom (refusal to drink coffee, tea, or alcohol; refusal to smoke) was an important Mormon identifier, and the church’s activities and various meetings were spread throughout the week. But Correlation, a program to make sure that all Mormons do the same thing at the same time on the same schedule, did not exist at the time.

By the mid-1970s, however, a huge church bureaucracy had been developed to keep up with the ever-increasing number of members, not simply in the United States and Canada but also throughout the world. The Word of Wisdom was and is still very important, but there are many other Mormon identifiers, including a carefully organized Correlation program, which guarantees that all the church’s members study the same written materials, they all follow the same pattern for Sunday services, their meetings have common agendas, and, most important, at church-run institutions of higher education, a dress code (including how the hair of males should be cut) creates a student body whose members so resemble each other that a “Mormon look” is a part of what it means to be an LDS.

While Salt Lake City remains the Mormon “center place,” the presence of Mormons in every other city and state of the United States, plus their presence in Canada and South America, Asia (particularly Korea), and Europe makes it obvious that the Utah Mormons are here to stay. Although many of the other forms of Mormonism are much smaller institutional units, so many of them have held together for so long that it is extremely likely that the other forms of Mormonism are here to stay as well.

Jan Shipp

See also Christianity; New Religions; New Religions in the United States; North America; United States of America

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MOROCCO

Morocco is a country located on the northwest corner of Africa. Although it is predominantly Sunnī Muslim, its cultural and religious heritage is multifaceted due to its unique combination of ethnic groups and influences from Europe and the Middle East.

The native term for the country is *Al-Maghreb*, which means “place of sunset” in Arabic. Historically, this name also applied to greater North Africa, as its location west of the Levant identified it with the sunset. Morocco has more than 30 million inhabitants, most of whom are of Berber, Arab, or mixed Berber-Arab ethnicity. The official language is Arabic, although the spoken dialect, Moroccan Arabic, is rather different from the Modern Standard Arabic of Middle Eastern print and official speech. In addition to Arabic, French is widely used in commerce and government and is taught in schools; English is also growing as a foreign language in education. About 40% of the country’s population speaks one of three main Berber dialects, Tarifit, Tachelhit, or Tamazight.

The geographical region is likewise diverse. The coastline touches the Mediterranean Sea to the north and the Atlantic Ocean to the west.

Morocco is home to the Rif and Atlas mountain ranges, the latter separating most of the inhabited area from the Sahara Desert. The western Sahara, south of Morocco, has been claimed and controlled by the Moroccan government since 1975, but it is a disputed region whose people are seeking independence. Rabat is Morocco’s capital; other important cities are Casablanca (the largest city and commercial center), Fez, Marrakech, and Tangier.

The Berbers are the oldest known indigenous group of the region. In the seventh century CE, Arab conquerors took over the land, which was formerly ruled by the Roman and Byzantine empires, and they brought Islam to the area. Although the Berbers fought for autonomy, they slowly adopted Islam, and today more than 99% of Moroccans are Sunnī Muslim. Many Berbers retreated to mountainous areas, where their concentration remains higher than in the urban centers. After the Arab conquest of the region, Morocco was ruled under various dynasties (Almoravid, 1042–1147; Almohad, 1123–1269; Merinid, 1248–1465; Sadi, 1511–1659; and Alawi, 1664–). In 1912, the French took Morocco as a protectorate, although the Alawi sultan was able to keep his position under French control. After a long struggle, Morocco gained independence in 1956 and is now ruled by a constitutional monarchy.

In addition to the Sunnī Muslim majority, there are small Jewish and non-native Christian minorities in Morocco. Sufi elements are also present, most notably in ritual Sufi music and the visiting of shrines to saints. Veneration of saints and the use of musical instruments have been criticized by conservative reformers, particularly within the Salafi reformist movement that spread to Morocco starting in the late 19th century. This line of thinking holds that Sufi beliefs and practices hinder Muslim reform.

Morocco’s relationship with Andalusian Spain has also influenced its architecture, music, and art. When Muslims conquered Spain in the eighth century CE, the arts took on a distinctive style that incorporated Spanish and Arab elements. Andalusian Muslims gradually retreated back to North Africa when Christians began to gain rule over Spain, starting in the 10th century. Although much was lost in this migration, attempts to preserve Arab-Andalusian

arts still take place, for example, in the cultural center of Fez.

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See also Algeria; Fez; Islam; Mediterranean World; North Africa; Spain; Sufism

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MOSCOW

Moscow is the capital of the Russian Federation and the largest multicultural mega-city of eastern Europe. Its present population is estimated to be more than 10 million. The majority of Moscow's population is nominally Russian Orthodox,

though a significant number of Moscovites follow Islam. Other religions of its inhabitants include Judaism, Roman Catholic Christianity, various forms of Protestantism (the Lutheran tradition, Methodism, Baptism, Pentecostalism), Buddhism, Neo-Paganism, and the Hare Krishna movement. As in Russia in general, nearly half of Moscow's nominal Christian population make only occasional visits to religious sites and exercise religious rituals. Yet Moscow is Russia's biggest religious center with about 500 religious organizations, 532 registered Russian Orthodox churches, 10 monasteries, 6 mosques, 5 synagogues, a Buddhist temple, a Sikh temple, a Hare Krishna assembly hall, and others. It is popularly known in Russia as "the city of the forty of forties" of churches and "the Third Rome." Its cultural landscape is still dominated by the Russian Orthodox churches and monasteries, of which the most famous are Our Saviour (*Khrista Spasitelya* [Figure 1]), Novodevichiy Convent, St. Basil's Church, and the cathedrals of the Moscow Kremlin.

The first reference to Moscow as the place in the Duchy of Rostov is in 1147. In 1327, Moscow



Figure 1 Cathedral of Christ Our Saviour in Moscow

became the capital of the Vladimir-Suzdal principality. After 1480, Moscow was the capital of an independent state that started to unite other Russian lands under its control. Since the 16th century, Moscow Christians have been independent from the Constantinople Patriarchate, and the Orthodoxy has enjoyed the status of a state religion. In the 17th century, however, the state-sanctioned attempts by Patriarch Nikon to modify the Christian liturgy led to the Church Schism and open social unrest and the emergence of the Old Believers communities. In 1712, the capital of Russia was moved to St. Petersburg, which was proclaimed the center of the Russian Empire. The position of the Patriarch was abolished, and the Synod or the Ministry in charge of the Russian Christian Church was established in 1721 in the rival city of St. Petersburg. The Patriarchate was terminated. The February 1917 coup d'état ended with the establishment of the monarchy, and the October 1917 revolution ended the period of domination of Russian Christianity in the country. At the same time, the Moscow Patriarchate was revived. In 1918, the Bolsheviks returned the Russian capital to Moscow. In 1924, it became the capital of the Soviet Union. In 1992, it remained the capital of the Russian Federation, the successor state of the Soviet Union.

The multinational and multiconfessional composition of Russia's population does not allow the choice of Orthodox Christianity as the only ideology of the Russian state. Thus, the Russian Federation was proclaimed a secular state. Yet the state supports four main churches as traditional or historical religions: Russian Orthodox Christianity, Islam, Judaism, and Buddhism, in opposition to other churches, particularly new Protestant churches and new religious movements of a neo-Hinduism type and neo-Pagan cults. Moscow is the headquarters of the Inter-Confessional Council of religions.

Igor Yurievich Kotin

See also Eastern Orthodox Christianity; Europe; Global Cities; Russian Federation

MOSQUES

A mosque, or *masjid* in Arabic, is literally a clean space for prayer, oriented so that the praying

worshippers are facing the holy city of Mecca. In Cairo, a mosque can refer to a piece of carpet next to a jewelry store on the third floor of the Ramses Hilton shopping mall or a monumental 12th-century building housing the head of Husayn, the Prophet's martyred grandson. A mosque means either a small prayer space near one's home or workplace for the five daily prayers or a large building purposely constructed for the Friday afternoon congregational prayer service.

The first mosque was Muhammad's home in Medina in the year 622 in the Gregorian calendar or year 1 in the Muslim calendar. The clean and undecorated palm-fronded courtyard and *mihrab* (marking the direction of prayer) form what architects call the hypostyle pattern, later seen in the Great Mosque of Córdoba. Similarly elaborating on the mosque's humble origins, a caliph, king, or wealthy donor can also build a large state mosque such as the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus, Jamé Mosque in Isfahan, or Sultan Ahmed Mosque in Istanbul.

The clearest sign of a mosque today is a dome or minaret, neither of which was originally Muslim. The Church of the Holy Sepulcher and Hagia Sophia provided models for the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem and Sultan Ahmed Mosque in Istanbul. Domes are particularly useful in colder climates, where more light is admitted to illumine the prayer space. In warmer climates, a lower flat ceiling of the hypostyle variety is more conducive to serene prayer and contemplation. Domes and minarets are more popular in Muslim-minority nations as historical markers and signs of confidence to non-Muslims. The origins of minarets may include church bell towers, Mediterranean lighthouses, desert caravan signal stations, or Zoroastrian ziggurats.

In the United States and Britain, the number of mosques registered for tax-exempt status tripled during the 1990s, from several hundred to over a thousand, with 9 out of 10 of these being storefronts or private homes. Purpose-built mosques, financed by foreign governments in Los Angeles, New York, Washington, and London are frequented by diplomats, visiting dignitaries, professionals, and students. A self-financed purpose-built mosque in the United States or Britain is usually an Islamic center that includes a lecture hall, offices, bookstore, kitchen,

school, gymnasium, and mortuary in addition to the prayer space. Islamic centers have both an imam to serve as religious leader and a director to manage day-to-day operations, including public relations and outreach to non-Muslims.

The design of a purpose-built mosque or Islamic center is a statement of the religious and political orientations of the community and reflects a relationship with the larger society. The first goal of the architect is to maximize the prayer space given the budgetary and property constraints, including parking and traffic regulations. Then the theological and historical aspirations of the community must be reflected in the architectural style. The signage and façade may invite, intimidate, or be completely lacking, depending on the relationship with local non-Muslims. The prayer space for women can be next to, above, or below the men or eliminated altogether. Women are more likely to serve on the boards of directors of self-financed Islamic centers than foreign-financed mosques. Arabic is used for prayer, but local languages are used for the Friday sermon, or *khutbah*, in mosques that are not strictly orthodox.

Saudi-financed mosques are built using a one-dome, one-minaret formula based on an Ottoman model to invoke the most recent unified Sunnī caliphate. South Asian mosques are more likely to have an *iwān*-shaped entrance modeled after the mosque at Isfahan. In the United States and Britain, where churches and synagogues are common, domes have become the most important architectural marker of a mosque, a statement that declares and affirms the presence of a local Muslim community. A dome is a visible sign that a Muslim community consists of citizens, not sojourners.

In contrast to domes, which are affordable and familiar to non-Muslims, minarets are subject to greater contention. When an Islamic center is self-financed, the board of directors must often choose between a purely ornamental minaret or an elementary school or soup kitchen. In addition to symbolizing theological priorities, the sound from a minaret can be annoying to non-Muslims early in the morning, and the very sight of minarets can be offensive to those who think of Islam as a threatening religious tradition. When an Islamic Center in New York City proposed to relocate its center, including a mosque, several blocks away to a location near the site of the September 11 destruction

of the World Trade Center, a howl of protests emerged from around the country. The mayor of the city, however, refused to halt the plans, citing the importance of tolerance and the peaceful purposes of the planned mosque and center.

Despite the ethnic and theological diversity of mosques around the world, there is a common ideal of providing a safe refuge for any Muslim. The use of simple, rational geometry and Qur'anic calligraphy is universally familiar and comforting and serves to spiritually uplift and anchor individual souls. In contrast to private collections, mosques lack figurative representations of scriptural narratives or personages as potential distractions from the spiritually and socially unifying effects of group prayer.

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See also Arabic; Art; Churches; Islam; Sacred Places

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MOTHER TERESA (1910–1997)

“Blessed” Teresa was a European Roman Catholic nun who dedicated her life to Christ through her service to the poorest of the poor. Her work began

in the slums of Calcutta (now Kolkata), India, and eventually spread across the globe. She is considered by many to be a modern-day saint.

Mother Teresa was born Gonxha (Agnes) Bojaxhiu on August 27, 1910, in the city of Skopje, which was then part of the Ottoman Empire and now the capital of Macedonia. In 1928, when she was 17 years old, she entered the Sisters of Loreto, taking the name Teresa. After studying English in Ireland, she was missioned to Kolkata, where she served in a high school for 20 years, eventually becoming the principal. During this time, she suffered a bout of tuberculosis and was sent to Darjeeling to rest. On this trip, she felt what she described as her “call within the call” from God to dedicate her entire life to the poor. In 1948, she left the Sisters of Loreto to work among Kolkata’s poorest people, drawing others to her work as volunteers. In 1950, her new order of women religious, the Missionaries of Charity, was approved by the Catholic Church.

Under Teresa’s leadership, the Missionaries of Charity took care of society’s outcasts in many ways, including opening and operating homes to care for the dying, working among lepers, and being among the first to minister to people suffering with AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome). In spite of her decades-long “dark night of the soul,” which Mother Teresa communicated in her recently published personal letters, her life’s work was inspired by a deeply held religious conviction and a profound Eucharistic spirituality. As her lifelong friend Eileen Egan explained, Mother Teresa pursued a personal relationship with Christ mediated through the Eucharist, which truly was the source and summit of her devotion and service to the poor.

During the course of her life, Mother Teresa received the highest recognition for her work. In 1971, Pope Paul VI awarded her the first Pope John XXIII Peace Prize, and in 1979, she won the Nobel Peace Prize. On her death in 1997, Pope John Paul II waived the typical 5-year waiting period for considering a cause for canonization, and Mother Teresa was beatified on October 19, 2003. Her order continues her work to this day, serving on every continent of the world.

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See also India; Roman Catholicism; Saints; Social Justice

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MOZAMBIQUE

The Republic of Mozambique is located on the southeastern African coast along the Mozambique Channel and the Indian Ocean. Bordering five nations and across from the islands of Madagascar and Comoros, Mozambique spans a land mass of approximately 800,000 square kilometers and is prone to droughts, flooding, and storms. Mozambique became an independent nation in 1975. The national language is Portuguese, a legacy of five centuries of colonial rule and trade relationships with Portugal. Portuguese migration to Mozambique led to Catholic mission stations being established, oppressive *assimilado* policies of citizenship afforded to “civilized” Africans who were literate and “acted Portuguese,” and backbreaking labor for many Africans forced to work in mining industries under colonial pressure. The *indigenato* system of racial preference aroused the ire of the people and caused an African backlash on White residents, who were exiled from the country after it gained independence. Today, African ethnic groups constitute 99% of the population and include the Makhuwa, Tsonga, Sena, and Lomwe. In addition to Portuguese, the languages of Emakhuwa, Xichangana, Elomwe, Cisena, and Echuwabo are spoken in Mozambique.

Civil war and political unrest from 1977 to 1992 caused mass emigration, violence, and national instability, exacerbated by drought and widespread poverty. Military service registration is currently required for all legal-age Mozambicans, though without major threats internally or abroad, citizens are experiencing relative peace and stability. A form of African Marxism was used in government until 1989. The current political system in Mozambique, a republic using multiparty elections, was constitutionally adopted in 1990.

After being the leader for nearly two decades, Joaquim Chissano stepped down from office in 2004; Chissano worked to expand free market trade and improve the national economy through exporting agricultural products, surplus electricity, and aluminum. Mozambique's primary trade partners today include South Africa, the Netherlands, China, and India. Much of the current nation's gross domestic product relies on foreign assistance, and debts still unpaid have left the country scrambling to stave off inflation and the AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome) crisis, with an estimated one in eight Mozambicans testing positive for HIV (human immunodeficiency virus)/AIDS. The current president, Armando Guebuza, was reelected in 2009 for a second 5-year term.

According to the 1997 census, the nation's religious makeup includes 41.3% Christians (23.8% Catholics and 17.5% Zionist Christians), 17.8% Muslims, and 40.9% who identified as other or none, most of whom are practitioners of various African Christian denominations or African traditional religions. Under the Portuguese, Catholicism was the official religion of the colony and was used in the mission education system, though K. E. Sheldon notes that of all European colonies in Africa, rates of illiteracy were among the highest and frequency of school attendance the lowest for Portuguese Africans. Marxist ideologies postindependence promoted a secular state, but presently religious freedoms are upheld and promoted by government and citizens alike. Today, Sunnī Muslims are the majority population in the north, while in the nation's central and southern provinces, many denominations of evangelical Protestants, Catholics, and African Independent Churches predominate.

Christi M. Dietrich

See also Africa; Missions and Missionaries; New Religions in Africa; South Africa

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MUGHAL EMPIRE

The Mughal Empire is among the most influential dynasties in South Asian history. Established in 1526 with the deposing of the Delhi sultanate, under the leadership of generations of charismatic, ambitious, and highly effective emperors, the Mughal Empire experienced nearly 200 years of stable rule over much of the Indian subcontinent. The empire also facilitated a cultural renaissance that blended Islamic and Indic traditions. Today, the legacy of the Mughal era is found in various artistic, literary, and architectural wonders.

In 1526, Babur, a Central Asian general, after defeating Sultan Ibrahim Lodi in the Battle of Panipat, established the Mughal Empire, which he led until his death in 1530. Humayun, Babur's eldest son, then ruled the dynasty from 1530 to 1556. His reign was marked by infighting with his brothers as well as mixed fortunes on the battlefield against his rivals.

Humayun's son Akbar, the most successful and influential of the Mughal emperors, assumed the throne in 1556 after his father's death and reigned until 1605. Conquering vast territories including Gujarat and Bengal, Akbar significantly increased the domain of Mughal rule. The expanding empire was funded chiefly through revenues collected from trade and agriculture. Akbar installed the *mansabdari*, a sophisticated and highly efficient bureaucracy, to both defend and administer his empire.

Akbar strived to create an Indic empire free of sectarian strife. To this end, he gained support among many Hindu rulers by appointing them to high-level positions in his court and by eliminating the *jizya* (taxes imposed on non-Muslims). His royal court was reputed for being a center of religious pluralism, to which the emperor invited scholars and mystics from different religions. Akbar eventually synthesized what he saw as the best elements of these disparate traditions by developing his own religion, which he referred to as *Din-i-Ilahi*.

The Mughal Empire continued flourishing under the rule of Akbar's next three successors: Jahangir (1605–1627), Shah Jahan (1627–1658), and Aurangzeb (1658–1707). Following the reign of Aurangzeb, the empire entered a period of

decline, with subsequent emperors wielding diminishing power and influence. British officials exiled the last Mughal emperor, Bahadur Shah Zafar, after the Indian Rebellion of 1857.

The Mughal emperors sponsored the production of various illustrated manuscripts, including the translations of the Sanskrit epics into Persian. Akbar's royal studio brought together both Hindu and Muslim artists, who produced new Indo-Persian styles of painting. Included among the architectural marvels of the Mughal world are the Red Fort and Humayun's tomb in Delhi, the Lalbagh Fort in Dhaka, and the Taj Mahal in Agra.

Rohit Singh

See also Akbar; Hinduism; India; Islam

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MUHAMMAD (CA. 570/571–632 CE)

Muhammad, literally the “praised one,” is believed by Muslims to be the last and final prophet sent by God (Allah) to guide humankind. Although from the modern historical perspective there has been much debate on the historicity of specific events related to his life, modern scholarship has conceded Muhammad's historicity, cautioning, however, that there is much that awaits research.

Muhammad was born in Mecca (Makkah) in 570–571 CE to the noble tribe of Banu Hashim. His father had died just months before his birth, and within the first 10 years of his life, he lost his mother and grandfather ‘Abd al-Muttalib and was subsequently brought up by his paternal uncle Abu Talib. He assisted his uncle in trade and traveled around Arabia and to Syria a couple of times. From a young

age, he had become known as “the honest one” and “the trustworthy one.” He married Khadijah, a rich widow 15 years his senior, who bore him four daughters and two sons, both of whom died very early. Close to age 40, he took to meditation and would retire to the cave of Hira’ outside Mecca in reclusion. On one such occasion around 610 CE, he received the first revelation through the archangel Jibreel (Gabriel), and thus began his prophetic career that would last till his death in 632 CE.

Muhammad's initial message to the Arab tribes was quite simple: Believe in only one God, casting aside all forms of idol worship, and believe in him (Muhammad) as God's messenger and in an after-life where everyone would be held accountable to God for his or her actions—implying therefore moral uprightness.

Muhammad's prophetic activities are usually divided into two eras: the Makkah and the Madinan. After continuous preaching for 13 years under increasingly hostile conditions in Mecca and only being able to win a handful of followers, Muhammad migrated to Medina (Madinah), where he had been promised support and where he would spend the rest of his life.

In Medina, in addition to his prophetic and spiritual qualities, he demonstrated his skills as an intelligent statesman as he fused previously warring tribes into a brotherhood and nation (*umma*) unparalleled in human history. In a mere 23 years of an active prophetic career, Muhammad's message rose from the dirt alleys of Makkah to challenge the Byzantine and Persian empires, thus laying the foundations for Islam to turn into a global religion.

Muslims the world over consider the love of Prophet Muhammad and the recitation of *salawat* (blessing invocations) on him as the benchmark for piety; he is seen to be the model par excellence and thus needs to be followed in his words and actions.

Muhammad Modassir Ali

See also Islam; Mecca; Medina; Qur'an; Saudi Arabia

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MUJTAHID-SHABISTARI, MUHAMMAD (B. 1937)

Muhammad Mujtahid-Shabistari is a contemporary Shi'a Muslim theologian who is one of the leading thinkers behind the reform movement challenging the clergy's political supremacy in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Born to a clerical family, Muhammad Mujtahid-Shabistari entered the Qum seminary at the age of 14 and pursued his religious studies for the next 18 years. He was also interested in contemporary trends in philosophy and modern Western thought. Mujtahid-Shabistari went to Germany in 1970 and became the director of the Hamburg Islamic Center. While holding that position until 1979, he studied the hermeneutic trend in modern theology. He returned to Iran after the Islamic Revolution of 1979 and was elected to the first Islamic parliament (Majlis) in 1980.

Mujtahid-Shabistari emerged as one of the most forceful theorists of the religious reform movement in postrevolutionary Iran in the 1990s and early 2000s. He made a decisive epistemic break with the apologetic modernism of the earlier generation and offered a more rigorous critique of the foundations of theocratic government in legalistic Islam with the publication of *Hermeneutik, kitāb va sonnat* (Hermeneutics, the Book and Tradition) in 1996. Drawing on the mastery of modern hermeneutics he had acquired during his years in Germany, he elaborated a critical theory for rethinking Islam in the contemporary world. The interpretation of religious experience was mediated by language and depended on the historical context. Islam, like religious experience generally, had to be read afresh and reinterpreted by each generation. This was followed by *Naqdi bar qirā'at-e rasmi-ye din* (A Critique of the Official Reading of Religion) in 2000, approaching Islam hermeneutically from the historical perspective of modernization. The key to the hermeneutic conception of Islam is that it is capable of different readings. The official reading (*qirā'at*) of Islam is historically

contingent and only one of its many possible readings. This reading is severely criticized from the perspective of modernity. Modernization began about 150 years ago with the resolution of the Muslims to overcome backwardness by adopting a new style of life and has variously been called progress and development. The process of modernization radically changed the character of Muslim societies and consequently the social functions of Islamic jurisprudence. The "official reading of religion" originated in a phenomenon called "jurisprudential Islam" (*Islām-e fiqāhati*), which justified totalitarian control of culture by the theocratic government and gradually gained the upper hand after the revolution.

The political implications of Mujtahid-Shabistari's religious hermeneutics were spelled out further. In *Hermeneutik, kitāb va sonnat*, he used the hermeneutic principle that the meaning of religious norms is determined by their historical context to refute the fundamental claim that it is possible to base the state, or for that matter any social institution, on Islamic jurisprudence. No political regime was founded on the basis of the science of Islamic jurisprudence in the past, nor could one be so founded in the future. This is because the science of jurisprudence can only offer answers to certain questions that arise in a specific historical context and within the institutional framework of existing political regimes. Mujtahid-Shabistari thus explicitly refuted the two cardinal tenets of the official clericalist reading of Islam, namely, that "Islam as a religion has political, economic and legal regimes based on the science of Islamic jurisprudence" suitable for all ages and that "the function of government among the Muslims is the execution of the commandments of Islam" (*A Critique of the Official Reading of Religion*, p. 12).

Mujtahid-Shabistari's fundamental idea that different readings of Islam are acceptable was adopted by President Muhammad Khātami (1997–2005) and became a major tenet of the reform movement in Iran, thereby undermining the claim of the clerical elite to exclusive authoritative interpretation of Islam.

Saïd Amir Arjomand

See also Iran; Islam; Islamic Reform; Politics and Religion; Religion and State; Shi'a Islam

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MÜLLER, MAX (1823–1900)

Max Müller was a German-born Vedic scholar and fellow of All Souls College, Oxford, who painstakingly edited the first critical edition of the *Rig-Veda Samhitā* (6 volumes) and oversaw publication of the monumental series *The Sacred Books of the East* (50 volumes, to which he contributed translations of the *Dhammapada* and the Upanishads). Son of the German Romantic poet Wilhelm Müller (1794–1827), Max Müller was born in Anhalt-Dessau and educated at the University of Leipzig, completing his PhD in 1843. Müller continued his studies at Berlin under Franz Bopp and Friedrich Schelling, the former known for his work identifying the linguistic links among the so-called Indo-European (or Aryan) family of languages, the latter inspiring Müller's interest in comparing the historical developments in language with those of religion. After further studies in Sanskrit at Paris under Eugène Burnouf, Müller, encouraged by Burnouf and supported by Baron Christian von Bunsen, received a commission from the East India Company and Oxford University Press to edit the Rig Veda (published in 1849–1873). Shortly after arriving in London, Müller secured various appointments at Oxford University, eventually receiving a chair in comparative philology in 1868. Because of his research, and his unwavering support for Indian nationalism, Müller gained admirers throughout India, his home soon becoming something of a pilgrimage site for students and pundits.

Müller first gained prominence in 1856, when he published “Comparative Mythology,” a book-length essay wherein he expertly applied the then current linguistic theory to the question of the origin of mythology. Müller believed that the chief

source of ancient myths was the Sun (hence the term *solar mythology*) and argued that the earlier names (*nomina*) that people gave to solar and other natural phenomena were later confused for divine beings (*numina*). To account for these names, stories developed around them. But far from being a case of mistaken personification, ancient mythology also provided evidence for the evolutionary development of human thought and language. For Müller, mythology represented an earlier “mythopoeic” strata of human thought, a vestige of the distant past that still impressed itself on present-day cultures and religions.

In addition to his work in philology and comparative mythology, Müller also championed the comparative study of religion as a “science” over and against theology. Müller coined the term *science of religion* in 1870 and, through several series of public lectures he gave over the next quarter century, laid out a methodology that he hoped would ensure its success as an academic enterprise. These included *Lectures on the Science of Religion* (1872); *Lectures on the Origin and Growth of Religion, as Illustrated by the Religions of India* (1879); *Natural Religion* (1889); *Physical Religion* (1891); *Anthropological Religion* (1892); and *Theosophy, or Psychological Religion* (1893).

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See also Hinduism; India; Indo-European Religion; Veda

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MULTICULTURALISM

Multiculturalism as a contemporary ideology should be understood as a response to assimilationism, that is, as a movement toward greater

respect for the cultural differences within nation-states. In the broadest sense, it signals an extension of the “human rights revolution,” defined originally with respect to individuals and then extended to groups. Within Western countries with large streams of immigrants of diverse origins—Canada, Australia, and the United States, especially during the 1970s and 1980s—new trends and policies emerged, recognizing and celebrating the cultural differences. In Europe, multiculturalism took the form mainly of public recognition of and public policies relating to religions, especially Islam. Generally, its meaning and expression vary depending on the national context and the extent to which it is defined primarily as a social or as a political ideology. Typically, it involves a normative framework (dealing with how to build a society respectful of human differences), but it can also be understood as a category of praxis (how a pluralistic, civic-minded society should function in everyday life).

History

The first nation to adopt multiculturalism as official policy was Canada in 1971. Prime Minister Pierre E. Trudeau, contesting the assimilationist (“melting-pot”) perspectives, argued that adherence to cultural community was a matter of individual choice but that for members of immigrant groups, their ability to choose their own was threatened without government intervention. His multicultural policy was intimately linked with the promotion of Canadian unity, after the rise of French Canadian nationalism. The policy legitimated belonging to both Canadian society and the immigrant’s country of origin; it pressured political leaders to make some accommodations for ethnic minorities. By 1973, the term *multiculturalism* had been introduced into Australian policy, in an effort to shift away from expectations of assimilation and to recognize, respect, and celebrate the cultural differences of non-European migrants. Social expenditures on immigrant assistance and welfare increased sharply, as did the role of ethnic organizations in helping minority communities. Policies in other countries, particularly Britain, the Netherlands, and Sweden, soon followed. In the United States, even though there is no legally established policy of multiculturalism, the ideology has flourished; however,

it has also sparked significant negative reaction as ethnic and religious diversity has expanded in recent decades.

Criticisms

Cultural essentialism has been identified as the core problem with multiculturalism as an ideology. Many educational curricula, media images, public funding programs, professional training courses, and handbooks (e.g., in the social services) promote uniform, essentialist views of minority cultures and identities. Consequently, the politics of recognition risks becoming a politics of coercion when members belonging to a particular cultural community are stereotyped. Other critiques of multiculturalism point to the intensification of group barriers and interests, which when carried too far can lead to a weakened national cohesion, the underestimation of internal group differences and inequalities, and the problematic relationship of multiculturalism to the building of nation-states, especially in young countries where there are large populations of native peoples who experienced European colonialism and where Eurocentrism is still strong. Hence, in all diverse societies, young and old, some sense of balance between internal group bonding and nation binding is necessary.

Today, there is discussion of the “crisis of multiculturalism,” and at a global level, we can observe two opposite discourses. The first seeks to legitimate a return to an assimilationist ideology, in the context of post 9/11 and of increased perception of the threat of religious extremism; the second refers to the necessity of rethinking and improving multiculturalism, with attention to a shift toward “interculturalism,” a new pluralistic model that conceives culture as an emerging process, more fluid and less bounded than in earlier thinking. Forces favoring these two are apparent in much public discussion across many countries. Religion is under scrutiny in both the pro-assimilationism and the pro-new multiculturalism arguments.

Multiculturalism and Religion

Religious followers tend to think generally that their religion is the best. This sense of superiority can be mitigated in societies where pluralism

becomes a shared public value. Yet for many religious people, this introduces a plurality instead of a cultural hegemony, puts their own religion on a par with others' religion, and exposes them and their children to the influence of other religions and secular cultures. For these reasons, conservative religious and political leaders often feel uncomfortable with multiculturalism; a discursive strategy for attacking it is the charge that it promotes cultural and religious relativism. Cultural relativism is a central concept in the history of anthropology, its classical formulation stemming from the 1930s and 1940s as a strong refusal of Nazi-style racism and 19th-century evolutionism, which theorized a hierarchy of cultures and peoples and thereby legitimated colonialism and other systems of oppression. Today, cultural relativism easily becomes synonymous with immorality and ethical indifference. Thus, traditionalists call for the defense of "our values and traditions," which are more or less explicitly opposed to "others' values and traditions." An example is the case of Joseph Ratzinger, the current Pope Benedict XVI of the Catholic Church, and Marcello Pera (ex-president of the Italian Senate), who wrote a book titled *Without Roots: Europe, Relativism, Christianity and Islam* (2004). Their main ideas are that Europe suffers from relativism and that the moral superiority of Christianity should be reaffirmed and the presence of Muslims perceived as a threat. Even many European liberals—the champions of minority rights, cultural diversity, and civic nationalism—feel threatened by Muslims.

In many societal settings, two areas that have emerged as particularly contentious relate to the values of freedom of speech and expression, and gender equality.

Freedom of Speech and Expression

In recent years, no other event has generated as much tension relating to freedom of expression than the publication of Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses* (1988) in Britain. As a part of his new theorizing on political multiculturalism, Bhikhu Parekh argues that the sacred (for Muslims) has been treated in a mocking manner throughout the book. Soon after the publication of the novel, British Muslims began to protest. The response in much of the liberal as well as conservative press was hostile,

accusing Muslims of preferring a theocratic as opposed to a liberal secular society. There was public discussion about whether multiculturalism was a dangerous doctrine and whether it was acceptable to tolerate the intolerant. Even Roy Jenkins, the father of Britain's Race Relations Act (1976), lamented that politicians should be more cautious in allowing the growth of a more substantial Muslim community in Britain. Muslim protests received a standard reply based on the fundamental principles of British society that were generally nonnegotiable, freedom of expression being among them.

The controversy over *Satanic Verses* offered insights on multicultural society, that is, the relevance of memories of the past (and fears of the future) in which political debates are embedded. Thanks to the painful memories of religious wars during the early-modern period, many Britons were deeply suspicious of the political role of religion, and because of the role of radical Islam in some Muslim countries (e.g., Iran under Ayatollah Khomeini, who pronounced a death sentence on Rushdie), they feared the militancy of Muslims within Britain. On the other side, Muslims brought to the debate their memories of centuries of European Islamophobia, colonialism, and racism and their current experience of social marginalization, interpreting Rushdie's book and the British debate surrounding it as further proof of these realities.

Multiculturalism often lacks a strong religious sensitivity in situations of group defamation. At issue are the scope and limits of free speech. Moreover, the political theorist Bikhu Parekh affirms that what is troublesome about the Muslim political reasoning is not so much its religious character but rather its unfamiliarity in non-Muslim settings and the need for greater social interaction with host populations, more education, and more intercultural dialogue. While Muslims need to acquire more competence in secular languages and develop more internal criticism, European societies have to rethink what secularism means in practice and question anew the historical compromises with secular thinking they now take for granted. As the sociologist Tariq Modood argued in recent essays, there is a secular bias in much of the discourse and policies of multiculturalism in Europe. In a society where some of the disadvantaged minorities are religious ones, a policy of public multiculturalism requires a stronger public recognition of religious

minorities and their rights. Scrutinizing the compromises in the church-state relations in each European country is necessary for extending the principles associated with the plural state. The challenge of existing power structures and the cultivation of more inclusive forms of democracy are therefore required.

Gender Equality

What should be done when the claims of minority cultures and religions clash with the norms of gender equality endorsed by liberal states? Feminist scholars such as Susan Moller Okin worry about political multiculturalism. Polygamy, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, differential access for men and women to health care/education, and many other sexist practices cannot be treated simply as “customs” to be respected. Even if defenders of multiculturalism limit the defense of group rights to those groups with acceptable practices, the skepticism of feminists is due to the fact that much of the control over women by men is informal and enforced in the private sphere. Thus, those who defend group rights on liberal grounds need to address carefully these very private, culturally/religiously reinforced kinds of discrimination. According to the feminist classical perspective, the personal is political, and the household is the main battlefield. In other words, the separation of the private from the public sphere makes little sense when applying this distinction to gender issues.

Gender biases are deeply connected, of course, with patriarchal religious teachings and practices. True, too, in almost every religious tradition, it is possible to find a rationale for progressive social change and voices of dissent in the struggle for gender justice. The public recognition of cultural complexity and of religious changes is politically useful in establishing alliances between progressive citizens across religious communities who are involved in antiracism and antisexism. A feminist, more egalitarian multiculturalism ideally would include teaching about religion (i.e., the study of comparative religion with attention to gender) in public schools, not only to educate children on the norms of pluralism but also to empower them through education so that they can reflect seriously about their religious traditions and promote more gender equality from a religious perspective.

Everyday Multiculturalism

“Everyday multiculturalism” is not about the normative debate on the foundations of a fair multicultural society but instead focuses on lived practices that support and reinforce pluralism as a culture. As an analytical perspective, it goes beyond the banal observation that difference is a social construction to focus on the ways it is constructed and to link the microlevel of everyday life to macrolevel policies and structures. As a category of practices, it refers to how social actors, in specific situations, interpret group-based cultural differences and by their actions give support to the principles of fairness and equality in their daily lives. As individuals, people often concur with the views and practices of their ethnic or religious group in relation to other communities; at other times, they must break with their group in the interest of more universal human values.

Moreover, religious beliefs and practices can have paradoxical consequences. In her research on American Hinduism, Prema Kurien shows this to be the case. Hindu Indian American spokespersons promote themselves as patriotic Americans, emphasizing the intrinsic pluralism of Hinduism and its possible contribution to solving global problems. But at times they also use the discourse of multiculturalism to promote a more militant, nationalistic *Hindutva* (“Hinduness”) movement, with criticism against Muslims, Christians, and secular Hindus. Even more paradoxically, in the name of their rights as a global minority, supporters of this movement demand a Hindu state in India where they would deny to India-based minority groups some of the basics rights that Hindu Indians enjoy in the United States (and that allow for their activism). All this simply points to the fact that religion as a basis for political mobilizing can lead to many, often contradictory, expressions; thus, any single religion is itself potentially a multicultural and multipolitical force within a social context.

Annalisa Frisina

See also Canada; Diaspora; Gender; Global Migration; Global Religion; Globalization; Hinduism; Inter marriage; Islam; Multiple Faiths; Pluralism; Roman Catholicism; Tolerance

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MULTIPLE FAITHS

In the global era, it is not uncommon for individuals to draw on beliefs and practices from multiple faiths or even to identify with more than one faith. Among the many cultural changes likely contributing to the increasing number of individuals with ties to more than one faith are the prioritization of individual freedom and choice, greater tolerance toward marriages between people from different religious backgrounds, and increased contact with other religious traditions through globalizing forces such as the spread of technology and migration. In this entry, a definition of multiple religious ties is offered, examples from both Eastern and Western cultures are presented, related phenomena are explored, and the historical context is examined.

Definition

Given the continuous and rapid changes acting on contemporary society, an individual who has ties

to multiple faiths may accordingly be broadly defined. An individual who consciously identifies with more than one faith, regardless of beliefs or practices, would be considered to have ties to multiple faiths. However, an individual also may be considered to have ties to multiple faiths if he or she draws on beliefs and/or practices from more than one faith, regardless of whether or not he or she consciously identifies with or declares ties to more than one faith. This definition includes individuals who practice, adhere to the beliefs of, or identify with more than one established denomination or subgroup of the same larger religious tradition but excludes institutionalized group practices or identities involving the syncretism of multiple faiths.

Examples

There is a wide difference in how individuals may have ties to more than one faith. In the Eastern context, Catherine Cornille, who is skeptical of contemporary Westerners' claims to belong to more than one faith, describes how the Chinese can easily experience a sense of simultaneous belonging to Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism. Jan Van Bragt observes that more than half of all Japanese people claim to be adherents to both Shinto and Buddhism. And Elizabeth Harris describes how 19th-century Sri Lankan Buddhists reinterpreted existing identities and expressions of religiousness to incorporate the Christianity brought to them by British evangelical missionaries.

Examples from the West are less common but still readily available. One typical respondent from Gideon Goosen's research in Greater Sydney, Australia, was a woman who considered herself Hindu but, having been influenced by the Catholic schools in which she had been educated, often attended Catholic churches to pray to Jesus and Mary and was inspired by the Ten Commandments. A particularly illustrative case from Nancy Eiesland's study of an exurb of Atlanta, Georgia, was a family that had ties to several different denominations of Christianity; the family members' religious narratives simultaneously incorporated elements from all of these diverse ties, which included their affiliation with the local United Methodist Church, a nearby Baptist megachurch where the wife participated in a "Grief Relief" support group, the influences of

her Catholic and Presbyterian siblings, and the husband's upbringing with little attachment to any faith.

Related Phenomena

Other, closely related phenomena have been documented in studies of the U.S. population. Robert Wuthnow found that a large minority of young adults were engaged in spiritual tinkering in two particularly common ways—"church shopping" and "church hopping." Church shopping involves attending various religious institutions while presumably seeking one in which to settle and become a regular member. Church hopping, however, involves staying in the market or tinkering with several possible selections rather than settling down with one, which appears to Wuthnow to be intentional among those who find variety appealing. An examination of people who claim no religious preference in national surveys found that many of them still held a weak sense of attachment to a religious tradition and thus might identify with the tradition sometimes, if not always; for this group, religious identity was a situational trait rather than a stable one and could vary from one context to another.

History

Catherine Cornille contends, however, that for much of history, ties to multiple religions may have been the rule rather than the exception, at least on a popular level. She believes that religion in the West, which has been shaped around comparatively rigid and exclusive boundaries by a combination of political and religious forces, may just be coming to terms with a practice or form of religiosity that has been prevalent for ages in most of the rest of the world, especially in the East. Yet even Christianity did not always demand exclusive adherence. For example, Gideon Goosen describes how the first disciples saw themselves as Jews and Christians simultaneously, going to the synagogue on the Sabbath and then coming together to celebrate the Lord's supper on the first day of the week—at least until they were thrown out of the synagogue. References to "Jewish Christians," who were an early source of controversy in the

church, can be found through the middle of the fifth century.

Conclusion

The prevalence of individuals with ties to more than one faith will likely only continue to grow. Nancy Ammerman observes that if religious identity ever was a given, it certainly no longer is so. Within the everyday marketplace of modern identity narratives, people can choose how and whether to be religious. Robert Wuthnow points out that the geographic mobility and the general unsettledness of our contemporary society allows for unprecedented opportunities to make spiritual choices. And Catherine Cornille describes how the heightened and widespread awareness of religious pluralism has left the religious person with a choice not only of which religion but also of how many religions he or she might belong to. Cornille credits the radical sense of individual autonomy evident everywhere in Western culture today with the fact that individuals no longer feel compelled to accept every single aspect of a religious tradition without question, which can result in a more piecemeal approach to doctrine, symbols, and practices, governed by personal judgment and taste.

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See also Diaspora; Global Religion; Globalization; Multiculturalism; Pluralism; Protestant Buddhism; Public and Private Religion; Religious Identity; Syncretism

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MULTIPLE MODERNITIES

Multiple modernities, a concept that emerged at the end of the 20th century, represents a new paradigm in understanding the contemporary world. It moves forward from the “classical” analyses of Émile Durkheim, Karl Marx, and Max Weber, whose works implicitly assumed that the social, economic, and political processes taking place in Europe around the 18th century, such as urbanization, industrialization (capitalism), secularization, rationalization, the emergence of the nation-state, and bureaucratization were not only unique but also universal. The concept of multiple modernities was developed to refute mainstream sociological thought around the 1950s—particularly modernization theories. These theories conceived that the peculiar features of modernity in the West (the United States and some parts of Europe), such as individual emancipation and future-oriented progress together with the development of democracy, technology, and advanced communications media, appeared as goals that all nations will eventually achieve.

The notion of multiple modernities was developed by many social scientists during the last decades of the 20th century. However, it is generally recognized that the most important work was by Shmuel N. Eisenstadt (1923–2010). He stood up against theories that suggested that the world was going to collapse due to the confrontation of modern and not modern societies—that is, Western and non-Western societies. He also criticized works that suggested “the end of history” and those who considered that modernity was an

incomplete program. He believed that developing an idea of multiple modernities was the best way of understanding contemporary societies and, as a consequence, modernity as a process of “constitution and reconstitution of a multiplicity of cultural programs.” That is why he suggested that the notion of multiple modernities implies making a distinction: Modernity is different from Westernization. This means that there are distinctive patterns of modernity, with a capacity for self-correction, throughout the world. Finally, Eisenstadt sustained that institution building, protest, and the relation between centers and peripheries caused the acceleration of the transposition of the project of modernity to non-Western (non-European) societies.

To sum up, the notion of multiple modernities implies that modernity itself, as it was conceived in the mainstream sociological approaches in the late 19th and 20th centuries, can be reduced to a phenomenon only present in some parts of western Europe in a specific period of time. It also implies that the diverse and complex non-Western societies are not exceptions to modernity but are modern in themselves.

Classical Approaches to Modernity

There are some classical interpretations of modernity that are necessary to understand before analyzing the main aspects of the idea of multiple modernities.

During the 18th century, at the time of the Enlightenment, a project of modernity was developed by many influential philosophers. This project implied the development of reason, an objective science, a new form of morality, and universal laws separated from religion. They believed in the ideas of unlimited progress and the reign of reason. The accumulation of a refined culture meant the enrichment and rational organization of life. There was a positive consideration of the idea of progress and the virtues of reason for humankind.

During the 19th century, some of the high expectations of progress and reason were questioned by social scientists, and new explanations of modernity arrived. These explanations were dominant in the social theory until the end of the 20th century.

It was considered that the social spheres, such as literature, the arts, science, economy, and the

state, were institutionalized apart from religion. This process of secularization, as a separation of spheres, was one of the main contributions of classical sociology. According to Max Weber, the modern concept of the world was attached to principles, ideas, and customs derived from Protestant doctrines. This process allowed the rationalization of everyday life and the rational-capitalist organization of labor. Such economic rationalism depended not only on the development of *technique* and *the law* but also on the capacity and aptitude of man to develop a certain type of rational behavior. The economic mentality that emerged in the origins of capitalism—and modernity—was influenced by a religious ethos. The rational ethics of ascetic Protestantism, transferred to the modern economic ethics, was analyzed as a new compulsive mentality for work and saving that emerged as a base of capitalism. This rational organization of life included the development of new ways of increasing bureaucratization, considered as an inexorable “iron cage.”

The consumption of goods was considered, by other social theories, as a characteristic of modernity. The emergence of a monetary economy influenced new styles of life and consolidated a new kind of individual who was prone to consumption. Production and consumption were important to the objectivation of social relationships and the personality of individuals. This also meant the suppression of subjectivity, because people turned into anonymous shoppers.

Some social scientists considered that in industrial societies, typical of modernity, there was a characteristic process of individuation, secularization, and increasing functions of the state. This process meant interdependence among individuals, differentiation, solidarity, and civil responsibility. It also implied anomie, because a society based on social pluralism and individual values contained intrinsic possibilities of tension.

It was also considered that the development of modern capitalism, with the consequent emergence of private property, entailed an inherent conflict. Alienated individuals without the means of production became a salaried labor force that was traded in the market like merchandise. Exploitation and oppression were the distinctive characteristics of modern capitalism.

The classical explanations of industrial societies and modernity of the 19th century were influential

for the social sciences in the next century. One major influence was structural-functionalism. This theoretical framework, developed in the United States, was adopted within the social sciences internationally.

The assumptions of Weber and Durkheim (and even those of Marx and Simmel) were condensed in a newly developed concept: *modernization*. The idea of modernization entailed a sense of the evolution of society and progress. It was a concept that was used to analyze social change.

Modernization consists of the reciprocal action of two complex processes of differentiation and reintegration that enable society to adapt to the environment.

During the course of economic development, society and its institutions become more complex and heterogeneous. The relationship between the different sectors of society diversifies. The growth of urbanization establishes a competitive environment for individuals in the great cities. Traditional roles lose their specific characteristics, and individuals feel uprooted. Modernization implies social evolution as a process of increasing differentiation during industrialization. The growth of industrialization leads to the professionalization of the labor market and to better conditions of life for the population and, also, democracy as a system of government.

Modernization involves a notion of *progress* as an idea that is linear, accumulative, and oriented to the achievement of a goal: a successful industrial revolution and democracy. It implies that all societies in the world are going to evolve toward the same pattern of social change that occurred in some European countries and the United States.

Some of these aspects of differentiation can be found in many societies around the world: family life, education, economy, politics, individualistic orientations, and mass communications. The definition and organization of these arenas differ from one place to another, thereby giving rise to multiple ideological and institutional patterns.

The dominant paradigm in the social sciences during the 19th and 20th centuries assumed that modernity, as it was developed in some European countries, would be adopted by all countries. The institutional framework that emerged in those countries would have been a goal for every society in the world. The force of this linear and accumulative

progress appeared as a process of modernizing all societies. However, the social scientists who formulated the concept of multiple modernities criticized these theoretical approaches. They considered that there are processes of reappropriation, rejection, distortion, and reshaping in the course of reproducing modernity.

The Political and Cultural Program of Modernity: Autonomy and Destructive Tendencies

The classical approaches to modernity have been criticized by the social scientists who developed the notion of multiple modernities. However, these authors recognize that there is a common core of promissory notes about modernity that they call *the cultural and political program*. This program refers to different notions of human agency and the fact that there is a future that can be shaped by the autonomous agency of humankind.

This autonomy entails exploration, reflexivity, transformation of nature, and the possibility of participation of human beings shaping the political and social order. This program also implies the emergence of radical changes of the political order's premises and the building of a political arena.

The political process of modernity, according to Eisenstadt, is characterized by some dynamics focused on center-periphery relations, the politicization of demands as a general tendency of different sectors of society. This situation establishes a continuous conflict for the definition of the political realm.

The program of modernity also implies the building of limits for collective identities that are not taken for granted or defined by a transcendental authority. It further implies internal conflict, tensions, and contradictions derived from different developments in the capitalist system and the demand for democratization in the political arena.

Contrary to the interpretations of modernity as a peaceful path to progress and the evolution of reason, its program has internal conflicts that are increased by the development of imperialist landscapes and the rise of violence. Modern states have experienced war, terror, and violence, all bearing on citizenship and collective identities. World War II and the systematic extermination of European

Jewry in the Holocaust are examples of the destructive and negative potential of modernity.

There are different possibilities for the experience of modernity due to the construction of diverse and multiple ideological and institutional patterns throughout the world. This diversity is instantiated by social movements and intellectual activists who struggle for different programs of modernity because they do not share the same vision of what constitute a modern social system. The articulation of distinctive sectors of society with these social actors and movements establishes the heterogeneous patterns of how modernity is expressed around the globe.

The political program of modernity implies varieties of tension. There are different modes of legitimization of the political order that are related to adherence to the system along a continuum that ranges between religious and secular ways of legitimization. This implies contradiction around the building of collective identities that were mainly promulgated by national social movements with an international scope. Among these were communist, socialist, and liberal together with national-socialist and fascist movements. These social actors oscillate between two different kinds of antinomies related to the possibility of homogenizing societies through universalistic components of collective identity and the struggle between universalizing and pluralistic orientations.

These antinomies express fights and clashes in societies in Europe, the Americas, and the rest of the world. As Europe was the first landscape where these antinomies emerged, the characteristics of the conflict follow its pattern. Different notions of the nation-state and collective identities have emerged. Some actors understand the civil society and the state as separated arenas; some opine the contrary. However, everywhere the nation-state has been a central ideological and symbolic entity, it was one of the major parts of the program of modernity that in the last decades of the 20th century became debilitated. New visions of political order and collective identities appeared and were carried out by many social movements that challenged the classical program of modernity. These movements, according to Eisenstadt, developed first in Western societies. The ecological and women's movements arrived first in the West; these were rooted in the anti-Vietnam War groups of the late 1960s. They

represented a shift away from the orientation to the nation-state and proposed a local agenda in many countries. These movements did not focus on resolving macroeconomic problems or the reconstitution of the nation-state; they conceived themselves as “multicultural” or “postmodern” and represented new politics of identity to construct different cultural and political spaces. After those social forces, “fundamentalist” groups were born in different contexts such as Protestant Christian, Jewish, and Muslim communities. They had their basis not only in national societies but also in the international sphere. Moreover, there were communal religious groups developed in Asian cultures in the context of Hinduism and Buddhism that share a strong feeling against modernity or Westernization. Finally, in the last two decades of the 20th century, ethnic movements and diasporas developed and also challenged the cultural and political program of modernity. All these movements accelerated the transformation and consolidation of new social landscapes.

As noted earlier, the opposition between “modern” and “traditional” sectors of society developed first in European countries and then expanded to the American, Asian, and African countries. Europe, especially France and England, provided a mirror and reference point for other countries.

It is important to note that the premises of the modern program suffered an early transformation with the expansion of modernity in the American continent. In that landscape, different conceptions of the world and models of institutional life emerged. As Eisenstadt suggests, from the beginning of modernity’s expansion multiple modernities were developed within a Western framework.

The cultural and political program of modernity appeared first in Europe and then migrated to different Western countries. After that it traveled throughout the economic, technological, and military expansion of the West to diverse Asian societies and finally to African nations. All these societies adopted the model of the territorial nation-state and the basic institutions of the program of modernity. The encounter of modernity with non-Western countries and societies made also transformations within the cultural and political program. That is why one of the main characteristics of modernity is its capacity of self-correction.

The Religious Dimension of Modernity

One of the most widely accepted assertions about modernity in the classical approach is the fact that religion was disappearing from the public sphere and was becoming private. As rationality advanced, individuals were supposed to abandon their beliefs or practice their religion in the comfortable space of their homes. The economy, art, science, and other spheres acted as if “God did not exist.” It was expected then, due to the force of the secularization process, that religion was eventually going to disappear.

The case of the United States, where religion played an important role in the development of its project of modernity, was seen by social scientists as an exception. As J. Heideking suggests, religions in America were an important aspect in the construction of collective identities in the dawn of modernity not only because the development of an “integrative ideology” called “civil religion” but also because of the significant growth of religious denominations, mainly evangelical Christians. Americans succeeded in establishing a political order without separating individuals from religion. They could separate the relations between the church and the state in a religious social environment. The understanding of the American case as an exception of modernity was a common assumption in social theory. The United States was expected to imitate the European pattern of modernity. During the apogee of the modernization theories, the second half of the 20th century, social scientists realized that religion was not disappearing and that it still played an important role in societies. However, they still believed that religion was becoming a private matter. The influence of religion in the public sphere—at least in Western societies—was considered as null.

After the 1980s, the consensus on the privatization of religion started to break down. Many social movements based on religious beliefs exerted an influence in the public sphere. Social scientists then started to consider religions and symbolic orders as a way of shaping different programs of modernity. Moreover, modernity started to be seen as a producer of religion. The work of Danièle Hervieu-Léger was crucial for the development of this concept. What seems to be occurring is a process of individuation of beliefs. Due to the centrality of the autonomy of the individual in modern societies,

social actors build their religious productions without being formally attached to institutions. Believers circulate, define, and moderate their spiritual path. This movement of individualization of beliefs does not mean the loss of searching for communal boundaries.

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See also Durkheim, Émile; Modernism; Multiculturalism; Pluralism; Postmodernism; Public and Private Religion; Weber, Max

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MUSIC

Religion and musical practices are closely linked in most, if not all, societies and are interacting across cultural boundaries in the global age. Siegfried Nadel proposed that music may have had its origins in heightened speech at religious rituals—language performed in a musical way as a means of communicating with the supernatural, or at least as a way of demarcating sacred language from everyday language. We cannot know the origins of music, but it is true that religious practices around the world employ musical sounds. Yet in many, if not most, cases the relationship between music and religion is problematic, causing some religious teachings to include proscriptions against certain types of musical activity. Thus, any consideration of music and religion in a global context must be multifaceted, sensitive to the particular issues of any given religious practice and to how its adherents engage musical behavior.

Like the term *religion*, music can be difficult to define in a cross-cultural global context. The adage that music is the universal language has been disproved many times over by ethnomusicologists, who have shown that while music from cultural traditions unfamiliar to a listener may sound aesthetically pleasing, the meanings and uses of that music are rarely understood without substantial experience. Like language, music is a universal human behavior; and like language, but probably more so, the understanding of music varies greatly depending on one's cultural competency. This is especially true when music is associated with religious practices where organized sound art is often highly regulated and imbued with symbolic meaning. Thus, when encountering musical sounds from an unfamiliar source, one cannot make assumptions about the intended function of that music, even if one feels an aesthetic attraction. Even within the same religion, a single type of music may be deemed appropriate by one sect but banned by another, so varied is the understanding. Nor is there any universal understanding of what constitutes "music." In some cases, especially where religion and other belief systems are concerned, the symbolic meaning of sounds may be such that even what sounds like music to the uninitiated listener is not considered music at all by the informed producers and listeners—by the cultural insiders. Even within major global religions, there is no agreement about whether music is created by humans or inspired by the gods, devils, or other beings. One can also not assume that what sounds musical is considered as music to the sociocultural group that created the sounds or even if a given group has an indigenous term that approximates the European American concept of "music." For these reasons, the terms *musical practices*, *sound art*, and so on are used in this entry instead of *music* to avoid imposing a concept on the people.

The following sections of this entry are organized around three themes, or complementary approaches, to the question of music and religion. First, the close associations between religious and musical behaviors suggest that people attribute great power to music, thus making it a potentially volatile activity within religious communities. Second, the globalization of religions has also resulted in the globalization of some musical practices, forms, and styles. Third, and in seeming

contradistinction with the second point but probably related to the first, musical practices within any single global religion tend to vary greatly, containing even opposing approaches to what musical practices are encouraged and those that are restricted or prohibited.

The Power of Music in Religion

If there is any agreement among religious traditions, it is that musical practices can be powerful and, therefore, must be monitored and controlled. The source and nature of the power of music are not fully understood, and as Ter Ellingson has proposed, music is probably the synthesis of a number of things, but at least four musical qualities or potentialities seem to contribute to its effectiveness:

1. The ability of musically organized sound to structure human's experience of time
2. The potential for collective participation in musical behaviors (including singing and playing instruments together, dancing, etc.) to effect group solidarity
3. The potential for musical sounds to elicit emotional response (through sonic qualities as well as through symbolic and associative means)
4. The combination of music with meaningful texts, which can be particularly effective in conveying meaning as well as useful for didactic purposes

The structuring of time and our experience of time are particularly interesting for religious purposes. On the macrolevel, musical sounds can mark the beginning, ending, and key moments of ritual events. For example, in Europe, there is a long tradition of setting to music key moments of the Christian liturgy of the Mass. Notable examples include several settings by Dufay (from ca. 1450 CE), 104 settings by Palestrina (middle 1500s), settings by Mozart and Handel in the 18th century, settings by Beethoven in 19th century, and so on. In Muslim-majority societies, a musical call to prayer is sounded publicly five times daily, thus structuring time for all in the community. On a microlevel, musical sounds can shape one's experience of time in the moment physically by

inducing repeated action that in some circumstances leads to a trance, a key phenomenon in many religious rituals. Structuring human experience of time is also important in the second and third potential reasons for music's power: group solidarity and emotional response. Group solidarity can be created through rhythmically unified action, and the rhythmic features of music enhance one's emotional response (a calming response to repetition, the shock of sudden changes, the agitation of syncopation, etc.).

The last explanation of music's potential power, the combination of words and musical sounds, is most often cited as the reason for the close ties between musical and religious practices. In all societies, ways of producing words with special vocal technique (drawn-out speech on one or a few tones, chanting, singing) are used to demarcate important texts. Qur'anic recitation is a prominent example. Traditionally, the Qur'an is to be heard, not just silently read, for the full meaning is in the sound. Though Qur'anic recitation is melodious and shares (even dictates) the central characteristics of some musical practices in regions of the world with predominantly Muslim populations, it is decidedly not considered music in itself. Most, if not all, other religions also have performed texts that are musical, while not all are conceived of specifically as music. Though the linking of texts and musical sounds for religious purposes may seem like an obvious place to locate the power of music, ultimately it is the nonspecific, nonreferential, untexted qualities of sound art or music that give it its greatest power. The power of suggestion, unexplained affect, and aesthetic pleasure, linked with the idea of the Divine can be quite moving. This not fully understood capacity of music to move people also makes it controversial in many global and local religious practices. What does a struck gong, a trumpet blast, a chord on a pipe organ, the sigh of an end-blown reed flute, the repeated pattern on a frame drum actually mean? Nothing without cultural context, but when contextualized as signifiers of religious feeling, belief, and truth, musical sounds become deeply meaningful for individuals within that faith system—and oftentimes negatively meaningful for those outside that system.

The power of music in one context, however, does not make it immune to trivialization when decontextualized. This is especially problematic in

a global context, where a sound considered sacred and evocative of deeply held beliefs to some might become little more than sonic texture or color when commoditized on a commercial recording, for example, and played for listeners on the other side of the globe, across a political border, or across a city street in a different house of worship. For example, as Mik Aide has reported, when Brian Eno and David Byrne mixed a recording of Algerian Qur'anic recitation with their own percussion and electronic music on their 1981 album *My Life in the Bush of Ghosts*, some Muslims were offended and the World Council of Islam protested. The offending track, "Qu'ran" [*sic*], was removed from subsequent releases of the album. While the potential for aesthetic beauty in musical sounds combined with an ambiguity of meaning often lulls individuals into thinking that they grasp the essence of musical sounds (hence the "Music is the universal language" fallacy), the intended meaning of human (or divine) sound art is usually much more interesting.

Globalization, Religion, and Music

The globalization of religions has also globalized certain musical practices. In Europe, the Christian church institutions were instrumental in spreading certain approaches toward music, including the early development of music notation systems that eventually became the five-line staff system used today in many parts of the world. The history of European art music is intertwined with the Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant churches. Music was and is also a tool for missionaries who have worked to make Christianity and other religions global. During colonial times, missionization was typically cultural—to be a Christian in Africa or the Americas included the cultural practice of singing European hymns, for example. Though this did globalize certain concepts of music, perhaps most notably harmonic rhythm, Philip Bohlman has pointed out that it was not a simple matter of missionary hymnody replacing the musical practices of global converts. Hymnody became the cultural possession of local communities, who reshaped it. Some, according to Bohlman, took the musical material and translated it into their own religious practices. However, even in the early years of global missionary work, some took a deliberately syncretic approach, combining local

music with ritual practices introduced by missionaries. For example, during the Spanish colonization of Mexico in the 16th century, in the P'urhépecha (Tarascan) region in the state of Michoacán, although choral music and instruments from Spain were actively used to evangelize, missionaries also incorporated elements of the P'urhépecha ceremonies into religious fiestas. They also learned the P'urhépecha language and used it in religious services. In the 21st century, religious fiestas in the P'urhépecha region continue to incorporate syncretic forms, including musical elements from wider popular spheres of music, such as mariachi ensembles.

The globalization of Islam presents a different, but not unrelated, set of issues. On the one hand, the call to prayer and Qur'anic recitation are part of the soundscape of all regions of the world where Islam is the majority religion. This is especially true of the call to prayer, which is broadcast over loudspeakers from mosques five times daily—it is a public sound art, not considered music, but musical in form and heard by all in Muslim communities. Qur'anic recitation is ostensibly learned and practiced by all Muslims, though there are trained specialists who perform a more elaborate form for public audition. Recitation and the call are also always performed in Arabic. Thus, both the call to prayer and Qur'anic recitation can be considered universal experiences for Muslims and for others living in predominantly Muslim societies. However, their relationship to local musical practices varies. Neubauer and Doubleday show how, while the call and Qur'anic recitation are not considered music, they are profoundly influential in Egyptian musical practice, and Egyptian cultural productions are highly influential throughout the Muslim world. In Egypt, the call and recitation as practiced by specialists are related to the modal and melodic construction (*maqām*) of Middle Eastern art music. In other Islamic societies, such as Indonesia (with the largest Muslim population), the call and recitation of the Qur'an borrow certain sonic qualities from the Middle East, especially through the obligatory use of Arabic, and while the influence of *maqām* can be heard in many places, different locations also add distinct regional qualities to the call and recitation.

Sufism within Islam has employed musical practices for mystical rituals, sometimes emphasizing trance. Sufi practices tend to be local, but a global

concept of Sufi music and performance was invented by the music industry from the early 20th century on, a phenomenon studied in depth by Regula Qureshi. Various internationally touring troupes of so-called Whirling Dervishes and the popularity of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan's devotional songs exemplify this development. Katherine Hagedorn has documented and theorized a community of listeners who access *qawwali* (sung Sufi devotional poetry) as well as Afro-Cuban Ocha (Santería) *tambores* (religious drumming with singing and dance) via the Internet. This global virtual community is deeply interested in the ecstatic or spiritual experience, if not the practice of religion itself. Here, musical interest leads a global network of consumers to religious and spiritual practices.

One could propose many additional examples of musical practices that are globalized by religious practices, and religions that are globalized by music—for example, Rastafarianism. Though perhaps not always considered a global religion, Rastafarianism is known to many in the world through the popular music genre of reggae. Though not all reggae music can be considered Rastafarian, and though reggae is not the first or only music associated with the religion, basic Rastafarian tenets are often emphasized in the lyrics of reggae. For example, in the 1990s, a Rastafarian reggae band, the Twinkle Brothers, performed together and made several commercial recordings with a Polish Tatra Mountain family folk ensemble, Trebunia-Tutka. For at least some individuals in the Polish band, the idea that the God of their Roman Catholicism might be considered the same as the Rastafarian's Jah was an important point of connection, as was their history of actively resisting oppression. To the extent that reggae is the music of Rastafarianism, the religion has a relatively stable musical identity compared with the other global religions considered here. Though this in itself is interesting, it must be considered in the context of Rastafarianism being a young religion (emerging in the 1930s), contrasting with two millennia history of Christianity and the 1,300 years of Islam.

Global Religions and Musical Diversity

Though global religions do help globalize some musical practices and ideas, it is equally true that within any global religion there is great diversity, and even contradictions, in the musical practices of

its adherents. Christianity and Islam provide ample examples. There is no single “Christian music” despite the efforts of hierarchical church structures to standardize many aspects of the liturgy. This includes macrodivisions of liturgical practice between the many primary branches of the church, including but not limited to Roman Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, and Protestantism. Some macrodivisions in the church have particular musical implications. For example, the Reformation, beginning in Zürich in 1525, broke from the Roman Catholic ritual focus on the Mass (which had many sung or chanted sections and a tradition of composed musical settings as noted above) in favor of services that focused on the sermon. The liturgy was almost entirely spoken, rather than sung, and congregational singing was rare. In contrast, the reformer John Calvin in Geneva favored metrical psalms for congregational singing. Martin Luther’s roughly contemporary reforms in Germany retained the basic structure of the Mass but emphasized congregational participation, including congregational singing. Luther himself composed a number of chorales, some of which are still sung in Protestant churches. The Reformation also encouraged the use of vernacular languages and other cultural forms, including music, as opposed to Latin, the official language of the Roman Catholic Church.

The tension between top-down liturgical practices given to a congregation by church leaders and vernacular cultural practices brought to the church by congregants remains especially in evangelical churches, some of which are defined as much by the music they use as by the theology that may distinguish them from other churches. These tensions are explored in Frank Burch Brown’s writings. In any city in North America, one can find a church with paid professional musicians, such as an organist/choir director and soloists within the choir, who perform new and old music from a European American art music tradition. In the same town, another church will prefer newly composed popular music and may also hire professional musicians. Other churches will rely on the musical talents of their congregation or offer several services each week that feature different styles of music or no music at all. The decisions about what music (if any) is appropriate may be left to the clergy or members of any one congregation, or it may be part of the doctrine of the church

denomination, though doctrinal statements about music tend to be restrictive. Prominent examples include the Amish, who use only unaccompanied, nonmetrical singing, and the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), who often have no music in worship services.

The situation in Islam may at first seem a little more straightforward, but this is not the case. As noted above, the universal expectation that Muslims recite the Qur’an in Arabic provides a level of sonic uniformity in global Muslim communities. The generally suspicious view of secular music by many Muslim teachers may also be seen as a unifying factor. However, musical practices within the global Islamic community are ultimately as varied as other religious demographics. The range of opinions about the idea of music runs from severe bans on musical behavior by groups such as the Taliban in Afghanistan and restrictions on some kinds of music in Iran since the 1979 revolution, all the way to the many Sufi sects that cultivate music as a central part of their religious practice. Other global religions provide their own unique situations. Hinduism includes performing arts as forms of worship; Buddhism is relatively tolerant of musical practices.

In India, music has been part of Hindu and Buddhist religious traditions from antiquity. The earliest forms of music were rhythmic chants of Vedic passages and selections from sutras. The growth of bhakti (devotional) Hinduism was the occasion for music to be composed to accompany the poetry of the saints of medieval Hinduism, including Guru Nanak, Kabir, Ravidass, and others. In the case of the female saint Mirabai, folk music emerged to tell her story of devotion to Lord Krishna. The music of the Hindu saints was influenced by Sufi music traditions, and the followers of Hindu and Muslim saints interacted with each other; Kabir was a Muslim saint who was devoted to the Hindu notion of a formless God; he was venerated by both Hindus and Muslims. In modern India, popular Hindu religious music is often conveyed through the soundtracks of Hindi-language religious films.

Conclusion

The three-pronged approach suggested here is intended to aid contemplation of the paired

mysteries of religion and music. The power of either is not readily defined, but how their powers play out in human societies can be observed. The globalization of religions has globalized some musical practices and ideas, but the same processes of globalization have introduced a dizzying array of musical practices within any given religion. Thus, even as global awareness increases, religious and musical practices must be considered locally.

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See also Art; Christianity; Cinema; Global Religion; Globalization; Hinduism; Islam; Popular Religion

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MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD

Founded in 1928 by Hasan al-Banna, the Muslim Brotherhood is perhaps the most influential and enduring Islamist organization of the modern period. On the heels of the Islamic reformist projects of Muhammad Abduh, Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, and Rashid Rida, and within the context of British imperialism in Egypt, al-Banna envisioned the brotherhood as an authentic Islamic alternative to modern political ideology and as a sustainable decolonization program. Concentrating its efforts on community service and basic education, the brotherhood has been a central component in the social and political life of modern Egypt despite suffering a considerable period of persecution by successive regimes since its founding. As both a formal organization and an international movement, it has also greatly influenced the Islamist politics of other Arab countries. Throughout its history and in various contexts, the brotherhood's political strategies have varied from radical opposition to pragmatic accommodation, making it one of the most enigmatic political forces of the modern period.

Hasan al-Banna was a primary schoolteacher in Ismailiyya, a major city in the Suez Canal zone. With the city's economic livelihood dependent on the British-controlled commercial trade in the area, al-Banna was in a unique position to witness the pressures and dynamics of the British colonial administration in Egypt. While rapid modernization

and capital expansion benefited the aristocratic elite, the disparity in wealth and educational opportunities among the classes became increasingly problematic. In this context, he envisaged the brotherhood both as a platform through which to fundamentally “revive” Islam as a holistic religious system and as a forum through which to address the necessities of a changing society.

Early Years

Hassan al-Banna was reared in traditional Islamic learning by his father, a reputable Muslim scholar in his own right. He was also exposed to a wide network of religious figures and intellectuals through his participation in the al-Hassafiyya Sufi order. In fact, it was a social welfare organization created under the auspices of the Hassafiyya that served as an immediate precursor to the brotherhood’s initial inception—a school (a room rented in a local mosque) dedicated to Islamic education such as Qur’anic recitation, interpretation, and history.

In 1931, the organization embarked on its first project to build a mosque and begin its social services. Weary of potential interference by elites, al-Banna sought financial support from middle-class and underprivileged locals instead of seeking funds from traditional patronage networks. Likewise, he regularly placed working-class, or other nonestablishment, individuals in positions of leadership within the organization, against the advice of his closest aids. A boys’ school and club were built above the mosque, followed by a girls’ school a year later. Also in 1931, the Cairo branch of the brotherhood was founded by al-Banna’s brother. Such actions afforded the early movement a reputation of popularism, piety, and integrity.

From its founding years, the brotherhood breached the fine line of political and religious separation that had conventionally governed the activities of Islamic welfare societies in Egyptian society. It addressed issues of public concern, including the legality of alcohol, prostitution, economic inequality, labor rights, British control of national resources, and European colonialism in Muslim lands more generally. It, nonetheless, did not actively involve itself in conventional politics. Thus, the brotherhood was positioned as a popular voice just as the Palestinian revolts of 1936 to

1939 cemented the anti-imperial sentiments of large segments of Egyptian society. By that time, the brotherhood had established approximately 100 branches across Egypt, founded a publishing house, owned their own pharmacy, and created a series of vocational schools for uneducated and unskilled initiates.

After establishing a network of contacts with like-minded Islamic welfare organizations abroad and supporting anti-Zionist political parties, it became increasingly difficult for the brotherhood to maintain its nonconfrontational posture against the British occupation of Egypt and the monarchical regime conducive to it. Splinter groups and underground militant cells began to form in the late 1930s, often without the knowledge of the organization’s top leadership. As World War II ended, Palestine was partitioned by the United Nations, and the Egyptian military confronted the emergent state of Israel, the brotherhood was transformed from a broad social service network of up to 0.5 million members to an active oppositional political party. Attacks on the government and popular protests against British and Jewish interests in 1948 led to a massive crackdown on the brotherhood. Increasing confrontations led to the assassination of Prime Minister Mahmud Fahmi al-Nuqrashi by a member of the brotherhood, which in turn resulted in the assassination of al-Banna in 1949.

In a united effort to oust King Farouk, the brotherhood joined forces with the Free Officers headed by Gamal Abdel Nasser. As a national socialist movement, it shared many of the populist sentiments of the brotherhood. However, when the group came to power in 1952, its nationalist agenda bypassed the Shari’a-oriented Islamic reforms sought by the brotherhood. Increasing tensions between the two groups led to political violence. An attempt on Nasser’s life in 1954 was attributed to the brotherhood, leading to widespread arrests and exile of the leadership, the dismantling of the organization’s infrastructure, and a ban on its activities. It has since then remained a banned political party.

After the assassination of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat in 1981 by the radical group Al-Jihad, headed by Abdul Salam al-Faraj, the Muslim Brotherhood further distanced itself from violent political tactics. Increasing radicalism in Egypt has

placed the brotherhood in a position of moderation between the regime and its militant Islamist challengers. Sadat's successor, Hosni Mubarak, released the brotherhood's Supreme Guide from prison in 1981, introducing a cautious policy of tolerance and accommodation. This policy has allowed the brotherhood to field candidates in parliamentary elections under the auspices of other parties or as independents despite remaining a banned political party.

Throughout the 1980s, the brotherhood gained a foothold in government institutions through a prudent policy of nonconfrontation coupled with a strategic use of legal channels of political participation. The brotherhood's political achievements took place alongside increasing radical Islamist violence, albeit by groups unassociated with the brotherhood, and soon the regime's accommodationist policy began to reverse. Despite the brotherhood's entrenchment in the civil and political life of Egyptian society, 54 of its members were convicted for participation in an "illegal organization" in 1995. After the convictions, the Mubarak regime pursued the organization more forcefully by restricting its activities and arresting its top leadership. Nonetheless, the brotherhood continued to increase its participation and success in parliamentary elections, winning roughly 20% of the seats in 2005. The end of the Mubarak regime in 2011 provided new opportunities for the brotherhood to achieve electoral success.

Beyond Egypt: Arab Nationalism and Militant Islamism

The Muslim Brotherhood's most radical ideologue emerged within the context of the brotherhood's persecution by the Nasser regime. Sayyid Qutb (d. 1967) was editor of the brotherhood's primary publication. His most cited work, *Milestones*, which justifies jihad against fellow Muslims on doctrinal grounds, was written in prison and reflects more the pressures of a persecuted activist than it does the organization's strategy and philosophy as a whole. Seen as a threat to the state, its publication and wide dissemination led to Qutb's execution and further persecution of the organization's members. Nonetheless, *Milestones* and Qutb's wider pronouncements more generally have inspired Muslim political activists the world over.

The group's tactics in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan exemplify the diversity of the movement's

political philosophy and strategy. Unlike the organization's Egyptian counterpart, under King Farouk and the Nasser regime, the Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood has fully supported the monarchy and the country's political institutions since the inception of the state in 1946.

The results of an oppositional political orientation proved disastrous for the brotherhood when the Syrian-based group challenged the Ba'athist regime of Hafez al-Asad through a series of bombings and assassination attempts. In 1982, the Asad regime moved its military on the brotherhood in Hama. Continuous shelling resulted in the complete destruction of the city, placing the lowest estimated death toll at 10,000.

In contrast, the brotherhood's activities in the Sudan led to some political "success." Active in the country since the mid-1940s, the brotherhood gained a considerable following among the urban and educated middle classes but failed to penetrate the lower and rural classes, whose politics were dominated primarily by traditional networks of Sufi brotherhoods and tribal dynasties. The Sudanese brotherhood evolved into the Islamic Charter Front (now the National Islamic Front) under the leadership of Hasan al-Turabi in the early 1960s; it has since fallen in and out of favor with Sudan's various regimes.

One of the brotherhood's most enduring legacies abroad can be seen in its activities in the Palestinian territories. Like its Egyptian program, the Palestinian-based brotherhood focused on social services and Islamic revivalism before and after the creation of Israel. With the rise of Yasser Arafat's Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), the Israeli government allowed the brotherhood to expand its efforts, which it thought would serve as a political counterweight to rising Arab nationalism. Ironically, such policies led to the release of Shaykh Ahmad Yassin from prison in 1973—Yassin became the future founding figure of Hamas. Founded in 1987 out of the social network affiliated with the brotherhood's charitable institutions, Hamas was established as an alternative resistance movement to the secular nationalist orientations of Arafat's PLO, and it rejected the peace process with Israel. It has since maintained a dual character as a community service and a guerilla organization.

Abbas Barzegar

See also al-Banna, Hasan; Egypt; Hamas; Islam; Islamism (Political Islam); Palestine; Politics and Religion; Qutb, Sayyid; Religion and State; Terrorism; Violence; War on Terrorism

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MYANMAR (BURMA)

Situated adjacent to India, China, and Thailand, the Southeast Asian country of Myanmar, previously known as Burma, was the region referred to as Suvarnabhumi (“Golden Land”) in the Buddhist Jatakas. With a population of more than 47,758,000, about 89% of the people profess Buddhism. Christians and Muslims constitute 4% each, and the rest practice different religions. The religion of Myanmar has been influenced chiefly by Indian Buddhist and Hindu traditions. The spread of Buddhism also was due to close cultural contact with Sri Lanka.

The account of the advent of Buddhism in Myanmar before the Common Era period can be gleaned from legends, traditions, and literary sources. It was believed that Gautama Buddha (567–487 BCE) himself visited the region. Two merchants from the Utkala region in the eastern coast of India (roughly corresponding to parts of modern Orissa), Tapussa, and Bhallika had installed three hairs of Gautama Buddha in the stupa (“reliquary mound”) at Yangon (former Rangoon), where the magnificent Shwedagon Pagoda was constructed. The missionary activities of Emperor Asoka (who ruled from 273 to 226 BCE) resulted in the spread of Buddhism in Myanmar.

The commercial contact between Myanmar and northeast India, Bengal, and Orissa witnessed the coming of traders with the message of Buddhism. There also were regular visits of Buddhist scholars between Myanmar and India. Archaeological excavations in Myanmar have yielded Buddhist monuments with square bases and a drum-shaped superstructure as well as images of bodhisattvas and Buddha Dipankara. For centuries, Buddhism dominated the life of the people of Myanmar along with elements of Hinduism. The influence from India was closely interwoven with ancient beliefs of the local people. The king was proclaimed as an avatar (incarnation) of Vishnu. Images of Brahmanic gods such as Vishnu, Brahma, and Siva were found in various locations in Myanmar. Whereas in the Indian tradition, Buddha is an incarnation of Vishnu, the reverse is true of Myanmar.

As noted above, Sri Lanka’s relations with Myanmar in medieval times also shaped the religious life of Myanmar. The Sri Lankan king Vijayabahu I (1065–1120 CE) requested Anawratha (1044–1077 CE), the ruler of Myanmar, to depu-tize monks for restoring the sangha, or Buddhist community, in Sri Lanka. King Kyanzitta (1084–1113 CE) made revisions of the *Tripitaka*, basing it on the version from Sri Lanka. He also visited Bodh Gaya in India and helped in repairing its Buddhist shrines. The king tried to bring about the assimilation of different religious traditions prevalent in Myanmar. Close ties between the two regions continued. In the mid 15th century, thousands of monks of Myanmar were being ordained in the Sri Lankan form of ordination. Gradually, the art, architecture, and literature of Myanmar were influenced by the Theravada Buddhism of Sri Lanka.

Religion has played an important role in the life of the people of Myanmar, where Buddhist monks and nuns have been in the vanguard of efforts to uphold democratic rights under the current dictatorship. The military junta’s brutal suppression of religious protestors has been widely condemned.

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See also China; India; Laos; Politics and Religion; Religion and State; Sangha; Southeast Asia; Sri Lanka; Thailand; Theravada Buddhism

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MYSTICISM

Mysticism is a spiritual experience that is virtually universal in religious traditions. It is also a problematic category for analysis, though it nonetheless retains heuristic value in the contemporary study of religion, culture, and society. The original Greek term *mystikos* and its English derivative *mystical* have a specific history. Historically, the dimensions of what has been deemed mystical include, as Louis Bouyer notes, initiatory and esoteric religiosity, hermeneutics, liturgy, and experience. The term has also been used in an imprecise way in popular culture and nonspecialist discourse, but such uses will not be the focus of this entry.

In the field of religious studies, the term is probably best understood as synonymous with mystical experience; such experiences differ according to particular mystics and religious traditions. Mystical experience is a subcategory of “religious experience” or “anomalous experience,” but it is not reducible to “altered states of consciousness.” Such anomalous events include glossolalia, lucid dreaming, near-death experiences (NDEs), out-of-body experiences (OBEs), psi-related experiences (“paranormal” abilities), and synesthesia. This is not to mention other, more “mundane” religious

experiences such as a feeling of communal belonging while sitting as a member of a religious congregation. Although mystical experience is often elevated to the highest form of religious experience and as the essence of religions, greater reflection on the accuracy and dangers of that characterization is required.

On the most basic level, mystical experience may be defined as an experience of that which a given individual or community identifies as sacred or ultimate. There is no single, essential, and “ultimate” form of mystical experience; there are, in fact, many types of mystical experiences, which differ according to the community and tradition involved and which assume different soteriologies and theologies. The present definition also does not preclude the possibility that there are “nonreligious” mystical experiences, such as a feeling of oneness with Nature or the cosmos (Zaehner’s panenhenic category), or that, as noted by Louis Komjathy, some individuals may have had “trans-tradition” experiences that lead to religious conversion. “Nonreligious” experiences would still be “mystical” because an individual or a group defines them as sacred or ultimate.

Mystical experience consists of four primary dimensions: (1) the trigger (source), (2) the actual experience (not reducible to physiology), (3) its interpretation, and (4) the context. This is not to claim that one of these is more primary than another or that they are independent. Instead, the study of mysticism requires one to investigate the relationships.

The above “definition” is phenomenological, not normative. It does not privilege one type of mystical experience, one conception of self, or one theology over another. From this perspective, some interpretative challenges include studying the specific views of self, specific types of mystical experiences, and specific theologies (conceptions of the sacred) among different adherents and religious communities. Among certain mystics, and unfortunately among many scholars of mysticism, a monotheistic/monistic theology is assumed, that is, the informing worldview is that “reality” is unitary rather than pluralistic in nature.

Specific views of self, related practices, as well as the relationship among self, community, and society also deserve careful attention. The slatter point is key: Mystical experiences always occur in

a sociohistorical and religiocultural context. This recognition does not deny the potentially transformative effects on the individual involved, but it begs the question of how such experiences are conditioned by, received within, and framed inside specific contexts. Mystical experience is thus simultaneously individual and communal; in relation to religious traditions, mystical experiences may be either conservative or subversive. Some communities value and affirm such experiences, whereas others de-emphasize or reject the relevance. An example of the latter would be the emphasis on grace and the Bible as the revealed/inspired word of God in certain forms of Protestant Christianity, or the Church and its ecclesiastical representatives as interpretative authorities in Roman Catholicism. In addition to the medieval heresy trials, one finds an example of such concern in the “Norms of the Congregation for Proceeding in Judging Alleged Apparitions and Revelations,” issued by the Papal Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith on February 25, 1978. There are similar reservations concerning the relevance of “mystical experiences” in certain Zen Buddhist movements and in specific Daoist internal alchemy communities, not to mention contemporary secular-materialist dismissals of mystical experience as nothing more than social constructions or neurophysiology (see below). The underlying motivations and political dimensions of such attempts to corral mystical experiences also deserve consideration.

Toward a Typology of Mystical Experiences

Throughout the history of the academic study of mysticism, scholars have attempted both to define mysticism and to typologize mystical experiences. In *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, published in 1902, which includes one of the earliest and most influential studies of mysticism, William James attempted to set parameters around “the mystical” by identifying four defining characteristics: (1) ineffability, (2) noetic quality, (3) transiency, and (4) passivity (Wainwright, 1981, pp. 1–53). Each of these is debatable, as many mystics actually describe their apprehension of the sacred (e.g., Hildegard of Bingen), claim that knowledge itself is a problem (e.g., the early Daoist inner cultivation lineages), attain an enduring state of mystical experiencing or mystical being (e.g., Rūmī),

and directly initiate mystical experiences through religious praxis (e.g., Dōgen). Nonetheless, James’s characteristic-based analysis established some of the dominant interpretative questions for the field of “mysticism studies,” with particular attention being given to epistemological issues. Later researchers, using a more informed comparative approach, have sought to categorize mystical experiences according to types. Important initial attempts include R. C. Zaehner (monistic, theistic, panenhenic), Walter Stace (extrovertive and introvertive), and Roland Fisher (ergotropic and trophotropic). There have also been recent, problematic attempts to limit mystical experience to trophotropic experiences (Forman, 1990) and to categorize mystical experiences in a hierarchical ordering of states of consciousness (d’Aquili & Newberg, 1999). Much of the latter type of research assumes a specific worldview and is protective in intent: If affective or visionary types of mystical experiences are included (those “dangerous medieval Christian women”), some modern researchers seem concerned that mystics will be defined as pathological, as in the mode of the modern psychiatric category of “schizophrenic.”

If one accepts the above definition of mystical experience and adopts a more phenomenological and comparative approach, then a composite and expanded interpretative framework of the above typologies provides significant contributions to the study of mysticism. One may focus on the linguistic tendencies of mystics: *kataphatic* (based on affirmations), *apophatic* (based on negations), or *translinguistic* (silence as primary). Mystics, mystical texts, and mystical communities may also be studied in terms of the relationship of the sacred with self and world: immanent (in self and world) or transcendent (beyond self and world), and dualistic (separate and different categories of being), unitive (separate but able to be unified), or nondualistic (distinctions as illusory). Attention may also be given to the type of sensory activity involved, including visionary, auditory, gustatory, olfactory, tactual, synesthetic, or “extrasensory,” as well as the degree of emphasis on sensory perception—extrovertive/ecstatic (outward directed, with sensory engagement) or introvertive/enstatic (inward directed, with sensory disengagement). The physiological dimension of mystical experiences includes the degree of arousal or quiescence, charted along

a spectrum from the most *ergotropic* (hyperaroused) to the most *trophotropic* (hypoaroused/hyperquiescent). The former involves high levels of perceptual, emotional, and/or intellectual stimulation, while the latter involves low levels. One may also focus on “theological dimensions,” in the sense of conceptions of the sacred: monistic (one reality), monotheistic (one, high God), pantheistic (everything is God), panentheistic (God is simultaneously in all things but beyond all things), polytheistic (many gods), animistic (all things inhabited by gods), and panenhenic (Nature as sacred). Another dimension of mystical experience is the view of self involved: docetic (eternal soul), spiritualist (ephemeral spirit), psychosomatic (mind-body), composite (self composed of different ephemeral elements), transpersonal (divine Self beyond individuated identity), and illusory (“self” as illusion). Finally, a psychological typology would include at least the following categories: perceptual (sense based), affective (emotion based), speculative (intellect based), contemplative (transconceptual with meditation as primary), erotic (sexuality-based), or somatic (body based). Although every mystical experience involves the body, “somatic mysticism” involves mystical experiences within which the sacred is experienced in/as/through the body (Komjathy, 2007). Many more cartographies could be added.

Placing these categories in conversation with mystics and mystical texts, certain patterns emerge. There tends to be overlap among the following: monotheistic, kataphatic, dualistic, transcendent, affective or speculative, and ergotropic. A similar connection is found among monistic, apophatic, unitive, immanent, contemplative or somatic, and trophotropic. Specific soteriologies, including diverse practices, are also implied in these.

Some examples that have informed the above typology may provide clarification. The Syrian Neo-Platonic Christian Pseudo-Dionysius’s (early sixth century CE) experience of the Transcendent One is a monistic, unitive, transcendent, speculative, and trophotropic mystical experience. The Benedictine Catholic nun Hildegard of Bingen’s (1098–1179) experience of the “Living Light” is a monotheistic, dualistic, transcendent, visionary, affective, and ergotropic mystical experience. The Japanese Zen Buddhist monk Eihei Dōgen’s (1200–1253) realization of his own Buddha nature

is a monistic (possibly panenhenic), nondualistic, immanent, contemplative, and trophotropic mystical experience. Such examples clarify the challenges of a comparative approach to mysticism: One finds equally viable and mutually exclusive accounts of the human condition and ultimate reality.

Interpretative Approaches

There are many interpretative approaches to the study of mysticism. Some are more developed than others, and each has its contributions and limitations. Some are also more applicable to certain mystics than others. Each requires deep familiarity with mystics, mystical literature, and religious communities to be able to provide an accurate account.

Contextualist Approaches

This approach emphasizes understanding the given mystic/mystical text within its overall religious-cultural, sociohistorical, and political context. Area studies related to each religious tradition have major researchers using historical contextualist approaches, with some placing more emphasis on the tradition itself and others on the overall sociopolitical context. This might include the relationship of mystical experience to the larger religious system in which it occurs, including asceticism, ethics, meditation, prayer, ritual, and so forth. A historical contextualist approach to the study of mysticism is most often associated with Steven Katz and the contributors to his many edited volumes, but most modern researchers acknowledge the importance of context.

Philosophical and Theoretical Approaches

This approach emphasizes philosophical questions, with particular attention to epistemological issues. Some dominant questions are the following: Is experience mediated or unmediated? If knowledge is gained through mystical experiences, what type of knowledge is it? Can mystical experiences, especially as documented in texts, provide any evidential support for claims about the nature of “reality”? Philosophical approaches include specific conceptions of self, including consciousness

and mind (though rarely the body), that involve various assumptions. Here, there is overlap with postcolonial studies, psychology, consciousness studies, and neuroscience. Normative judgments are often involved. The field of mysticism studies has been dominated by philosophical approaches in combination with historical contextualist ones. Some major voices using this approach include Robert Forman, Steven Katz, and Wayne Proudfoot.

Phenomenological and Comparative Approaches

A phenomenological approach emphasizes studying mystics and mystical texts on their own terms, with particular attention given to defining characteristics and internal concerns. It is primarily descriptive and avoids privileging either normative claims on the part of mystics or questions brought to the material by scholars (“bracketing”). Although comparative approaches often overlap with contextualist and philosophical ones, such approaches must begin as an extension of a phenomenological approach. The comparative approach studies different mystics and mystical communities in terms of the similarities and differences among them. Comparative approaches may involve using insights gleaned from the study of one mystic to study another, developing larger theoretical frameworks through comparison, or placing different mystics in conversation with each other. Comparative approaches may also be intra- or interreligious. The comparative study of mysticism reveals many unquestioned assumptions on the part of both a given religious community and researchers of mysticism. This interpretative approach is not yet fully developed. It begins with the work of scholars such as William James, R. C. Zaehner, and W. T. Stace. More recent contributions have come from Robert Ellwood and Robert K. C. Forman.

Theological Approaches

This approach emphasizes the relationship between mystical experiences and conceptions of the sacred (“theology”), most often from a Christian theological perspective. The latter tends to focus solely on Christian mystical experiences, assume monotheism as a self-evident given, and engage in normative discourse. It often also conflates “theology” with existentialist questions

(meaning and purpose), believing that only a “relationship with God” can provide a framework for meaning and purpose. A major question focuses on the soteriological import and theological relevance of mystical experiences. Do mystical experiences enable the Christian adherent to know God? Such is a Christian normative approach, and additional issues such as the importance of grace and Scripture play a central role. An alternative theological approach, yet to be fully developed, would focus on descriptive and historical “theology” and refrain from privileging one religious tradition over another. One might enquire into the specific conception of the sacred and the corresponding world-views involved. Normative issues would be bracketed or explored from a comparative perspective. There can be no doubt that the comparative study of mysticism reveals alternative, mutually exclusive but perhaps equally viable, theologies (contra Perennial Philosophy). Theological approaches to the study of mysticism have generally fallen out of favor, but a major voice using such an approach is Bernard McGinn in his *The Presence of God* series on the history of Christian mysticism.

Psychological Approaches

These approaches emphasize the psychological dimensions of mystical experiences. They may be skeptical or sympathetic, reductionistic or integral. The skeptical and reductionistic approaches tend to interpret mystical experiences as pathological in nature and to categorize certain mystics according to modern psychiatric or medical categories (e.g., schizophrenic, migraine sufferer). Such approaches tend to begin with the assumption that *religion itself* is a social pathology, when there is, in fact, much evidence that mystics actually live in more “optimal states” and differ significantly from “the diseased.” Sympathetic and integral psychological approaches tend to see mystics as providing glimpses into human potential and higher levels of consciousness. In this way, there is overlap with consciousness studies. In either case, psychological approaches tend to de-emphasize or ignore the soteriological and theological dimensions of “mystical psychology,” although contemplative, spiritual, and transpersonal psychologies are beginning to explore mystical experiences in a more comprehensive way. Some major voices in the psychological study of mysticism include Arthur

Deikman, Robert Forman, Sigmund Freud, Stanislav Grof, William James, Abraham Maslow, and David Wulff.

Neuroscientific Approaches

These approaches emphasize the scientific study of mystical experience in terms of the nervous system and the brain (“mind”). Neuroscientific approaches tend to involve various forms of technological interventionism (e.g., functional magnetic resonance imaging [fMRI], single-photon emission computed tomography [SPECT]) to create “neuro-images” of different “brain states.” Neuroscientific approaches focus on the neurophysiological and neurostructural dimensions, including biochemical and neuroregional associations, of mystical experience. Like psychological approaches, with which they sometimes overlap but with a stronger biological basis, these approaches may be skeptical or sympathetic, reductionistic or integral. Among skeptical and reductionistic neuroscientific approaches, one finds experiments to re-create “mystical experiences” through brain manipulation (through drugs or machines) in laboratories. Note that this is a very different context from a meditation hut in the Himalayan mountains and begs the question about the influence of community and place on religious praxis and experience. Among the more sympathetic and integral perspectives, researchers seek to map out dimensions of human consciousness related to the “mystical mind” or higher levels of consciousness. There is also overlap with research on meditation and contemplative studies, and we are only just beginning to see the use of “critical first-person” approaches. Some major voices in the neuroscientific study of mystical experience include Eugene d’Aquili, Richard Davidson, Andrew Newburg, Walter Pahnke, and Michael Persinger.

Postcolonialist and Postmodern Approaches

Postcolonialist approaches to the study of mysticism emphasize the ways in which Western scholarship has tended to colonize “the other,” especially “non-Western” religious traditions. These approaches attempt to understand mystics and religious traditions on their own terms and examine the unquestioned assumptions of many earlier accounts of mysticism. This includes the specific

conceptions of self and existence among mystics and the ways in which those views challenge received worldviews and enculturation. While postcolonialist approaches might require one to see the world from multiple perspectives without hierarchical ordering, postmodern approaches tend to see all knowledge as relative and “reality” as perspectival. This approach challenges the very relevance of the study of mysticism. Postmodern approaches also give greater attention to the social and political dimensions of mystical experience, so much so that some researchers would reduce mystical experiences (mystical texts) to political critique and deny the possibility of “unmediated experience.” Both postcolonial and postmodern approaches challenge the privileging of “personal experience” in the study of mysticism. We have yet to see the logical culmination of a postcolonialist perspective: scholarly studies that place mystics and mystical texts (“data”) as equals in the conversation or that are written from the perspectives of mystics. Some major voices in the postcolonialist and postmodern study of mysticism include Grace Jantzen, Richard King, Jeffrey Kripal, Robert Sharf, Mark Taylor, and Steven Wasserstrom.

Methodology

In terms of methodology, the study of mysticism has been dominated by the study of texts. While earlier Perennialist accounts most often used inaccurate translations, selective citation, and decontextualized interpretation, the contemporary study of mysticism is characterized by a generally high-level linguistic competence, complete translations of primary sources from their original languages, and historically informed interpretations.

However, the reliance on texts reveals various interpretative issues. First, the present entry seems to suggest that the study of “mystical literature” is synonymous with the study of mystical experience. In fact, that relationship is a complex and problematic one. A written account of a mystical experience, if such an account is considered “mystical literature,” is not the same as having a mystical experience. How much more compelling then is the case for hearing or reading such written accounts? (Note, however, that mystics such as Eihei Dōgen, Eckhart, Hildegard of Bingen, and Jalāluddīn Rūmī might dispute this statement.) The

study of mystical texts begs the question of the relationship of those texts to the author's interpretation or construction of specific events and the relationship of the text to both the originary event and the interpretation, assuming that there is a distinction (see Katz, 1978, 1983; Proudfoot, 1985; Sharf, 1995, 1998). A similar problem with respect to reliance on texts is the categorization of certain works as "mystical literature," especially if one believes that they are part of some "universal wisdom tradition." For example, is Pseudo-Dionysius's *Peri Mustikes Theologias* (Mystical Theology) a "mystical text" or a "theological treatise"? Without assuming that such categories are mutually exclusive, is that text about personal mystical experience? Another challenge in a text-based methodology is the fact that the autobiography is a relatively recent genre of literature. Before the European Enlightenment, and outside of modern Western contexts, it is relatively rare to find autobiographical accounts of mystical experience. (Note the fact that many received texts were transcribed.) One possible explanation is that the emphasis on direct experience of the sacred is a modern preoccupation, but the careful study of religious traditions provides evidence that this is not the case.

Because of the inherent limitations of textual study, especially that of texts written in different cultures during diverse historical periods, many contemporary scholars of mysticism have sought to supplement classical texts with other forms of support. This includes contemporary firsthand and autobiographical accounts, interviews, as well as personal testimonials. Among the latter, some scholar-practitioners have used autobiographical accounts of their own mystical experiences as evidential support for their interpretations of mysticism. Examples include Robert Ellwood, Robert Forman, Jeffrey Kripal, and Jordan Paper. Although this approach is interesting, it also proves problematic because of issues of "objectivity" and hegemonic academic standards of "scholarship." As is the case in contemplative studies, this is the beginning of a new methodology in mysticism studies: combining third-person approaches with critical first-person approaches. What requires attention here is the fact that mystical experience easily becomes decontextualized and secularized, and thereby domesticated. Perhaps the soteriologies and theologies (adherence/observance) are essential features of mystical systems.

The study of mysticism is thus as engaging as it is challenging. In addition to familiarity with specific texts and religious traditions, it requires careful investigation of and reflection on various interpretative and methodological issues. Guiding interpretative questions are multifaceted and diverse. What is the relationship among mystical texts, mystical experience, and interpretation (individual, communal, and academic)? How are mystics and mystical texts located and placed within their specific religious tradition? What roles do gender and power relationships play? What is the relationship between views of self, religious praxis, and mystical experience? What is the larger soteriological and theological framework in which mystical experiences occur? What kinds of challenges do mystics pose to religious authorities and interpreters of mysticism? Are there dangers in reducing the study of mysticism to the study of mystical experience and in identifying mystical experiences as the culmination of religious adherence and human potential? Is there a state of being, an ontological condition, beyond the static idea of "mystical experience" (linear and transitory), in which the individual abides in a constant state of mystical being and mystical experiencing?

Interpretations of mystical experiences are as diverse as the corresponding mystics, religious texts, religious traditions, and the experiences themselves. Those interpretations emerge within specific contexts and specific discourse communities, and there may be an indeterminacy of translation among them.

Louis Komjathy

See also China; Christianity; Daoism; Hinduism; Islam; Mahayana Buddhism; Meditation; Modernism; Monasticism; Theravada Buddhism; Vajrayana, Tibetan

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associated with religion. It is derived from the Greek word *mythos*, meaning “word of mouth.” In general, myths are understood to take place in an unspecified time either before recorded history or in the early history of a group’s existence, but they carry a meaning that makes them significantly relevant to a group’s system of beliefs as they continue to exist in society. Myths are not necessarily false, as common usage of the word is concerned. Rather, they are regarded as part of a group’s spiritual beliefs, so they are not considered either true or false.

In attempting to explain the worldview of a particular group of people, myths contain images, symbols, and metaphors that represent a number of different ideas shared by a group. Unlike legends, folktales, fables, or fairy tales, myths play an important role in society and are taken more seriously by scholars due to their spiritual and religious significance. They are not simply stories conjured up by members of a group today, but rather, they have gained acceptance by a group of people through generations of oral and written tradition. They are an integral part of a group’s religious and cultural identity.

Myths have been a part of society for as long as people have sought to explain the world around them. In a sense, myths can be seen as alternatives to science, with science being the modern method of describing natural phenomena. For instance, the Big Bang theory is science’s way of explaining the origin of the universe, whereas nearly every group of people throughout history has come up with its own creation myth. The Greek myth of the creation of the world out of chaos is an example of this type of myth. As science increasingly becomes the more accepted version of describing natural phenomena, even among groups with strongly held traditional beliefs, myths have somewhat decreased in importance. They are still, however, vital to the identity and cultural heritage of groups of people. They are so important, in fact, that even as different civilizations and societies have disappeared, their myths have persevered, offering scholars a close look into their systems of beliefs.

Myths are a part of nearly every culturally and religiously distinct group’s heritage. Some of the most well-known myths today come from the ancient Greeks, who incorporated numerous myths about their gods and heroes into their religion and

MYTH

A myth is a sacred narrative that seeks to explain the worldview of a group of people and is usually

society. These myths were a central aspect of ancient Greek culture, and these sacred stories were intertwined into their religious rituals. Other prominent sources of mythologies that are still well-known today include the Norse (Scandinavian) myths, Egyptian myths, Judeo-Christian myths, Mesopotamian myths, and a variety of myths from the native North American tribes.

Creation myths, as earlier stated, are a popular type of sacred story that can be found in nearly every culture's collection of mythologies. These narratives tell the story of how the world was created by a supernatural power out of a scene of chaos and disorder, with each different culture inserting its own respective symbols and superpowers into the myths. In addition to creation myths, founding myths are another common type of myth and serve to explain the origins of a people, place, or idea. Founding myths are featured prominently in Greek mythology, as nearly every different subsection of the ancient Greeks was accounted for by a founding myth. Many of their cities, such as Athens, Delphi, and Corinth, also had founding myths behind them. Apart from Greek mythology, one prominent founding myth comes from Roman mythology, telling the story of how the city of Rome was founded by the twins Romulus and Remus.

With nearly every culture and religion having its own myths, it is not surprising that there are some similarities among the myths of different cultures. Looking at myths from a cross-cultural perspective, there are many familiar patterns and symbols that recur among different groups of people, which might be more than mere coincidence. The story of a resurrecting savior of humankind is one that does not belong only to followers of the Christian faith, referring to Jesus Christ. In Buddhism, the story of Siddhartha Gautama, the Buddha, is noted for certain parallels to Jesus' life; this is also the case with the Aztec god Quetzalcoatl. Even the theme of Jesus' crucifixion occurs, with some variations (e.g., the Greek god Ixion), in myths of different cultures and religions.

Another very common myth that is shared by several different cultures around the world is the story of the flood. The most well-known version of this story in Western culture comes from the Hebrew Bible. In this account, Noah built a great ark according to God's instructions and was able

to save only his family and a select few animals from the subsequent great flood caused by God, which killed every animal and human outside the ark. After the flood, God instructed Noah to repopulate the earth with the people and animals from the ark that were saved. Scholars have been able to identify hundreds of distinct cultures that tell the story of a great flood that occurred at the hands of a higher power, where only a select few were allowed to be saved. Although not all accounts share the same details of the flood story from the Bible, many of them, even ones told by cultures from different regions of the world, are remarkably similar. The Maori people of New Zealand, for example, tell a very similar account of the flood story, with only a few differing details, some of which are the result of their worshipping many gods as opposed to just one.

The similarity of all these flood stories leads many to believe that there may have been some type of natural disaster involving water that occurred in ancient times. Archaeologists, theologians, and even geologists offer different theories about the possibility of an actual deluge that may have occurred. A more mythographical approach to the flood story, as well as the many other analogous myths among different cultures, is the idea of the monomyth. The writer and scholar Joseph Campbell (1904–1987) introduced this idea in his book *The Hero With a Thousand Faces*. The monomyth, according to Campbell, is the idea of a basic pattern found among myths throughout different cultures around the world. He claims that all myths follow the same basic framework that divides them into three basic stages: the social separation, initiation, and return of a hero. Campbell thus claims that there is a universal quality that all myths from every culture or religion around the globe share, which is the result of the similar way that all humans understand themselves. The only differences among the different myths are each culture's varying use of symbols and characters to represent their ideas. The psychologist Carl Jung (1875–1961) was also an influential proponent of a universal theory of myths, which he attributed to a collective unconscious shared by all humans.

The theory of the monomyth became popular in the mid-20th century, when it was first introduced, but has since been criticized for its simplicity.

Scholars have opted for a less universal approach to the study of mythology, siding instead with a theory more closely identified with particularism. Particularism, which is also mentioned in conjunction with many other academic fields, explains myths in a more individual context. In this view, myths are products of each culture's disparate struggles with life, and they reiterate their own society's beliefs about nature and its own existence. The fact that many myths are similar in nature is due to common aspects of the human condition around the world.

Regardless of the theory one accepts for the explanation behind myths, they are clearly an important tool for researchers to study different cultures and religions around the globe. Studying Greek myths gives scholars an idea of how the Greeks practiced their religion, as myth and ritual mirrored each other to a great extent. Egyptian myths also entailed elaborate religious rituals. In Mesopotamian civilization, many myths dealt with vegetation and drought, as the climate had a huge impact on their survival. Celtic mythology contains narratives of a number of different gods and

spirits, offering a look at the traditions and beliefs of pre-Christianized Europe.

Zion Zohar

See also Ancient Near Eastern Religions; Campbell, Joseph; Christianity; Greece; Hinduism; Islam; Jung, Carl Gustav; Lévi-Strauss, Claude; Mahayana Buddhism; Pluralism; Theravada Buddhism; Vajaryana, Tibetan

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NAJAF

The city of Najaf in Iraq has been a religious center of the Shi'i branch of Islam since the eighth century. A popular destination for pilgrims, Najaf is located south of Baghdad and 6 miles west of Kufa (1 mile = 1.609 kilometers). It is the site of the mausoleum of the first Shi'a imam, Alī ibn Abī Ṭalīb, whose gravesite was revealed to the public in the early 'Abbāsīd period by Ja'far al-Ṣādiq (d. 765) during one of his visits to Kufa. Under al-Ṣādiq and his disciples, Najaf also became heir to the Shi'a learning that had flourished in Kufa, where, in the grand mosque, al-Ṣādiq's narrations were disseminated among some 900 teachers of traditions.

Muslim armies entered the Najaf region in the year 633. Four years later, they chose the adjacent city of Kufa as a garrison city. The army took up permanent residence in Kufa and its environs in the direction of Najaf (then called the "Back of Kufa"). The main mosque in Kufa was built in 637, around which the Arab tribes soon began to gather. Kufa flourished in no time, particularly following the year 656, when 'Alī took up residence in the city. 'Alī found the city agreeable and moved the seat of the caliphate from Medina. According to Muslim tradition, the prophets Adam, Noah, Hud, and Salih are buried in Najaf. At one stage, 'Alī informed his household of his impending martyrdom and willed to have his body buried at a specified place in the valley, which he pointed out to them. His sons, al-Hasan and al-Husayn, buried him in that spot, which now lies inside the city of Najaf.

Following the founding of Baghdad (754–775), a number of Shi'i scholars from Kufa migrated to this new capital. Some others chose the mausoleum at Najaf as the base from which to teach and spread Shi'a traditions. Although Kufa retained its importance as the locus of Shi'a activities until the 15th century, Najaf gradually replaced it. During this transition, Najaf's shrine and the seminary attached to it received much needed patronage from Shi'i rulers. The ruler of Tabaristan, Muhammad ibn Zayd al-'Alawī (d. 900), ordered the construction of the dome and the Sufi *zāwiyah* (cells). The Būyid sulta added the arched halls and hospices that provided residence for the students who came to study in Najaf. During his visit to Najaf in 1336, Ibn Batūtah, the famous traveler, noted the existence of a number of seminaries, hospices, and Sufi convents attached to the shrine.

In the 11th century, Muhammad bin al-Hasan al-Ṭūsī (d. 1067), a great Shi'a scholar and leader of the community, migrated from the Karkh region of Baghdad to Najaf in 1057, following the Sunnī-Shi'i riots and destruction of his library, and established his own school based on a text-oriented Shi'a curriculum. The present-day Shi'i *mujtahids* regard themselves as the intellectual heirs of al-Ṭūsī's school, but in the 20th century, Najaf lost its leadership of Shi'a learning. With the establishment of Shi'ism as the state religion of Iran under the Safavids in the early 1500s, there was a flow of Shi'i scholars from Iraq and Lebanon to Isfahan and other places in Iran. In the 19th century, Iraq and Iran witnessed the modernization of educational and political institutions along with the development of an intense nationalism that created a different challenge

for the jurists in Iran. Under the leadership of Ayatullah ‘Abd al-Karīm Hā’irī Yazdī (d. 1937), the religious hierarchy in Iran found it appropriate to establish a seminary in Qum that would respond to the growing needs of the times and would equal and even surpass Najaf as the hub of Shi’a religious sciences. Moreover, the highly centralized religious leadership of the *marja’ al-taqlīd* (supreme religious authority) had passed on to prominent jurists of Qum, overshadowing the apolitical leadership of Najaf in the growing turmoil of the 1950s and 1960s. It was not until the rise of Ayatullah Khomeini (d. 1989) and Muhammad Bāqir al-Ṣadr (executed 1980) that Najaf reversed its tradition of shunning politics and actively sought to combat the secular ideology of the Baathists in Iraq. Today, Muqtada al-Sadr wields enormous political influence among the downtrodden in the city; whereas Ayatullah Sayyid ‘Ali al-Sistani remains influential among the secularists and well-to-do Iraqis.

There are several historical sites in the vicinity of Najaf that form an important part of Shi’a piety. One of the most sacred places is the grand mosque of Kufa, where ‘Ali was assassinated. In Shi’i estimation, the Kufa mosque is equal in status to the mosques of Mecca (Makkah) and Medina. The other important spot of pilgrimage is the Sahlah mosque, where the Shi’i believe that the 12th messianic imam, al-Mahdi, appears every Tuesday evening to perform the sunset prayer. Accordingly, a large crowd of pious Shi’i assembles in Sahlah at that time in the hope of meeting the “Hidden Imam.” The surrounding environs consist of tombs and sanctuaries, including ‘Ali’s house. One of the most extensive cemeteries in the Muslim world, *Wadi al-Salam* (the Valley of Peace), is located in Najaf on the way to Karbala, where everyday hundreds of dead bodies of both Shi’i and Sunnī Muslims are brought for burial.

Abdulaziz Sachedina

See also Iran; Iraq; Islam; Karbala; Pilgrimage; Qum; Shi’a Islam

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NAMIBIA

The religious diversity of the southern African nation of Namibia, dominated since colonialism by Christianity, stems from centuries of cultural interaction. Before colonialism, the supreme deity, Kalunga, presided over the Bantu-speaking Ovambo. With their *onganga* ritual, experts regulated relations with ancestors and healed illness. Today, Herero flag associations, composed of Christian men, commemorate colonial-era heroes and ancestors by visiting their graves and asking for good health. European missionaries saw such ideas as both bridges and challenges to Christianity, but populations of African descent, which also include San, Khoi, Nama, and Damara, have struck a balance with the mainline Christian heritage of the “mixed-race” Baster and Colored populations, both of whom speak Afrikaans, and the country’s small White minority.

The London Missionary Society began evangelizing the Nama in the early 1800s, translating the Bible into Nama. The Rhenish Mission Society of Germany (RMS) and the Finnish Missionary Society (FMS) followed. The RMS targeted the Herero, translating the Bible into Herero in the late 1800s, at a time when Herero and Nama were warring over grazing lands. RMS field reports strongly influenced German colonial perceptions of Africans as indolent, arrogant, and devious, helping justify the ruthless colonial repression of armed Herero and Nama anti-colonial resistance and to incite the Herero genocide of 1904. Herero and Nama survivors were interned in concentration camps with some assistance from the RMS, whose members ministered to the refugees. Herero survivors converted to Christianity, in part to restructure their decimated society. But in 1955, they initiated the autonomous Oruano Church. Other African-initiated churches also emerged, including the FMS-derived Evangelical Lutheran Ovambo-Kavango Church.

During and after World War I, South Africa occupied Namibia, imposing its apartheid system of racial segregation. African-initiated churches and the Anglican, Lutheran, and Catholic Churches opposed South African rule before and during the long rebellion

led by the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO). Then, after Namibia became independent in 1990, Christians sharpened their focus on issues related to gender and sexuality in the era of HIV/AIDS. In the 1990s, many pastors discouraged condom use, but the nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) fought back, winning President Nujoma's backing in 1999 for the distribution of female condoms. But in 2001, he ordered the police to "arrest, deport, and imprison" lesbians and gays, invoking Christian rhetoric. And in 2003, the U.S.-PEPFAR (President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief) initiative, influenced by conservative U.S. Christian groups, began funding AIDS treatment and programs promoting sexual abstinence over prevention education and harm reduction. In response, Namibian women have sustained their say in making sexual decisions with their partners, closed illicit bars known as places of sexual license, and worked to maintain the availability of female and male condoms in their country. Once again, Namibians have articulated their faiths amid global influences.

Joseph R. Hellweg

See also Africa; Anglicans; Gender; International NGOs; Postcolonialism; Protestant Christianity; South Africa

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and language; *state* refers to a legal and political entity that is a defined sovereign territory. While the origins and early history of the nation-state are disputed, most theories view the nation-state as a 19th- and 20th-century Western phenomenon deriving from the Treaty of Westphalia (1648), which many historians identify as marking the beginning of the modern European idea of a nation-state in which the national community and the sovereign ruler are identified as a single entity.

The earliest predecessors of modern nation-states are the city-states of ancient Greece, or *polis*. In the Medieval and Renaissance periods, this notion of localized government existed in return for loyalty to an absent central leader or monarch. With improvements in communications and transportation, the state then began to assert more authority, leading to the elaboration of the relationship between a citizen and the monarch or state. The Treaty, or Peace, of Westphalia in 1648, ending the Thirty Years War, laid the foundation for modern nation-state sovereignty. Coinciding in part with the Protestant Reformation, this treaty further weakened papal authority throughout much of Europe, marking the transition from feudal principalities to sovereign states. The treaty also established the concepts of territorial integrity and sovereignty—nonintervention of one state in the internal affairs of another state, legal equality between states, and the state's right of self-determination.

Throughout the subsequent period of the Enlightenment or Age of Reason (dated from roughly 1650 to 1800), French and British philosophers such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Baron de Montesquieu, and David Hume also sought to lessen the role of religion and the church in state affairs, to replace it with a political system advocating human reason and common identity. After the French Revolution, which ended in 1799, the nation-state was cemented in international relations as society became increasingly secularized and the dynastic state was replaced.

The nation-state is challenged both by globalization and by the rise of civil society as they signal the increasingly interconnected nature of the world's regional and transnational forms of networks. The porous nature of international economy, communications, and technology arguably lessens the significance of the nation-state, and in its place, a global political system based on international agreements and exchanges plus supranational blocs, such as the European and African Unions, now characterizing

NATION-STATE

The term *nation-state* reflects both a geopolitical and a political entity. *Nation* refers to a sociocultural entity—peoples who share the same culture, history,

the developing economic and geopolitical world of the 21st century, has substantially altered the conditions under which nation-states function.

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See also Assimilation; Civil Society; Global Cities; Global Religion; Globalization; International NGOs; Multiculturalism; Politics and Religion; Religion and State; Religious Nationalism; Transnational

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NATIVE LATIN AMERICAN RELIGION

Many of the tensions in the indigenous areas of Latin America are due to the globalization processes in the region and the response of local and communal identities to these global pressures. The religious aspect of this tension is manifest in the relationship between indigenous belief systems and the established Christian churches. There is a dynamic and ambiguous relationship between the indigenous communities and the religious groups (both Roman Catholic and evangelical Protestant) that circulate through the country, in no small part because of global influences. In some cases, the response is an increasing vindication of the rights of indigenous peoples and a recognition of their cultural and political identities.

Changes and Continuities

The study of the religious belief systems in the indigenous regions of Mexico and other contemporary Latin American countries must include as a point of departure the historical processes of colonization. These brought about widespread changes in their social, political, religious, and economic relationships; in their internal hierarchies; in their interracial contacts; and, of course, in the resulting processes of religious conversion, all of which substantially

modified their cultures. Also to be mentioned are the processes of resistance and revitalization within these cultures as a result of these many influences.

Indigenous religious expression did not take shape solely through the natives' conversion to Catholicism but assumed different forms depending on the varying degrees of adoption of Catholic symbolism and practice. This expression reflected the particular experiences of colonization, the specific indigenous groups concerned, and the shape that each community and people gave to those Catholic practices, as well as the extent to which their worldview became restructured, reflecting new religious and cultural realities. Therefore, we may simultaneously find religious expressions that are closer to Catholicism and others that are clearly the opposite, more akin to indigenous religious practices.

Elements derived from the religious framework of indigenous peoples are also deeply embedded in their cultural ethos. Hence, discussion of the socio-political rights of indigenous peoples involves the religious rights and the religious freedom both of these peoples and of those converts who have been more broadly incorporated into globalized religious networks through various religious organizations—known as religious associations—that may be found across Latin America today.

The domain of religious rights is allied to the political sphere in which social inequities can cause a society to neglect the religious rights of the indigenous peoples. Despite the modifications to the 130th Article of the Mexican Constitution in relation to religious cults, the “religious” rights of the indigenous peoples as cultures or as collectives are not included in the updated Bill of Human Rights, even though the 2nd Article of the Constitution grants political recognition to the indigenous peoples, without acknowledging their legal status as collectives.

In the 21st century, we may still observe a great plurality and a significant local differentiation, as a result of both the conversion to the various forms of “Protestantism” (i.e., to evangelical and para-Christian groups) and the reassessment and exposure of the indigenous religious expressions, in which tension and conflict are still part of the social-religious scenario.

A variety of new religious forms arise through syncretic processes in which the cultural appropriation of those Protestant or evangelical referents is selective and may also bring about social-cultural and religious resistance. Notwithstanding this cultural appropriation, the clash between both religious expressions is

evident because of the symbolical and social power these imply and because they bring diverse views of the world face-to-face within the same space.

Occasionally, conversion to an evangelical or para-Christian faith results in the disintegration of indigenous peoples due to the social-cultural change that it entails and, consequently, due to the fragmentation of the communities as well as an ethnic renunciation in the form of a cultural and often linguistic substitution. This creates new intra- and interreligious power relations in the new social structure, in which not only ecclesiastical institutions play a part—though always a minor one in the case of Catholicism, since what is under dispute is not part of the Catholic referent as such—but also new relations of power among the national and international legal authorities. Also affected is public opinion, which may or not favor the right to engage in missionary work covertly or in a manner that privileges only individual rights. Cultural rights are not necessarily defended by public opinion.

Complexity, Diversity, and Tension

The study of religion today occurs within an ever more complex social reality, with multiple networks that transcend local boundaries and thus become global-local networks. What follows is the creation of frames of reference that fail to be captured in the traditional propositions of anthropology or sociology. As a consequence, contemporary religion has become more complex, more difficult to understand.

The idea of religious cohesion and stability has been called into question by contemporary religious conversions and the new identities thereby developed, which show discontinuous, dislocated religious systems, which nevertheless continue to provide life-meaning systems.

It can hardly be assumed that all individuals within a given community share a common way of identifying with religious symbols, due to the variety and complexity of individual and collective identities. An example of this is the conversion processes in indigenous areas in Mexico, which fragment the unity of the indigenous society and create divisions among the authorities in charge. Inevitably, this situation questions the authorities' cultural ethos and, consequently, triggers diverse, complex, and conflicting actions and reactions.

Although some stability of religious symbols is still possible for certain types of religious groups,

the fractures, disruptions, and adaptations of those common religious symbols escape our understanding, so that explanations for their transformations, tensions, and conflicts are often sought outside the sphere of religion. The divisions, transformations, and creations of new religious forms require new approaches to understanding religion; they must be viewed from a perspective mainly of symbolic discontinuity. Equally, they call for the examination of the restructuring of ethnic religions and religious traditions such as Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, and Christianity, whose symbolic elements undergo a slow but persistent transformation.

This strain between symbolic stability and discontinuity implies theoretical and methodological challenges; however, it allows for a better understanding of the internal dynamics within the groups and communities facing these fragmentations of the individual and collective experience. Recognition of symbolic discontinuities enables us to study not only the new religious movements but also the fragmentations of Christianity and the transformations of indigenous religions; both become apparent in the contemporary world. This may be observed especially in urban areas and in those societies where the individualization and modernization processes are more advanced.

Nevertheless, the perspective of the unity of the religious field is still pertinent in groups and peoples where religion continues to play a significant role in influencing social identity. Herein lies one of the greater tensions now manifest between continuity and discontinuity, erupting in the religious conflicts of the indigenous areas of Mexico and in other places, particularly in Africa.

Belief Systems, Culture, and Identity

To understand the conversion processes, the religious conflicts, and the rights of the peoples, we must also consider the relationship between the creation of the symbol systems and a group's identity. Indigenous peoples establish a relationship between the cultural and the religious systems, which remain in force over time in spite of the transformations that inevitably occur. Rather than being a separate institution, religion and culture in this context coalesce to create a symbolic map defining a worldview and thus a foundation for individual and collective identity.

For instance, in the Huichol areas, to prove their renunciation of the indigenous religiosity and

bonds, converts to Christianity break their gourd bowls and burn their feathers; both of these Huichol ritual artifacts connect them to their view of the world and to their ethos, transcending the Christian religious referents and reminding them of who they are and where they come from. The gourd bowls and the feathers are part of the “real reality,” of the world of the possible; transgression of this latter shatters their sense of what is reasonable, moral, or human; it destroys the sense and effectiveness of what they do, as well as the cause and the purpose of their doing it.

Unlike contemporary societies, they cannot separate religion from the social sphere. Most indigenous cultures do not have a specific word for *religion*. To speak of religion is to speak of the view of the world—of their makeup as peoples and as individuals—where nature, individuals, the community, the territory, and the gods are all one. It is equally clear that among the indigenous peoples, the Catholic religion is part of this cultural-religious ethos. What differs in this Catholic expression is its absorption into and its relationship with the indigenous view of the world.

In spite of the existing separation between religious and secular institutions in contemporary societies, religious systems still establish themselves as cultural systems. Also, in this sense, it is possible to interpret the new religious expressions among the indigenous communities as widely shared belief systems. Often, however, they base their new religious expressions on a secularized perspective and less so on symbolic discontinuities, which can result in even deeper tensions and conflicts. Hence, the appearance of the religious conflicts is an important manifestation of the complex power relationship between the indigenous peoples and the larger society, which includes them as citizens but not as different cultures within the same territory; and as a consequence, their religious rights are also easily blurred, subordinated, or made nonexistent, depending on the type and degree of juridical and social clashes.

Indigenous Peoples Today: Religion and Conflict

In the last decades of the 20th century, many new religious belief systems asserted themselves as exclusive cultural systems, often in conflict with the larger society. Such is the case of sects and cults that sever

themselves from the larger society and sometimes, moreover, challenge it; some of these groups even result in collective suicide or homicide. An instance of this is the New Jerusalem in Puruarán, in the state of Michoacán, a movement that proclaims the end of the world and comprises a large number of followers who live apart from society and cannot leave the town without authorization. Equally, some indigenous people in Mexico and in other Latin American countries have been expelled from their own communities as a consequence of their conversion to the sectarian forms of Protestantism. There are also the Christian and Islamic fundamentalist movements, which not only sever themselves from the larger society but also create a major clash between the Eastern and the Western worlds.

Although Mexico has made some progress in relation to religious liberty in general, it leaves—as we mentioned before—much to be desired in terms of the indigenous peoples because they are not regarded specifically as different cultures, a fact that affects, among other things, the coherence of their social-religious ethos. This brings about various reactions, including violence and conflict. In this sense, the indigenous peoples of Mexico find themselves in a subordinate and often suppressed relationship. As a result, dispute and tolerance go hand in hand in our societies today. This situation is evident in the religious conflicts in the indigenous zones of our countries, as well as in the persisting historical conflicts due to colonization processes and religious proselytism. Important are the specific relationships of power and the social and economic relationships that pervade the religious sphere. Consequently, the religious and nonreligious factors deeply mix and do so in ways that take many different forms.

The result is the differentiation and stigmatization of many religious expressions and social groups. Such is the case mainly with the indigenous expressions, whose existence has been largely denied historically. Only the Catholic popular Latin American religious expressions are regarded as normative, with the indigenous religions still viewed largely as pagan expressions that remain to be adequately evangelized, as has happened with the arrival of Protestantism or with the efforts at reinforcing Catholic evangelization.

Once again, the conversions and the new strategies to reinforce Catholic evangelization both question the bases on which the intelligibility of

the world has hitherto rested. This has been detrimental to family and community ties, to marital relationships, as well as to those relationships determined by social, economic, and political power. In other words, it damages the deeper layer of meaning and the sense of belonging to the group, and of the group's relationship to the larger society.

The emblematic expulsions of the Huichols throughout the history of the presence of Franciscan monks and, today, of the evangelical groups are a sign of the revitalization and vindication of their culture and religious expression. Equally, the systematic, widespread nature of the conflicts in Oaxaca and Chiapas is a sign of this difficult relationship, on which the globalization processes have various effects. They generate diversification and a loss of the communal identity and reinforce those religious expressions that circulate through global networks following the forces of power and efforts at attaining human rights and religious freedom. They also bring about through these same international networks the vindication of the cultural rights of the native population and the reassessment of their sense of themselves as indigenous peoples. Here, we find a confluence of diametrically opposed and conflicting influences that not only hamper the litigation of religious conflicts but also challenge a true legal equity and obstruct the already difficult task of finding solutions to religious conflicts.

Religious pluralism in Mexico—which exists as a fact but is not legally acknowledged—finds itself immersed in complex globalized networks and at the same time calls for prompt local solutions. However, these cannot be easily attained due to the inequity and complexity of the social situations, and consequently, the clear absence of cultural and religious rights of the indigenous peoples remains to be addressed within the national agenda.

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See also Globalization; Hybridization; Indigenous Religion; Native North American Religion; Postcolonialism; Roman Catholicism; Syncretism

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NATIVE NORTH AMERICAN RELIGION

Religion in Native American culture is an entire way of life, understood as engaging all that is vital and relating the individual to everything that matters. Despite centuries of colonization and Christianization, many Native Americans have persevered in sustaining their native religious traditions and practices. A steadfast revival of the Native North American spiritual heritage has resulted in religious innovations as well as the rebirth of traditions long suppressed. Native Americans have put forward presentations intended to provide others with diverse perspectives on American Indian spirituality. At the same time, for nearly half a century, both the general public and scholars have increased their awareness of and attention to American Indian religions and sacred places. This has led to federal legislation such as the Civil Rights Act of 1968, which extended to American Indians under tribal jurisdiction the “free exercise of religion” clause of the U.S. Constitution’s First Amendment, which was meant to “protect and preserve Native American religious cultural rites and practices,” and the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978, or AIRFA.

When they reached the “New World,” the European explorers and settlers encountered peoples who had no written language but who kept rich oral traditions and maintained records of important historic and religious events through petroglyphs, the winter count, totem poles, and wampum belts. Their religions included sophisticated myths and rites, as well as spiritual concepts that were totally alien to the Europeans. For a long time, European Americans thought that native tribes had no religion. Explorers pointed out that native languages contained no words for god or soul. Such statements were understandable as long as there were reports only from poorly educated explorers or officials. In fact, no tribe is devoid of spirituality. On the contrary, all traditional tribal religions offer an elaborate and highly developed spiritual imaginary. Individuals and groups formerly lived within a rich network of religious rites, which today are often the only remains of ancient Native American cultures. The reports of French Jesuits in New France, as early as the 17th century, testify that tribal life revolved around religion.

In any discussion of Native American religion in general terms, it must of course be borne in mind that the whole continent was inhabited by hundreds of tribes, each with its own language, customs, and religion according to the geographic area where they lived or based on whether they were hunters and gatherers, such as the Sioux in the Plains, or horticulturists, such as the Pueblo in the Southwest. Their religious ceremonies ranged from simple hunting rites to elaborate calendrical rites adapted to the economies of sedentary farming communities, through the hunting and war-related religions of the Great Plains. Nevertheless, most indigenous religions evolved within a common framework of life processes affected by a familiar natural environment. They all claim the existence of an invisible force that pervades the universe and the divine origin of the cosmos. Some features are common to a great number of tribal groups. They share a similar worldview: the notion of cosmic harmony, direct experience of powers and visions, and the interrelationship of humans and animals. Ancestral lands and sacred places are important; some knowledge is to be kept secret, and initiation is necessary to have access to it. And everywhere, generosity is a religious act.

Worldview

The world Native Americans live in is characterized by a dichotomy between the natural and the supernatural and between the secular and the sacred. All groups believed in spirits that are present in everyday life, in dreams, and in natural phenomena; they become real as masked gods in ritual dances and sacred ceremonies. The line drawn by cultural tradition between the natural and the supernatural is a fuzzy one because both domains are closely intertwined. Deities and spirits, humans, animals, and plants all inhabit the sacred circle.

The boundary between spirits and animals and between plants and geographic features is not clear-cut: For the Navajo, some mountains are the embodiment of Holy People, while others are just elements of a landscape. A bear may belong to the ordinary world or may be a spiritual being materialized. In fact, each earthly form is supposed to have a corresponding spiritual form.

Guardians and Totems

Native American spirituality is based on a metaphysics of nature. The animal guardian was prevalent generally in the hunting cultures of North America, especially among big game hunters.

As is appropriate to peoples whose lives depended on the hunting of game, a rich and varied lore concerns all the animals present in the Native American world of experience. Animal qualities can be transmitted to humans, so that animals are in a way superior to them. That is why many groups have animal totems and why individuals enter secret societies of animal lodges.

But there are other “guardians.” For farming communities, good crops are essential, although they are threatened by parasites and other natural phenomena. Therefore, among the agrarian peoples, the plant guardian, such as the Corn Goddess, naturally occupies a prominent place. This does not mean that in some instances guardians do not occur side by side. Not every species has its own guardian. Usually, the most economically important species are believed to have guardians. The Great Guardian is conceived by many peoples as the ruler over all animals and plants. The guardian spirit gives guidance in the hunt, mainly concerning the animals whose shape it has chosen to assume. Good health and

fortune in the hunt and in war were what the Indian expected most from his or her guardian spirit. The latter exercises control over animals. He is a protector, making sure that if an animal has been slain, it has been given adequate respect and attention, with the proper rites. If the hunter has not observed the rules, the guardian may prevent him from killing other game. On the other hand, the guardian is favorable to hunters who have observed taboos and gone through the proper rites.

Each animal species has its “master of the animals,” the guardian soul of an animal collective. The principle is the same for all living beings that have their supernatural guardians. As regards humans, that role is played by the Supreme Being. Prayers are made to game before the kill or to medicinal plants during gathering, so that the animal or plant spirits will return in tangible form to again feed and heal the people. Most important, Indians care about nature because it is sacred when they experience the supernatural through visions or meditation.

Spirit helpers act as totems—that is, as entities that watch over a group of people, such as a family, a clan, or a tribe. They are thought to possess supernatural power and express a mysterious bond between human groups and their guardians.

The guardian spirits of North America have always possessed dual forms: human and animal. When humans arrived, the spirits withdrew to the forests and the waters, but they retained their ability to put on a human appearance when they wished. A whole range of “nature beings” can be found everywhere, from animals to thunder, the winds, rain, and heavenly bodies. Therefore, the world is full of distributed power, so that humans live constantly among potential helpers, provided they respect the rules.

The Supreme Being

In the Native American spiritual world, the universe is controlled by a deity that presides over all events, a being that is never clearly defined, whose nature and role are not universal. That Supreme Being is not always the Creator, but He (or She) rules the world and decides matters of life and death; the Supreme Being created initiation rites and was at the origin of tribal ethics.

In north-central California as well as in the Southwest, the Creation resulted from the Supreme

Being’s power of thought and word. Words and thoughts have a compelling potency, a creative force, especially in a ritual context. Consequently, a song that describes an episode of a myth actually re-creates the event. The Sioux call that Supreme Being *Wakan Tanka*, while the Omaha call Him *Wakan* or *Wakanda*, which means “the Sacred,” “the Divine.” Those names are often translated as “the Great Spirit,” although it really means “the Great Mystery,” since those peoples are not monotheists. For the Algonquin, “manitou” is a central concept that also translates as “supernatural” or “spirit.” One “Great Spirit” stands out: the main god, called manitou as well. Belief in manitou clearly predates the arrival of Europeans in North America; the first missionaries in New France had already mentioned him. The Algonquin populations, at least south of the Great Lakes, were exposed to the influence of the Mississippian culture of the Mound Builders. Their concepts of a Supreme Being are extremely varied. In the North, He is the master of animals; known as manitou by the Montagnais (also called Innu), He is the protector of caribous and the master of the world, although He does not preside over the dead. In the South, for the Delaware (or Lenape), He thought the world into existence; the Laguna Pueblo also believe the Thought Woman did the same, which testifies to the mystic nature of the act of creation. As for the other tribes, mainly in western Canada, a cosmic tree, a sacred pillar, supports the sky and prevents it from falling to the earth. It unites the underworlds and the upper worlds that form the universe. An eagle is seated at the top of that pillar. For the Flat Head, the roots of the world tree sink deep into the earth, while at the summit resides Amotken, the Benevolent Creator. This North American myth is found mainly among agrarian peoples, although sometimes among hunters and gatherers as well. From its roots, the Iroquois, at the beginning of times, climbed from an underworld up to the surface of the earth.

The Supreme Being may also consist of various spiritual powers that interact freely with humans, particularly in dreams and visions and also for food giving or healing when, during a ceremony, the medicine person *becomes* a holy being. The Supreme Being is at the same time the multiplicity of spiritual powers and the quintessence of these powers.

The Cosmogonic Myths and Cosmic Harmony

Myths and Symbols

The Supreme Being does not show his power to hunting tribes and agrarian tribes in the same way. For hunters, there is the sky and the world of humankind. For agrarian peoples, there are three or more successive worlds.

The sacred circle is the prevalent symbolism in the Southeast, the Plains, and the Prairie. It is seen in the organization of camps, the medicine wheels, the arrangements of buffalo skulls, the emblems painted on tipis and garments, and the architecture of homes and religious spaces. The circular Sun Dance lodge is supposed to represent the universe, and the central pole is its axis. The symbolism of the cross is also omnipresent for the four directions. The Tewa scholar Alfonso Ortiz has also shown that the tribes in New Mexico have specific cosmological images, but everywhere the cosmos concept mixes the natural and the supernatural. The cosmogony is totally based on mythology. Each tribe has its own Creation story. In one of the most common versions, the earth-diver motif prevails: An animal-like figure dives to the bottom of the primeval sea to bring back a little mud, from which the cosmos is then shaped. In the Southwest, sexual relationships between Father Sky and Mother Earth are preparatory to creation. All myths refer to an undetermined past when people and animals lived together and spoke the same language. This is when philosophies and rules for order were created. Those myths draw the guidelines for ritual performance. The culture heroes or tricksters and their adventures participate in the creation and transform the world for the benefit of people. As for humans, they mainly believe in the Emergence myth: They acceded to the Glittering World by climbing up from the womb of the Earth through successive worlds. In the meantime, there was a gradual metamorphosis of humans, animals, and all living creatures.

However, Native American religions usually place greater emphasis on action in this world rather than on speculations on a possible life after death that would bring reward or punishment. The physical universe is accepted as the place where humans can interact with the spiritual entities. Therefore, people must strive to

discover the correct forms of behavior in order to preserve harmonious relationships between the natural and the supernatural, to ensure fertility, long life, good health, and social stability. As the notion of cosmic harmony is at the core of the spiritual systems, people have the responsibility of preserving a balance between what is taken and what is given, so as not to disturb the world harmony. Consequently, no plant and no animal should be destroyed without a good reason, because animals, plants, and even plain matter are inhabited by spirits that intervene in the fate of humankind.

Nature and Religion

Among hunting tribes, such as the Algonquin hunters in eastern Canada and in the northeastern United States, there is a close relationship between hunter and game that gives birth to a ritual complex of "animal ceremonialism": The hunters adopt a ritual attitude toward the game animal and its supernatural masters. During ceremonies, dancers adopt animal attire and imitate the animal's behavior; they *become* an eagle or a buffalo. The vision quest complex shows the same intimate association between humans and animals. As regards gathering, attention is directed to the well-being of seeds, plants, and trees. The same attitude can be noticed in tribes that combine hunting and agriculture. In agricultural areas such as the Southwest, the Pueblo have a belief and ritual complex centered on grains and other crops.

According to their various modes of subsistence, Native American groups have a diversified attitude to nature that expresses an appreciative view of nature's gifts. The Plains Indians offer a good example of the connection between religion and nature: For them, the Supreme Being dwells in all living beings. Therefore, it is the people's duty to care for the well-being of nature. For the Choctaw, the Great Spirit manifests itself in thunder, wind, and waves, and for the Menominee, all living beings are manitou. Whether for hunters or farmers, belief in Mother Earth is prevalent in large parts of North America. Even among many Native Americans who have experienced disruptions in the continuity of their traditional culture and religion, such views are commonly shared.

Taboos

Certain taboos developed because the focus of power in a being or in an object could be dangerous to someone who was not in a sacred state. The most widespread taboos refer to certain stages of life: birth, puberty, old age, and death. As those events are uncontrollable, specific rituals are used to avoid harmful consequences. Offerings to animal or plant spirits are made, purification rituals may be necessary, periods of withdrawal might be observed after a death for fear that the spirit of the dead should refuse to leave or should want revenge, or a ceremony is held to restore cosmic and spiritual balance.

Visions and Rituals

Each tribe has its own Creation story that explains the natural and the supernatural worlds. Ceremonies are performed according to the instructions given by the mythic heroes, to preserve harmony in the universe, to heal the sick, and to maintain relationships with spiritual beings. They also aim at ensuring good crops and having abundant game. Today, as in the past, native peoples worship by chanting, praying, and dancing. Purification rites, vision quests, sun dances, and rituals of the pipe are being increasingly revived and practiced by the Plains peoples.

Spirits appear in dreams or in visions, adopting many forms that often include an animal guide. Vision quests are made through seclusion and fasting, or through ordeals of self-inflicted pain, as in the sun dance.

Most rituals are symbolic expressions of religious thought. They usually correspond to human needs and desires and contribute to carrying them out. Some reiterate the cosmic creation in dramatic performances of the mythic events at the beginning of time. Hunting and fishing rites show reverence for the animals: In the Northwest, the first salmon caught in the season is honored, and the fish bones are given back to the water, so that many more salmon may come and feed the people. The North is home to bear ceremonialism. Agrarian cultures practice fertility rites, determined by a calendar, to ensure rain and bountiful crops. Most tribes have initiation rites, such as puberty rites for girls among the Apache and the Navajo or for entering secret societies among the Kwakwaka'wakw and the Ojibway (or Chippewa). Shamanistic rituals

concern mostly men in their quest for guardian spirits, for healing ceremonies or for divination, as in the Sioux shaking-tent ceremonial. All those rites are preceded by ritual cleansing, by taking emetics and sweat baths.

Such rituals help obtain the aid of the supernatural in controlling the natural and social world. Individuals try to gain the benevolence of spiritual entities with prayers or offerings (e.g., tobacco, semiprecious stones, feathers, shells). In the Woodlands and in the Great Plains, the smoking of a pipe usually precedes ceremonies and, in earlier times, peace talks. But when entire communities wished to ensure a good hunt, victory in warfare, or bountiful crops, they called up a shaman, or a medicine man (or a medicine woman), supposed to have acquired supernatural powers, to act as a mediator between the visible and the invisible worlds. Medicine persons have often facilitated their contacts with spirits by the use of psychotropic substances that affect consciousness and behavior.

Dynamics of Native North American Religions

Since the first contact with Europeans, a vast spectrum of change has taken place within and across Native American cultures. Tribes have had to adapt and submit; they were compelled to give up their lands, sometimes forbidden to speak their languages and to practice their traditional religions, and subjected to the "civilizing" role of Christianization and colonization. As a result, some peoples have totally embraced Christianity, while others pray in church but also attend Indian healing ceremonies, finding comfort in both traditions, mixing Christian and ancient rites. Usually, Indians did not simply replace one faith with another. They dynamically adapted to the disruptions brought about by colonization. Native Americans responded to the efforts of Christianization with new religious movements that promised that the land would be theirs again, the dead would return, and the buffalo would come back. The main movements were the Handsome Lake religion, the Indian Shaker religion, the Ghost Dance, and the Native American Church (or NAC), which uses peyote as a sacrament.

Today, there is a rebirth of tribal religions in a world almost totally different from what it used to be. Tribes have also been in contact with one another. Therefore, many young Indians attracted by Pan-Indianism wish to revert to a “North American religion” as a system of beliefs and rituals common to all tribes. For them, its foundation is still the ancient notion of cosmic harmony, in which all beings live together. As long as their interrelationships last, the favorable cyclical changes will continue to occur in nature. Insofar as core elements of myths, values, and native languages are still held today by at least some parts of the populations, such “new” religious movements should be understood in terms of a continuity of traditional elements.

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See also Animals; Ghost Dance Religion; God; Indigenous Religions; Myth; Native Latin American Religion; North America; Rites of Passage; Shamanism; Symbol; Syncretism

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NATURAL LAW

Natural law may be described as law whose content is set by nature and is thus universal. It is an idea that exists in most religious traditions; Hinduism, for instance, has the notion of dharma, an enduring moral order underlying all reality. In the West, a similar notion is known as natural law. The first developments related to such law can be found in the work of the Greek philosopher Aristotle (4 BCE), the Stoics (3 BCE to 3 CE), and Cicero (106–43 BCE). However, the works of Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274), a Christian philosopher and member of the scholastic tradition, were some of the greatest contributions to the development of a natural law doctrine. During the 17th century, a vivid debate emerged about natural law and the foundations of society. Since the last decades of the 20th century, there is a process for the “revival of Thomism.” Theologians and Christian philosophers appeal to the natural law doctrine as a basis for intervention in the public spheres.

Thomas Aquinas

Aquinas wrote many theological and philosophical treatises; the most influential of them was *Summa Theologiae*. There, he deepened the work of Aristotle and Augustine of Hippo and developed a new approach to the understanding of natural law. Aquinas established that God exists and is the beginning and end of all things. All creatures come from God and depend on him. Moreover, God is the creator and the entity that settles the order of things in the world, and everything that exists, exists because of and for God. The natural order is a hierarchically created order. God is the foundation of natural law, and mankind receives it. In this process, humans participate in the eternal law that God has established for the universe.

Aquinas established that natural law prescribes actions according to virtues. The notion of natural law refers to a series of precepts enacted by human reason. There are some basic principles, intellectually known, that help reason to differentiate if the ends pursued are according to virtue. Mostly, all people are capable of knowing these principles, which are principles of practical reason. The first principle, known and understood by everyone, is

that good must be done and evil avoided. The second principle, not known by everyone, establishes an order among human inclinations. Finally, there are principles known only by wise people. One of them is the prohibition of usury. Natural law, as a moral law, is the core of evident universal principles that help people direct their actions.

This common core includes rules, values, rights, and duties such as the conservation of human life, the union of women and men, the education of offspring, avoiding ignorance, not harming others, reasonable behavior, and living in society. These are all goods that must be pursued.

Natural law, as the first and essential set of norms that rule moral life, refers to the own original nature of mankind: a person in unity of soul and body. The human person is a unified totality, it is a soul expressed in a body that is informed by the spirit.

Natural law refers to a moral dimension that regulates the natural order that consists of biological and physical laws. There is an order in nature. There is a disposition that settles that everything occupies its own function.

The law exists as a rule, and because it is a rule, it belongs to reason. Natural law is the first rational order to the good. Positive laws come from natural law, and they are only valid if they are consistent with it.

Snapshots of the 17th Century

During the 17th century, at the beginning of modernity, Contractualists made some developments regarding natural law. In *Leviathan*, Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) held that natural law is a general precept regarding the preservation of human life. According to natural law, founded by God and reason, man must avoid everything that may destroy his life. Hobbes describes nature in terms of a state of nature, a space or time before man surrenders to the sovereign to preserve his life. In this state of nature, nothing is perfect, virtuous, or good. Violence, death, and conflict are the main characteristics of this state. In *Leviathan*, Hobbes mentions that the main good is the preservation of life. Natural law is based on God, and the laws of nature contribute to human self-preservation. Man establishes a set of laws that are mainly related to obtaining peace, even if these laws limit human freedom.

In his two treatises on civil government, John Locke (1632–1704) mentions that natural law is an order of justice prior to the creation of positive laws and the government itself. He conceives natural law as an ideal duty that must be respected. It is a state of complete freedom where people can establish an order for their actions and dispose freely of properties. Reason coincides with natural law. Positive laws are just when they are based on nature and reason. Human laws are thus below the laws of nature and God.

After these developments in natural law, centuries have passed in discussions about the theoretical approaches to this concept. Most of the works consisted of discussions about natural law versus positive law, which is humanly established to rule social behavior. According to the heritors of the natural law doctrine, positive law must be surrogated to natural law. Human beings participate in the eternal law designed by God when they follow the evident precepts of natural law, which drives them in the direction of legislating reasonably.

Current Debates Concerning Natural Law

During the last decades of the 20th century, a group of philosophers started to review the work of Thomas Aquinas. Among them are Stephen Theron, Alasdair MacIntyre, Ralph McInerny, John Finnis, Germain Grisez, and Joseph Boyle. Moreover, the catechism of the Roman Catholic Church has many lessons on T. Aquinas. In 2010, Pope Benedict XVI encouraged Catholics to follow Aquinas's teachings. Because the Catholic Church sees natural law as the source of universal moral law, it appeals to some of its core principles as a basis for some of its positions on public policy. For instance, some of the values established in Aquinas's *Summa Theologiae* with respect to the pursuit of good, preserving human life, procreation, parents' education of offspring, and not harming others are used in current debates about abortion, sexual education, and marriage between people of the same gender. The Catholic Church believes that humanity has diverged from natural law and the natural hierarchical order. This deviation began on a massive scale with the beginning of modernity and the process of secularization. The separation of religion from other social spheres lessened the influence of churches in the regulation of people's

behavior. Not only Roman Catholics but also other Christians and other religious groups support the teachings of Aquinas related to the moral law. According to this notion, positive law must be subject to natural law; thus, they do not consider as proper the advances that some countries have made within the framework of sexual and reproductive rights. As procreation and the preservation of life are one of the goods to pursue, the Vatican suggests to Western governments around the world that their countries should avoid legislation on abortion and marriage between people of the same gender. They believe that it is possible to restore the reign of reason and natural law if there is a universal legal framework that is based on the teachings of their religious doctrine. Since the 1970s, when international organizations and governments established policies in the area of reproduction and women's rights and feminist movements exerted pressure to achieve sexual and reproductive rights, religious groups and scholars have returned to the teachings of Thomas Aquinas and his natural law doctrine. With this approach, they believe that they can establish the reign of God on Earth.

Gabriela Irrazábal

See also Dharma, Karma, and Samsara; Enlightenment; Ethics; *Li*; Religious Nationalism; Roman Catholicism

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NEO-PAGAN MOVEMENT

Neo-paganism can be described as a postmodern, almost worldwide, new religious and spiritual movement that evokes the spirit of Europe's pre-Christian pagan culture. This movement finds its origins in a dissatisfaction with what its adherents perceive as the stifling modernist religious models prevailing within contemporary cultures of Christian tradition; it is also born of a longing, akin to the romantic fascination for the primitive world, for more satisfactory models, long gone, reclaimed from antique or even prehistoric times. As shown by the links to be found on the Internet, where many neo-pagan groups or associations have created sites (e.g., the World Pagan Network or Witchvox, which give access to thousands of neo-pagan addresses worldwide), neo-pagans have emerged all over the world, particularly in Great Britain; in French Brittany; in northern, central, and eastern Europe; in Russia; in the United States; and in Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. These neo-pagans have decided to reconstruct old religious models for their own purposes. It is worth mentioning that the pagan revivals born within the nationalist and Romantic movements of the 19th century, some of which eventually became connected to the fascist European movements in Europe in the 1930s, cannot be called neo-pagan, because of their specific political orientation and essentially folkloric character; born in the context of international tensions, mostly concerned with the revival of their own national traditions and their supposedly superior characteristics, they did not share the world vision and did not have the spiritual dimension of what is called neo-paganism today.

Origins and Characteristics

For the purpose of this entry, the focus will be on the neo-pagan groups that appeared in Europe after World War II, some of them (Wicca particularly)

crossing the Atlantic almost 20 years later, in the beginning of the 1960s. In the United States, neo-paganism flourished rapidly, finding new sources of inspiration in the New American Social Movements, and it started expanding and spreading back to Europe and the other continents. Although in some places, especially in Europe, neo-paganism is still often linked to local movements aiming at the revival of traditional cultures, most neo-pagans are characterized by a syncretic and eclectic spirit, and the cultural roots of neo-pagan cults are often planted very far from their members' native lands: "Neo-Druids" can be found everywhere, for instance, and not only in the countries of ancient Celtic traditions, as also "witches" worshipping the god and goddess of the re-imagined old European religion (Wicca), neo-pagans attracted by the spirituality of Australian Aborigines or of Native American Indians and various brands of native shamanisms, and people worshipping the gods of ancient Egypt or ancient Greece. As a consequence, most neo-pagans remain a nonconformist minority and an oddity wherever they are and often cultivate the esoteric character some of them (e.g., Wiccans) have partly inherited from Theosophy or other Western esoteric traditions. They must therefore not be confused with those pagans of indigenous religions whose native cults and traditions have actually survived through the ages, despite the combined normalizing pressures of Christianity and modernity, and have been recently officially acknowledged as the national cultural heritage in some countries such as Finland.

If most neo-pagans, wherever they are, share a common vision (tentatively described below), it is important to emphasize the great variety of the neo-pagan landscape. Contrary to the truly universal Christian churches and in spite of the denominations some have adopted for themselves (the U.S.-born Church of All Worlds, to cite only one), neo-pagan groups have been unable, and unwilling, to develop either a common dogma or any kind of centralizing institutions that would hinder their free will. However, since the 1980s, numerous gatherings, the neo-pagan festivals, are organized here and there every year, during solstices or equinoxes or on the full moon, for instance, according to the neo-pagan solar and lunar calendar. These festivals often have an ecumenical character, facilitate exchanges, and contribute to the development of what some improperly call the neo-pagan tribe, or community.

It is difficult to assess the numerical importance of the movement worldwide since, except for the United States, no scientific sociologically oriented study, either of the movement as a whole or of the movement in Europe or anywhere else, has been conducted. Estimates postulating the existence of at least 10 million neo-pagans in the world at the beginning of the new millennium have been circulated by neo-pagans, but there is no way to check this figure. On the other hand, for the United States alone, where specialists in religious studies are at work on the subject and where an abundant scientific literature has been provided by the neo-pagans themselves, the figure of 1 million neo-pagans in the first decade of the 21st century seems a conservative estimate. However, the most interesting fact about the neo-pagan movement is not its actual numerical importance but the impressive rate of its development. Some speak of an "explosion" of neo-paganism within the past 20 years. The U.S. author Gordon Melton, for instance, asserts that it is the fastest growing religion in the world today. If there were almost no neo-pagans in the United States before the 1960s, there are at least 1 million of them today, and the membership continues to grow.

The social profile of neo-pagans worldwide has not been thoroughly studied either. The only existing observations have been conducted on members of American groups by local sociologists or foreign observers. Nevertheless, it can be assumed from the nature, history, and implantation of the movement that, on the whole, neo-pagans outside the United States are similar to American neo-pagans: The latter have been shown to be predominantly White, mostly young adults (except for those of the first generation of the 1960s, who are now getting on in age), with a slight majority of women; contrary to a common misconception, they are not overwhelmingly female, they do not survive on the margins of society, and they are evenly distributed on the social scale, well integrated in their human economic environment, with slightly better incomes and higher academic levels on average than most of their contemporaries. They have been described as avid readers, interested in cultural and religious traditions from all over the world, and, apart from their religious models, not particularly nostalgic for the past or otherwise different from their countrymen and contemporaries.

What distinguishes them from their fellow citizens, however, is their critical outlook on modern contemporary societies and on the negative heritage of “Christianism” and the monotheistic religions in general. From a strictly religious or theological point of view, neo-pagans do not believe in the existence of a unique, patriarchal, transcendental deity; their conception of the divine is a combination of pantheism and panentheism. But their religious choices are not always inspired by considerations of a strictly religious nature; they are widely motivated by intellectual, ideological, and psychological factors. Modernism and monotheism are jointly accused of having produced totalitarian systems; generating technological, environmental, or human disasters; crushing and despising cultures that did not conform; and unable to adapt to their self-proclaimed superior and universal models. Neo-pagans are convinced that polytheism was and still is culturally and psychologically better adapted to the complexity of human nature and human societies. Each pagan divinity is often considered as being the expression of one of the many archetypal images conflicting in the human mind; the possibility of worshiping several deities at the same time is a way of reconciling humans with their own complexity. The return to ancient gods enables neo-pagans to choose the deity best suited to their aspirations; the absence of dogma enables them to choose another deity or another system freely whenever they feel like it. Culturally speaking, neo-paganism may be just a way of recovering a past heritage, or of syncretically adopting the most attractive models of alien cultures. Last but not least, in a general context of growing concern for environmental issues, old and new pagan cults are considered by neo-pagans as closer to and more respectful of nature than are the monotheistic religions. Choosing neo-paganism is a way of adapting their spirituality to their secular concerns.

Implications

The philosophical and ideological implications of this worldview are becoming increasingly visible. Although the political convictions of neo-pagans were originally as varied as the political convictions of Christians, which entailed widespread disagreements in the political field, most neo-pagans today no longer adhere to the liberal modernist view of

the necessity of separating the private (and religious or sacred) from the public (and profane or political) spheres of their lives. In spite of the variety of their religious experiences, almost all of them are worshippers of nature and/or of the Goddess and have become convinced of the necessity of activism in favor of protection of the environment, in the defense of native peoples deprived of the natural resources of their native lands, and in the fight of people in developing nations against the growing pressure of globalized trade and inhuman financial rules. As a consequence, most neo-pagans have become today either actively involved or objective allies of the altermondialist, ecological, and feminist movements, both locally and internationally.

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See also Goddess; Neo-Shamanisms; New Religions; New Religions in the United States; Shamanism

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NEO-SHAMANISMS

Neo-shamanisms are new religious movements that are part of neo-paganism, inspired by worldviews and techniques of non-Western tribal peoples

from different parts of the world. These shamanist elements are adapted and changed to the context of modern, urban Western life. Notions and techniques have been appropriated mainly from Siberian, Native American, South American, and Scandinavian indigenous shamanic traditions. Neo-shamanistic adepts are very eclectic and are inspired by very different manifestations, which justifies the speaking of neo-shamanisms. Meeting modern urban needs, they have been adapted to individual needs and psychologized by reformulating traditional worldviews and methods in modern terms. The “darker” sides of traditional shamanism, such as fights with dangerous spirits, have hardly been adopted in neo-shamanism.

Neo-shamanism has been greatly influenced by two anthropologists. The descriptions by Carlos Castaneda (1968), telling of his training with a Yaqui shaman and the use of hallucinogenic plants to gain supernatural power and knowledge, became a source of inspiration for many Westerners. After research with different indigenous peoples of South and North America, Michael Harner (1980) introduced “core shamanism,” a set of presumed traditional shamanic techniques that displays no specific cultural features and that is recontextualized for modern Western societies. Harner established the Foundation for Shamanic Studies, which organizes neo-shamanic seminars all over the world.

The most significant techniques of the core shamanism are journeys in an altered state of consciousness—named the shamanic state of consciousness—induced by drumming. The journeys lead to different shamanic worlds and allow for interaction with different spirit helpers and power animals to receive guidance and healing. The search for a power animal, which is a spirit guide to the underworld, is a popular technique in neo-shamanisms.

Other common practices are the originally Native American sweat lodge ceremony, the vision quest, and the medicine wheel, which have been appropriated from the Lakota and Blackfeet tribes. During the sweat lodge ceremony, people are made to sit in a small hut of blankets with heated with steam while praying and singing to the spirits. The vision quest is a retreat to nature, where people fast and pray, seeking guidance from the spirits. The medicine wheel is a spiritual concept in which earth consciousness is connected with the directions of the wind and specific animals.

Some indigenous tribes, such as the Lakota Native Americans, have protested against the use of their cultural and spiritual heritage by Westerners and have prohibited the use of some of their traditional ceremonies. Other traditional shamans feel the need to expand the knowledge of their tradition all over the world.

Peter G. A. Versteeg and Hanneke Minkjan

See also Indigenous Religions; Native Latin American Religion; Native North American Religion; Neo-Pagan Movement; New Religions; New Religions in the United States; Shamanism

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NEO-SUFISM (SUFI RENEWAL)

The term *neo-Sufism* was coined by Fazl ur Rahman in 1966 to describe reform movements among Sufi orders (*turuq*, singular *tariqa*) of the 18th and 19th centuries. More recently, the term *neo-Sufism* has been applied to certain 20th- and 21st-century Sufi-inspired groups in the West as well as to movements in Muslim-majority countries among the globally engaged middle and upper classes.

Islamic reform (or “renewal”; in Arabic, *tajdid*) in Sufi orders in the 18th and 19th centuries responded to a mood of religious conservatism widespread across the Muslim world. While the anti-Sufi Wahhabi movement represents one expression of that conservatism, historians have documented parallel expressions in Sufi orders in Africa (initially in orders inspired by the Moroccan Ahmad ibn Idris) and across the Middle East to South and Southeast Asia.

John Voll, Nehemia Levtzion, and others adopted Rahman’s term, *neo-Sufism*, to designate a complex of changes commonly found in reformist

turuq. That complex included a renewed emphasis on studies of religious law (Shari'a) as the basis of the spiritual quest, a new social activism directed at moral and social reform, and the transformation of loose networks of disciples into hierarchical organizations.

Rahman, a leading proponent of modernist Islamic reform, saw in the premodern neo-Sufi orders not only a new valorization of this-worldly works of moral renewal but also a repudiation of ecstatic practices, identified as heterodox local cultural accretions (*bid'ah*). The notion that renewalist *turuq* turned away from the mystical quest has not been endorsed. Nonetheless, others have pointed to a widespread change in the way the goal of the mystical quest was understood: from unity with God (e.g., as theorized by the monist Ibn Arabi) to merely union with the spirit of Prophet Muhammad. Rex O'Fahey, Bernd Radtke, and others have critiqued that formulation, judging it as being oversimplified and overgeneralized, but allow that many renewalist *turuq* did increase the popularity of practices focusing on the figure of the Prophet, not only by promoting Hadith studies but by teaching meditation exercises aimed at opening the inner sight to the presence of the Prophet as guide.

Mark Sedgwick and others contrast Western neo-Sufi movements, which adapt the Sufi heritage for their mostly non-Muslim recruits, with the classical Sufi orders followed in the West by Muslim migrants. Some of the Western neo-Sufi movements preserve at least notional links with Islam, while others, such as Inayat Khan's "Universal Sufism," are deconfessionalized.

In contrast, contemporary groups identified as "neo-Sufi" in Muslim-majority societies form part of the Islamic revival movement. These institutionally innovative movements (e.g., the Turkish Fethullah Gulen movement and the Indonesian Sufi groups inspired by intellectuals in Nurcholish Madjid's circle) use Sufi ethical disciplines and meditative rituals to promote increased religious devotion along with this-worldly achievement.

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See also dan Fodio, Osman; Gulen Movement; Islam; Islamic Modernism; Islamic Reform; New Religions; New Religions in the United States; Sufism

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NEPAL

Nepal is a democratic republic located along the southern region of the Himalayan range, bordering India to the south, west, and east and the Tibetan autonomous region of China to the north. Though a small country in geographic terms (approximately 54,362 square miles [1 mile = 1.6093 kilometers]), its population of approximately 29.5 million people is a complex and heterogeneous mix of both Indo-European and Tibeto-Burman ethnic groups and castes, each with distinct languages and religious and cultural traditions. It has the highest percentage of Hindus in its population than any other nation in the world, including India.

In the late 18th century, the Gorkha king Prithvi Narayan Shah consolidated the territories of what is today Nepal, and his descendants ruled Nepal as a Hindu kingdom throughout most of the country's history. Following a 10-year Maoist insurgency and decades of off and on protests and grassroots movements for democracy by political parties and marginalized ethnic and religious groups, in May 2008, Nepal was declared a federal constitutional republic, and Nepalis elected their first president in the newly secular state. Nepal's contemporary religious landscape is highly diverse, and regional and ethnic variations are found within each religious tradition. Through an increase in international travel and migration alongside the growing movements of social and political reform of recent decades, Nepal's religious traditions have begun to be shaped by global religious movements as Nepalis become increasingly involved in transnational religious networks.

Hindus constitute approximately 80% of Nepal's population, Buddhists 11%, Muslims 4.2%, and Sikhs, Christians, and others the remaining 5%. Nepal's Hindus are predominantly *Shaivites* and

Shaktas, practicing rituals and rites similar to, but distinct from, those in contemporary India. For example, in Nepal, animal sacrifice is still a common practice, and major Hindu holidays such as *Dashain—Dussera* in India—are uniquely Nepali in practice and narrative. Hinduism in Nepal shares features with *Vajrayana* (Tantric) Buddhism, and there are syncretic forms of both Hinduism and Buddhism unique to Nepal, particularly prevalent in the Kathmandu Valley. Buddhism in a distinctively Tantric form has been practiced by the Kathmandu Valley's indigenous Newar residents since the medieval period, and throughout the northern regions of Nepal, various forms of Tibetan Buddhism are practiced. Islamic and Christian traditions have also been present in Nepal since the late medieval period, the former arriving through trade routes and migration from Kashmir and the terai (the Gangetic lowland plains in the southern region of Nepal) and the latter through European missionaries.

Religion in Nepal has historically been, and continues to be, highly local in orientation. Today, however, Nepalis of various religious traditions increasingly participate in translocal, global religious movements. With the rise of Hindu nationalism in India and the weakening of Hindu royal power in Nepal, Hindu nationalist groups formed in Nepal in the 1990s and since then continue to agitate, sometimes violently, for a Hindu national identity and the suppression of religious freedoms for minorities. Participation in aspects of global Hinduism is further evidenced by the immense popularity, among urban Nepalis in particular, of Baba Ramdev, an Indian guru who is leading a massive revival of interest in Hatha yoga. Among Nepali Buddhists, a movement of Theravada Buddhism has been growing since the mid-20th century, when it was introduced from Sri Lanka and Burma as a reform alternative to the highly ritualized Tantric Buddhism practiced by the Newars. Among Nepal's Muslim population today, many are involved in transnational Islamic reform and revival movements and increasingly seek Islamic study opportunities in Gulf countries or other parts of South Asia.

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See also China; Hindu Nationalism; Hinduism; India; Mahayana Buddhism; Shaivism; Syncretism; Theravada Buddhism; Tibet; Vajrayana, Tibetan

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NESTORIANS

See Assyrian Church of the East

NETHERLANDS

The Netherlands is a western European kingdom located in the delta between Belgium and Germany. Also known as Holland and the Dutch Republic, the Kingdom of the Netherlands was established as a parliamentary monarchy in 1848, a process that was completed with the constitutional reform of 1917. Its predecessor was the Dutch Republic (1581–1795). The origin of the Netherlands lies in the struggle for political independence in the Eighty Years War with Spain (1568–1648). The political-religious antagonism between Protestants and Catholics was an important factor in this conflict. In 1572, the Low Countries' governments installed a reorganized (“reformed”) church for the people, following a model that was partly inspired by John Calvin's ideas. Despite the popular image of Calvinist confessional dominance, the Low Countries have been in practice a multiconfessional society since the early-modern period. Most notably, the two southern provinces of the Netherlands have always had a strong Catholic presence.

Typical for the development of religion in Dutch society is “pillarization,” which is a situation whereby differences of class and religion shaped the formation of four dominant interest groups—Catholics, Protestants, Socialists, and Liberals—around which people's political and social affiliations were based. Although comparable with similar processes of ideological identity formation in other European countries in the same age, the idea behind the pillar was that the ideological subculture

to which one belonged was the highest moral community, instead of the nation. This form of ideological organization persisted from the second half of the 19th century into the 1960s, permeating many dimensions of public life.

In present times, the Netherlands is known for both its rapid church decline and its great religious diversity. Between 35% and 40% of Dutch people are still religiously affiliated, but this number is decreasing every year. At the same time, a relatively high number of Dutch people indicate that they have some sense of belief in a transhuman power (almost 70% according to recent figures). A portion of this group are interested in newer forms of religiosity, which often do not require a strong religious affiliation but which treat practitioners as consumers. Diversity is also increasingly reflected in the religious lifeworlds of migrants in the Netherlands, in which Christianity and Islam, in their many different cultural and confessional forms, are dominant. The growing presence of migrant religiosity in the Netherlands certainly adjusts the picture of religious decline, without, however, counteracting its reality.

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See also Amsterdam; Belgium; Europe; Indonesia; Protestant Christianity; Roman Catholicism; Suriname

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NETHERLANDS ANTILLES

See Curaçao; Sint Maarten

NEW AGE MOVEMENTS

The term *New Age* has been widely and variously used to refer to a range of beliefs, theories, practices, and lifestyles that do not fit into traditional religious belief systems and that have emerged primarily in modern, postwar, postindustrial societies, particularly in the United States, Canada, Europe, Australia, and New Zealand. Moreover, there is evidence of the increasingly global presence of identifiably New Age ideas and practices, particularly in the large cosmopolitan cities and conurbations of Brazil, South Africa, Japan, India, and many of the post-Soviet states.

Spiritual Eclecticism and Consumerism

New Age is a slippery term that not only means different things to different people but is also rejected by many of those who have been identified as “new agers” by scholars and the media. (This is, no doubt, because, it has, in recent years, become a derogatory term, suggesting idiosyncratic and superficial spiritualities and lifestyles.) Hence, some scholars prefer terms such as *alternative spiritualities*, *self-spiritualities*, or *spiritualities of life*. However, because such terms are not synonymous with what is meant by the New Age, the latter term is still widely used to refer to a bewildering array of self-oriented beliefs and practices that are understood to be at odds with, or at least on the periphery of, mainstream thinking in Western societies. Indeed, whether they are still on the periphery of the mainstream or have, to a large extent, moved into the mainstream is a matter of some debate.

The emergence of the New Age is a part of a wider subjective turn in contemporary Western societies. Individuals may belong to particular religious groups, follow particular paths, and submit to particular disciplines, but, generally speaking, the New Age encourages “epistemological individualism”: Its sources of authority are subjective; the final arbiter in matters of religious truth is the self; one is guided not by any external revelation or authority but by what one perceives to be the spiritual requirements of one’s self. This is reflected in the widespread suspicion of “religion” and the embracing of “spirituality,” leading to the familiar statement of New Age belief: “I’m spiritual but not religious.” Religion is identified with institutional hierarchies, tradition, and sources of authority that transcend the self (e.g., texts and deities), and spirituality is identified with “life as sacred,” the “self,” and subjective “well-being.” Bearing this context in mind, servicing the self became increasingly important, not to say commercially profitable for those trading in ideas, therapies, and consumables. Especially in the 1980s, the New Age became an increasingly commercialized “spiritual supermarket” within which seekers were encouraged to browse among and experiment with a broad range of ideas and practices without subscribing to any particular system of belief.

An emphasis on choice is conspicuous in New Age religion. The spiritual seeker is a late-modern consumer. This goes some way in explaining the appeal of the New Age religions in Western societies over hierarchical, authoritarian, exclusivist forms of religion. However, the spiritual consumerism of the New Age has also led to criticisms of cultural appropriation and religious commodification. As with wooden statues of Shiva or the Buddha carved in India and sold relatively cheaply in Western stores, so also traditions, cultures, beliefs, and rituals from around the globe have become lifestyle choices—items to be tried, tested, and acquired with other spiritual products. Without the least sense of dissonance, a European spiritual seeker with an interest in indigenous religions might sit before a statue of the Buddha—made in Nepal but purchased in the local shopping mall—inhale the fragranced smoke of several Nag Champa incense sticks—made in India by followers of the late Sathya Sai Baba—while meditating

on words from the Dao De Jing, the Bible, or one of numerous channeled texts.

Problems of Definition

The New Age is often defined as a movement. However, it is not a new religious movement in the accepted sense of that term, in that it lacks leadership or, indeed, any tightly bound organizational structure that could determine orthodoxy and criteria for membership. While there are identifiable religious organizations involved in the New Age, it is not itself an organization. Indeed, it is not a religion, a particular spiritual tradition, a church, a sect, or a denomination. It is rather a rapidly changing milieu within which groups, movements, teachers, gurus, and trends wax and wane.

In 1980, Marilyn Ferguson, a founding member of the Association of Humanistic Psychology and the author of one of the most influential texts on the New Age, *The Aquarian Conspiracy*, described the New Age as “a conspiracy without a political doctrine” and “a leaderless but powerful network . . . working to bring about radical change” (p. 8). These are helpful definitions. Having said that, the New Age has progressed significantly since the early 1980s. Principally, as a result of the advent of the Internet, the New Age is far broader and more diverse than it used to be. Indeed, it is difficult not to pluralize as a default position. That is to say, in the 21st century, largely because of the enormous volume of unregulated information and the New Age’s epistemological individualism, almost every interpretation, belief, and practice is contended. Hence, there is no single network. Rather, there is a loose and constantly shifting culture of overlapping networks, groups, and communities, through which numerous teachers, spokespeople, and therapists pass. Hence, in the final analysis, however one defines the amorphous phenomenon of the New Age, its fluidity, plurality, and heterogeneity need to be borne in mind.

Occulture and the New Age

The New Age can be understood as a manifestation of global “occulture.” Occulture is a constantly changing reservoir of ideas and practices that informs everything from extreme right-wing conspiracy theories to New Age teaching about angels and popular films such as *The Matrix* or

television series such as *Supernatural*. As well as in popular culture, occultural theories and myths are regularly rehearsed, expanded, and disseminated on the Internet and in many popular international magazines such as *New Dawn* (1991–) and *Nexus* (1986–), based in Australia; *Fortean Times* (1973–) and *Kindred Spirit* (1987–), based in Britain; *Fate* (1948–) and *Gnosis* (1985–1999), based in the United States; and *Der Golem* (2000–), based in Germany. Moreover, because occulture resources and is resourced by, among other things, popular culture, many people are familiar with its ideas.

Developing the idea of what Colin Campbell has called “the cultic milieu,” occulture expands the narrow, technical definition of the term *occult* to include a vast spectrum of beliefs and practices sourced by the world religions (particularly their mystical traditions)—such as paganism, spiritualism, Theosophy, alternative science and medicine, popular psychology, and a range of beliefs stimulated by a general interest in the paranormal. Occulture is the environment within which new methodologies and worldviews are passed on to an occulturally curious generation. While one may think in terms of a general global occulture, there are, of course, numerous local occultures that may or may not supply and receive from a global occulture. Hence, in the final analysis, occulture, like the Internet (an important occultural space), is constantly growing and changing as it absorbs, modifies, and disseminates new ideas, practices, and trends. Indeed, there is very little that cannot find a home within occulture (although that may mean significant reinterpretation), from chaos theory to deep ecology, from indigenous animism to angels, from depth psychology to astral projection, from geophysics to crystal therapy, from the Ancient Near East to Atlantis, from astronomy to astrology, and so on.

Indeed, as good examples of the way ideas become fungible, occultural concepts are the various series of very basic introductions to spirituality and well-being. For example, some years ago, two very popular series of books were published: “Principles of . . .” and “Elements of . . .” Overall, they constituted a general introduction to a range of occultural beliefs and practices. Although some of the books, such as *Principles of Numerology*, *Principles of Wicca*, *Principles of Tarot*, and *Principles of Your*

Psychic Potential, were clearly “occultic” in the narrower sense of the term, others, such as *Principles of Buddhism* or *Principles of Colonic Irrigation*, discussed subjects that were not occultic in themselves but had, nevertheless, become occultural ingredients. In other words, within occulture, it is not, for example, Buddhism per se that people are interested in but rather the principles or elements of Buddhism. As such, as we have seen, traditional religious practices are reinterpreted in the service of the self—they are de-traditionalized. In this sense, they become occulturally commodified. Consumers of occulture, such as those in the New Age, may not be particularly interested in becoming devout Buddhists but rather want to acquaint themselves with some elements of Buddhist belief and practice, which can then be merged with other spiritual, esoteric, or paranormal elements. Of course, in the most flagrant cases of occultural commodification, religious symbols become little more than jewelry and household ornaments. They function as indicators of an individual’s tastes and values but are detached from their original constellations of meaning.

The Emergence of the New Age

Locating the genesis of such an amorphous and fluid phenomenon as the New Age is fraught with problems. It is possible nevertheless to identify some antecedents and trace some influences. Although one could trace certain New Age ideas back many centuries, in recent history, its roots can be found in 19th-century occult traditions, notably spiritualism, American metaphysical movements, and Theosophy. Of these, it was perhaps the Theosophical Society that most successfully absorbed and communicated the principal ideas that would shape early New Age thought. Indeed, whereas the contemporary New Age is an amorphous phenomenon and the confluence of numerous streams of thought, being characterized by eclecticism and spiritual nomadism, initially it was theosophically oriented and unified around the Theosophical Society’s spiritual idealism and ethic of service to humanity.

The Theosophical Society, founded in 1875 by Helena P. Blavatsky (1831–1891) and Henry S. Olcott (1832–1907), was the cradle in which several important influences on early New Age thought would be nurtured. These include, most notably,

the English occultist Alice Bailey (1880–1949), founder of the Arcane School, and also the Austrian thinker Rudolf Steiner (1861–1925), the founder of Anthroposophy.

The key ideas taught by the Theosophical Society, which can be identified in early New Age thought, are summed up in its three objectives:

- (1) To form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity without distinction of race, colour, or creed.
- (2) To promote the study of Aryan and other Scriptures, of the World's religion and sciences, and to vindicate the importance of old Asiatic literature, namely, of the Brahmanical, Buddhist, and Zoroastrian philosophies.
- (3) To investigate the hidden mysteries of Nature under every aspect possible, and the psychic and spiritual powers latent in man especially. (Blavatsky, 1889, p. 39)

These teachings, Blavatsky claimed, were the result of her instruction in an “ancient wisdom” that was, in turn, the source of the principal spiritual themes and ethical ideals found at the heart of the world's religions. Indeed, she claims that enlightened masters or mahatmas throughout history, including the Buddha and Jesus, taught theosophical truths and that her own instruction had been imparted by certain “hidden adepts.” The mission of the Theosophical Society was to communicate the teachings of these advanced spiritual beings to humanity and thereby to contribute to the moral and spiritual evolution of the race.

The spiritual/ascended masters were living persons who had fully evolved through many incarnations, had acquired and become the custodians of “ancient wisdom,” and now sought to impart that wisdom to humanity through specially chosen intermediaries in order to lead it into a *new age* of peace, spirituality, and global community.

Central to much of this thinking and informing core themes within the New Age was a fascination with the East, particularly India. In 1878, Blavatsky and Olcott traveled to India, where they eventually established headquarters in Adyar, Madras (now Chennai). Their frequent contact with Hindu and Buddhist leaders; their teaching about occult mahatmas living in Tibet; their liberal use of Sanskrit terminology; their identification of a young Indian child, Jiddu Krishnamurti, as the coming “world teacher”; and the development of “esoteric Buddhism” gave this Western esoteric organization a distinctly Indian

bias. This confluence of the Eastern and the Western has significantly accelerated since the 1960s, contributing significantly to Western occulture and shaping the New Age.

As to the more recent origins of the New Age, Wouter Hanegraaf has argued that proto-New Age ideas and rituals can be found in the UFO (unidentified flying object) groups of the 1950s and 1960s. On June 24, 1947, Kenneth Arnold, a businessman from Boise, Idaho, reported a sighting of 10 shining disks flying over the Cascade Mountains when flying his private plane near Mount Rainier in western Washington. Occulture looked to the skies. Almost immediately, there was widespread public interest in alien contact, including the emergence of several flying-saucer clubs and UFO religions as well as the inevitable interest in the media and popular culture. Concerning the UFO groups, that these were started by those with an interest in the occult and Theosophy is hardly surprising, since Blavatsky had herself claimed that some “ascended masters” resided on Venus. Indeed, even before Arnold's sighting, the first new religion to have a specific interest in alien contact was the theosophical group “I AM Religious Activity,” whose founder, Guy Ballard (1878–1939), claimed to have been introduced to 12 Venusians who revealed Venus to be the home of a race of spiritually advanced beings. In the 1950s, groups such as the Aetherius Society, founded by George King (1919–1997), developed specifically theosophical, proto-New Age ideas, central to which was speculation about extraterrestrial beings seeking to guide humanity into the next stage of its evolution. This was identified with the astrological Age of Aquarius, within which there would be the emergence of a new spiritual consciousness.

Interestingly, early New Age thought had an apocalyptic core, in that it envisaged a difficult transition into the new age. There would be a period of global catastrophe, including wars, famine, floods, earthquakes, social unease, and economic collapse. The occupants of flying saucers, therefore, sought to warn humanity, particularly those who were spiritually sensitive to their paranormal methods of communication. These people would be guided through or otherwise saved from the coming events to be pioneers in the postapocalyptic world, a world in which humanity would live peacefully in accordance with universal cosmic laws.

Key elements of this proto–New Age thinking became central to the spiritual counterculture of the 1960s and early 1970s. Immersed in the prevailing occulture, there were groups, such as the Findhorn Community in Scotland, within which UFO apocalypticism merged with numerous other ideas. Eventually, this served to dilute and eventually transform it. A new progressive spirituality emerged. The passive attitude of waiting for the apocalyptic transition into the New Age was replaced by a pioneering activism, which encouraged people to live “as if” the New Age had dawned. As such, spiritual seekers were to be living examples of the New Age. They were “tomorrow’s children,” challenging others to live and think differently. By doing so, they hastened the advent of the new spiritual age. However, again, this early manifestation of the New Age was far more coherent than what was to emerge in the 1980s. It was rooted in theosophical ideas, particularly those developed by Bailey and Steiner. Although the American David Spangler (b. 1945) was a key thinker in this early period, it was largely a British phenomenon. Other influential teachers of the “theosophical New Age” were George Trevelyan (1906–1996) and Benjamin Creme (b. 1922).

At the end of the 1970s, the theosophical New Age was diluted still further. Not only were a greater variety of occultural ideas flowing into the milieu, but a growing variety of spiritual seekers were beginning to establish connections and pool ideas. This, we have seen, is what Ferguson refers to as the “Aquarian conspiracy”—the “emerging network.” Indeed, it was during the mid-1980s that *New Age* emerged as the principal term for this network. While the network was not oriented around the apocalypticism of the early theosophical thinkers, many did envisage a cosmic evolution, a major shift into a new age of peace, holism, and spiritual consciousness and a humanity that would, by default, favor the creative, intuitive right hemisphere of the brain over the more rationalist, atomist left hemisphere.

Geographically, in the 1980s, the movement shifted from Britain to America. As it did, so did ideas molded by transcendentalism and the American metaphysical movements, such as New Thought, begin to shape it. It was also influenced by ideas that can be traced back to the emergence of humanistic psychology. Of particular note is the Group Gestalt Therapy of Fritz Perls (1893–1970),

introduced in the 1960s at the Esalen Institute, Big Sur, California. This led not only to what became known as the human potential movement, which produced numerous self-help books and therapies, but also to New Age–sacralized human-potential ideas, rooting them in spiritual belief and practice. Hence, psychology and therapy became core to New Age thinking and practice.

Global New Age

Central to the emergence of the New Age has been a globalizing agenda. With roots in the Theosophical Society’s project “to form the nucleus of a universal brotherhood of humanity without distinction of race, colour, or creed,” (Blavatsky, 1889, p. 39) there is often a utopian vision of planetary wholeness, in which religions and cultures transcend their differences, adopt a fundamentally common spirituality, and live together in harmony. As to how this might happen, for many it is the inevitable next stage in the spiritual evolution of humanity. Others seek to contribute to the formation of a “critical mass” of enlightened people, which will lead to a spiritual tipping point in world history. Some, like the early UFO religionists, speak of the intervention of superior spiritual beings.

One might ask, of course, how a new global spirituality will accommodate, without coercion, those who prefer traditional, exclusivist religion or, indeed, no religion at all. The argument is that in the new era, humanity will have evolved the spiritual consciousness necessary for a peaceful global community. Because this spiritual consciousness will be a development of current New Age thinking, the new spiritual seekers are understood to be the vanguard of a new humanity.

A notable manifestation of this type of thinking was the “Harmonic Convergence” on August 16–17, 1987. José Argüelles (b. 1939), a Mexican American spiritual teacher, encouraged numerous spiritual seekers (“light beings”) from around the world to gather at sacred sites (e.g., Stonehenge) in order to mark the shift into a new age of universal peace. He believed that the Mayan calendar, as well as other systems of astrology, indicated that a “major energy shift” was about to occur that was powerful enough to cause a global shift

in human thinking toward universal cooperation. While there is little discernible evidence for these claims, he and others have also argued that the Harmonic Convergence inaugurated a period of 26 years, at the end of which, on December 21, 2012, the Mayan “long count” would mark the end of the current era, the thirteenth *b’ak’tun* cycle (which began on August 11, 3114 BCE). Hence, 2012, the Mayan calendar, and the coming global apocalyptic transformation have become key themes within much of the New Age and, indeed, in occulture more widely.

As to the spread of the New Age, it is, to a large extent, a deterritorialized transnational culture. However, because it has traveled as part of the baggage of Westernization (even Americanization) and has tended to retain its fundamentally Western characteristics, including the use of English as its lingua franca, it is difficult not to interpret it in terms of spiritual colonialism. While the New Age is, almost by definition, spiritually acquisitive and, therefore, naturally absorbs local occultural elements, the cultural flow is typically one-way; the location of cultural power is recognizably Western. That is to say, studies demonstrate that while there is an explicit interest in local spiritualities and indigenous traditions, in fact, the interest typically extends to the incorporation of appealing elements into an essentially Western spirituality, shaped by a utopian, unifying, and fundamentally relativizing project. Ideas are adopted (and reinterpreted) when they are recognized to cohere with the New Age. (Of course, this has also meant that certain cultures, particularly monotheistic cultures, are neglected. Indeed, not only is there little attention given to Islam, for example, but African cultures have also been neglected in the New Age.) However, as is widely recognized, not only does this lead to the maintenance of Western hegemony, but, as such, it has also led to denunciations and postcolonial critiques of the New Age by indigenous peoples. For example, on June 10, 1993, with specific reference to the New Age, an international gathering of the North American and Canadian Lakota, Dakota, and Nakota Nations issued a “Declaration of War Against Exploiters of Lakota Spirituality.”

Christopher Partridge

See also Blavatsky, Helena P.; Hinduism; Indigenous Religions; Neo-Pagan Movement; Neo-Shamanisms; Neo-Sufism (Sufi Renewal); New Religions; New Religions in the United States; Shamanism; Theosophy

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NEW CALEDONIA

New Caledonia (*Nouvelle-Calédonie*), a French overseas territory in the South Pacific, consists of the main island of New Caledonia (or *La Grande Terre*), the Loyalty Islands (Lifou, Mare, and Uvea), the Isle of Pines, and other minor islands. Its current religious landscape is the result of French colonization and Western Christian proselytizing. Of the approximately 240,000 residents, a majority of New Caledonians consider themselves Christian, with 60% identifying as Roman Catholic and 30% identifying as Protestant, mostly with evangelical and Pentecostal churches. While the indigenous Melanesian peoples, or Kanaks, make up about half of the Catholic population, they are the majority of the Protestant population, outnumbering those of European descent. Of the remaining 10% of the population, a significant portion identifies as nonreligious.

The non-Christian population is small but growing, especially adherents of Islam, Buddhism, and the Baha’i Faith. Indonesian and a few

African immigrants established a Muslim presence on the islands, building the first Islamic center in the capital city of Nouméa; recently, this archipelago, like much of Oceania, has seen a growth in Islamic converts. Some South Vietnamese residents migrated to New Caledonia following the war with North Vietnam, bringing Buddhism with them. The Baha'i Faith, appearing on the islands in the 1950s, also continues to grow in New Caledonia and throughout the Pacific Islands.

While most Kanaks have identified themselves as Christian since European missionization, some maintain traditional beliefs and practices, especially as part of cultural celebrations, including ancestral religious traditions and a deep connection to the land. Ceremonies such as weddings and funerals also involve Kanak traditions, including ritual dancing.

Explored by both England and France during the late 18th and early 19th centuries, New Caledonia became a French colony in 1853 and a penal settlement in 1854. As more French missionaries and settlers immigrated to the islands, the Kanaks revolted, and many were killed. The *Code de l'indigénat*, laws restricting the rights of the natives, was put in place in the late 19th century, as it was across the French colonial empire. Since 1986, New Caledonia has been on the United Nations Decolonization Committee's list of Non-Self-Governing Territories. Conflict over independence erupted during the 1980s, resulting in the 1998 Nouméa Accord, which planned to gradually transfer governing authority and grant the islands more autonomy. The agreement also stipulates that France must conduct a referendum sometime in the next decade to decide whether New Caledonia is able to assume sole governance. The Kanak and Socialist National Liberation Front (*Le Front de libération nationale kanak et socialiste*, FLNKS) continues to push for independence and promote a distinct Kanak identity, including ethnic, cultural, and religious traditions.

Lauren Horn Griffin

See also Cargo Cults; France; Micronesia; Pacific Islands/Oceania; Postcolonialism; Roman Catholicism

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NEW RELIGIONS

The term *new religions*, or new religious movements (NRMs), came into vogue in the latter part of the 20th century among scholars of religion to refer both to the influx of religions that were being brought to the West by immigrant populations and to the wide variety of innovative movements that were becoming increasingly visible and that were frequently being referred to as “cults” or “sects” in popular parlance and the media. No precise definition of either type of new religion is generally accepted, and the term is applied to phenomena that are both questionably new and questionably religious. Religions that are new to a particular society (e.g., Hinduism in North America, Shinto in Brazil, or Zoroastrianism in Europe) may have existed for centuries or even millennia in their countries of origin. ISKCON (the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, commonly referred to as the Hare Krishna) insist that they are not a new religion but trace their origins back to the 16th-century monk Chaitanya Mahaprabhu.

Several groups or movements might deny or be denied the term *religious*. For example, the Science of Creative Intelligence, better known as Transcendental Meditation, or TM, has fought in the courts to be defined as a technique of meditation rather than a religion; the Raelians call themselves an atheistic religion. Such ambiguities make any attempt to enumerate or make generalizations about new religions highly contentious. This entry uses the concept in very general terms to refer to groups that could be described as religious or spiritual, in that they offer some kind of answer to

questions of ultimate concern, and that have at least some recognizably novel features.

Definitions and Classifications

Perhaps the most important point to be made about new religions is that it is impossible to generalize about them. Possibly, the only characteristic that they have in common is that they have been referred to as a new religion, cult, or sect. They differ from each other in their beliefs, practices, lifestyles, organization, finances, leadership, and attitudes toward women and children and in the degree to which they are considered benign or harmful. All religions were of course new at some point, and all those religions that are now considered mainstream or traditional have historically undergone schismatic movements that kept some of their features while introducing others that were different—although those who initiated such movements might claim that they were simply returning to the religion's pure form. New religions have drawn not only from traditional religions but also from a variety of ideologies, philosophies, and psychologies. They include UFO cults, which claim to be in touch with aliens from other planets, and virtual religions that exist only on the Internet. Other movements that can be classified as new religions include Wicca, witchcraft, and the various pagan groups (and solitary practitioners) that have become popular, particularly in the United States and parts of northern Europe. Sometimes associated with such groups, but more often distinguishable from them, are the numerous New Age groups, ranging from spiritual communities such the 1960s founders of Findhorn in the north of Scotland and Esalen at Big Sur in California, to the production of sacred, spiritual, and/or magic objects (e.g., the crystals, angel cards, horoscopes, and runes on offer in specialist bookshops), to the hundreds of practices in which both the committed and the curious partake at places such as Glastonbury (southwest England), Turin (northern Italy), Sedona (Arizona), Santa Fe (New Mexico), or Ojai (California).

Throughout history, there have been waves of new religions, usually at periods of unrest or rapid change, such as economic upheavals, wars, colonization, or natural disasters. Within the past half-millennium of Christendom, for example, such

waves appeared in northern and central Europe in the 1530s and in England between 1620 and 1650 and again around the turn of the 19th century. In America, the Great Awakening of the late 1730s was followed by the Second Great Awakening from 1820 to 1860. According to some, it was the Fourth Great Awakening that began in California in the 1960s; others have referred to the wave of transcendental novelties that swept through most of the industrialized West during the 1960s and 1970s as the new religious consciousness or, at a more cosmic level, the dawn of the Age of Aquarius. The new religions were by no means confined to the West, however. Japan experienced what Neill McFarland called its "Rush Hour of the Gods" after the restrictions imposed during World War II had been lifted, and by 1970, commentators such as Susumu Shimazono were talking about the *new* new religions. Harold Turner estimated that there were 10,000 or more primal new religious movements in Africa by the second half of the 20th century. Journals dedicated to the study of new religions include *Novo Religio* and the *Journal of Contemporary Religion*.

While definitional problems make counting the number of new religions at any one time almost impossible (Should each type of coven be counted as a separate religion, or should they all be lumped together?), it is possible to say that there are several thousand identifiable groups at the present time. One London-based "cult-watching" group, Inform, has information on more than 1,700 groups that could be termed a new religion, well over 800 of which are currently active in the United Kingdom. Several hundreds have been counted in most other European countries and more than 1,000 in North America.

Counting numbers of participants is even more difficult. First, as with the older religions, there can be different levels of membership, ranging from those who do little more than display a friendly interest (and might be double-counted as a member of another religion), to those who belong to a marginal category (e.g., Unificationist "House Church" members or Children of God "Turf Supporters"), to those with further levels of commitment (as with a Christian congregation), increasing as followers approach the inner circle and devote their entire lives to the religion (like monks or nuns). Indeed, although the number of

new religions is large, very few of the movements have more than a few hundred members at any one time. A handful, such as Soka Gakkai International, can claim some million members, but many of the religions have only a few score, and some have only a dozen or so committed followers. Further complications arise from the fact that different religions have different criteria for deciding who is a member and who is not, and many new religions have a very high turnover, but (as with some older religions) the statistics tend to indicate the numbers who join more frequently than they note those who have left.

The high turnover rate has been obscured not only by the movements themselves, which are not anxious to publicize the fact that members can become dissatisfied and leave, but also by the movements' opponents, who frequently resort to the "brainwashing thesis" to explain the, to them, inexplicable conversion of otherwise apparently sane persons—a thesis that was used to justify the illegal practice of "deprogramming," common between the 1970s and early 1990s, in order to "rescue victims" who, it was claimed, were unable to leave of their own accord.

Several attempts have been made to classify new religions, but these rarely do justice to the enormous variety. One of the more successful attempts has been by Roy Wallis, who drew a distinction between what he called "world-rejecting movements" (e.g., the Unification Church or the Children of God in its early days), which typically expect the world to undergo radical change, and world-affirming groups (e.g., the Church of Scientology and various groups belonging to the human potential movement), which accept the values of the wider society and offer individuals (who may be seen as "clients") the means to achieve worldly success—be this in their careers, their relationships, or other aspects of life. Members of Wallis's third type, world-accommodating movements (to which he assigns the Aetherius Society, Subud, and the Charismatic Renewal movement), are fairly content with, or indifferent to, the world as it is. Another typology, proposed by James A. Beckford, is helpful for several purposes, relying as it does not so much on a new religion's ideological attitude toward the world as on the way in which it is inserted into society—as refugees, agents of revitalization, and/or a release.

According to some commentators, one of the defining characteristics of new religions is that a tension exists between them and mainstream society. J. Gordon Melton has argued that the religions have little else in common with each other but more in common with the traditions from which they emerged. Thus, movements such as ISKCON and Ananda Marga share common characteristics with the Hindu tradition, while religions such as The Way International and The Children of God (now known as The Family International) are more recognizably of the Christian tradition.

On the other hand, it can be argued that insofar as new religions *are* new in the sense that they are first-generation movements, they are likely to share some features just because of their newness. First, converts to a religion, be it new or old, tend to be more enthusiastic about their beliefs and practices than those who have been born into a religion. Second, those attracted to a new religion are likely to be atypical of the population as a whole. At certain periods in the past, new religions have appealed to the economically, socially, or politically oppressed. Those attracted to the wave of new religions that became visible in the West during the 1970s and 1980s were, however, drawn disproportionately from young adults from the White middle classes (although there were exceptions, such as the Rastafarians, where the appeal was mainly to young working-class Blacks). Third, new religions are frequently led by a charismatic founder, whose followers may grant him or her authority over a wide spectrum of their lives; he or she is unlikely to be constrained by either rules or tradition and might, therefore, be both unpredictable and unaccountable to anyone (except, perhaps, to God).

A fourth characteristic that is typical of many new religions is that they entertain a relatively dichotomous worldview. In the more obviously religious movements, a sharp distinction is made between what and who are godly and what and who are satanic; a clear moral boundary is drawn between good and bad and between right and wrong; temporally, individuals' past lives fall into the time before and after their conversion, and, for some, the future may be lived with a millennial expectation that the world as we know it will undergo some kind of radical change within their lifetime. Socially (and occasionally geographically)

a strong boundary may be drawn between “us” (members) and “them” (nonmembers), which may entail converts cutting ties with their relatives and former friends.

Fifth, new religions are likely to change more rapidly than older religions. The changes may be an adaptation of the belief system, particularly if it involved apparently refutable prophecies. Purely demographic factors also play a role in the changes. To take one example, the average age of members of The Family (then known as the Children of God) was 23 in the 1970s, most of the converts being around that age, with almost no young or old dependents for whom they had any responsibility. Twenty years later, the average age was still 23, but almost none of the membership was of that age. Instead, there were a large number of children, diverting time and other resources to their needs rather than efforts at proselytizing. The original converts who had stayed with the movement were now considerably more mature, and the founder, David Berg, had died. In fact, by the start of the 21st century the majority of the charismatic leaders of the new religions that had attracted public attention in the 1970s were now dead or no longer wielding the charismatic authority they had once enjoyed. Instead, the authority structures had usually (though not invariably) become more institutionalized and incorporated several “traditions,” thus becoming more accountable and more predictable.

A sixth feature that has been characteristic of many, if not most, new religions is that they have evoked suspicion, fear, and/or antagonism from the host society. This is not altogether surprising as they are offering an alternative set of beliefs and/or practices, and those with a vested interest in the status quo are unlikely to welcome what they can see as disruptive or dangerous elements. Not infrequently, the reactions have been violent: Early Christians were thrown to the lions, Cathars were burned at the stake, Jehovah’s Witnesses were gassed in Auschwitz, and there are still places in the world where members of new religions are attacked and beaten to death, sometimes by the state apparatus and sometimes by vigilante groups. More often, however, when modern states want to control religions, this is done through the passing and application of legislation, one common method being to make it difficult or impossible for new religions to function easily because the necessary

registration requires a given number of members and/or presence in the country for a given number of years. It should, however, be noted that in most democratic countries most new religions can practice their faith without too many problems so long as they do not indulge in criminal activity.

This does not mean that they are welcomed with open arms. Throughout history, groups have emerged with the sole objective of combating both specific new religions and new religions in general. The current wave of what is generically referred to as the anticult movement began in the West in the early 1970s when parents, concerned about their offspring joining new religions (which sometimes involved giving up their education and promising careers and cutting themselves off from relatives and friends), got together to form groups to fight the movements (which were often referred to as destructive cults), to warn others of their actual or potential harm, and to lobby for legislation to control or ban the movements. The events in Jonestown, Guyana, in 1978, when more than 900 members of the Peoples Temple, including more than 200 children, committed suicide or were murdered resulted in public horror and outrage and raised the profile of the anticult movement, as did subsequent tragedies such as those associated with the storming of the Branch Davidian compound by the FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation) at Waco, Texas, in 1993; the suicides and murders of the Solar Temple in Canada, Switzerland, and France in the mid-1990s; the releasing of toxic sarin gas in the Tokyo underground by Aum Shinrikyô in 1995; the suicides of Heaven’s Gate in San Diego in 1997; the burning and other murders of members of the Movement for the Restoration of the 10 Commandments of God in Uganda in 2000; and al Qaeda’s attack on the U.S. Pentagon and New York’s World Trade Center on September 11, 2001.

Terrible though such tragedies are, it should be recognized that such well-publicized atrocities are committed only by a tiny minority of the new religions, most of which indulge in neither more nor less criminal activity than adherents of older religions or those with no religion. It should also be recognized that visibility is not the same as typicality: A criminal act is far more likely to be reported in the media if it involves a member of a new religion than if it involves, for example, a Catholic or Presbyterian (and if Catholics’ or Presbyterians’

crimes are reported, the culprit's religion is very unlikely to be mentioned). Furthermore, attacks that have been carried out *against* new religions have not received similar coverage in the media—few remember the 1976 bombing of the Unification Headquarters in Paris, which caused severe injuries to a young woman, or the bombing of the ISKCON temple in Manipur in 2005, resulting in the death of at least five devotees. At the same time, the “good” actions of members of new religions are rarely reported (yet many of them are engaged in charitable work), or, if they are reported, they are interpreted as being a ploy to gain social status or new converts—which may, of course, be one of the motives. Nonetheless, it might be mentioned that, for example, ISKCON has provided food for thousands of hungry people in parts of the world where other aid workers have been afraid to venture, and the Family International distributes food, clothing, and medical supplies to impoverished inhabitants in the Black townships of South Africa as well as conducting literacy programs and imparting education about HIV/AIDS.

Conclusion

None of this is to suggest that new religions do not give rise to genuine problems or that the controversies can be dismissed lightly. They undoubtedly do present both individuals and societies with some very real challenges. What a study of the history of the “cult wars” indicates, however, is that it can be counterproductive to generalize about the movements, each of which has to be studied carefully as a discrete entity that can itself differ according to both the time and the place in which it is functioning.

Eileen Barker

See also Branch Davidians; Global Religion; Hare Krishna (International Society for Krishna Consciousness); Millenarian Movements; Multiculturalism; Neo-Pagan Movement; Neo-Shamanisms; Neo-Sufism (Sufi Renewal); New Religions in Africa; New Religions in Cuba; New Religions in Japan; New Religions in South America; New Religions in the United States; Radhasoami; Scientology; Syncretism; 3HO (Sikh Dharma Fellowship); Unification Church

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NEW RELIGIONS IN AFRICA

The continent of Africa, covering about 30 million square kilometers, comprising at least 50 countries

with more than 800 million people, is characterized by complex historical, cultural, religious, social, and linguistic affinities and diversities, some of which have given rise to new religious expressions. The innumerable ethnic social groups have cultures, each different from the other, that together represent the mosaic of African cultural diversity and lead to religious vitality and new forms of revitalization, especially in sub-Saharan Africa.

African religions comprise the indigenous religions of various African societies that share common affinities in their religious ideas, rituals, and worldviews. The emergence and expansion of Islam, Christianity, and Eastern- and Western-related spiritualities saw the introduction of new religious ideas and practices into indigenous religions. The encounter transformed indigenous religious thought and practice but did not supplant them; indigenous religions preserved some beliefs and rituals but also adjusted to the new sociocultural milieu. Owing to social changes, aspects of indigenous beliefs and rituals were abandoned, transformed, or reinvented with the incorporation of elements from European, Arab, and Asian cultures and religions. The change also led to the revivification of other aspects of the indigenous religions and cultures. In many cases, Islam and Christianity became domesticated on African soil. The contact produced new religions, with some appropriating indigenous symbols and giving them a new twist.

The sustained mutual influence of and interaction between the various religions that characterize the religious landscape of Africa have produced new religious constellations that continue to attract scholars, policy makers, and media and public attention. The interface of religious cultures of sub-Saharan Africa with globalization needs to be located against the backdrop of the interlocking relationships and mutual enhancement of the various old and new religions rather than in any unilateral perspective. Some new movements have appropriated symbols and employed religious imagery from one or the other religious tradition, giving them a novel interpretation and producing a new kind of religious creativity. These religious formations are hardly to be considered as new in terms of any novelty of their ideologies or the originality of their beliefs, practices, polity, and ethos. Rather, they are groups whose emergence is

historically unprecedented in the specific local contexts where they have emerged and are thriving. “New religions” refers to nonmainstream religions within the African context, although some have experienced vertical-horizontal growths and increasing institutionalization, and take on public roles that ensure their visibility and social relevance.

Historical Context

The historiography of new religions in Africa spans the colonial era, particularly from the early 20th century to the contemporary period. The nexus between globalization, religion, and culture in sub-Saharan Africa can partly be understood in terms of the legacy of colonial conquest and occupation, neocolonialism, and the introduction of Arab Islam and European Christianity. The period in which virtually all African societies were subjugated under colonialism coincided with when the indigenous religions (re)encountered Christianity, Islam, and Eastern- and Western-related spiritualities in a much more dynamic way. While some new religions were indigenous and homespun, others grew out of external stimuli and influence from outside Africa. Although Islam and Christianity were introduced to various parts of Africa much earlier, it was from the colonial historical phase that there emerged renewed religious encounters, interactions, and competition.

Religion is quintessential to our understanding of African cultures in a global context. A proper grasp of the texture, shape, and complexity of the different religious traditions improves our understanding of Africa and its religious culture in conditions of globality. It also points to the significance of religion in contextualizing Africa in the framework of ongoing globalization processes. Contemporary “African religion” is itself a product of globalization. Jacob Olupona (2003) notes that African religion is

less a single tradition than a sociological context in which the elements of a variety of indigenous religious experiences are combined with Islam and Christianity. All three of these dimensions—indigenous religion, Africanized Islam, and Africanized Christianity—are part of the interactive, globalized, African religious experience. (p. 78)

These initiatives attest to the continuity of African worldviews and ritual cosmos in the midst of worldwide sociocultural change.

The interconnectedness between globalization and the religious cultures of sub-Saharan Africa is marked by how new religions in Africa influence globalization and respond to the challenges and opportunities that the globalization process presents. On the one hand, African religions are integral to the processes of globalization. They also assess the impact of globalization and global change on their *modus operandi*, religious praxis, and cosmologies; but at the same time, they avail themselves of the opportunity for self-repositioning within the global religious scene. Olupona (2003) notes that African traditions and cultural values have been significantly affected by globalization but that “at the same time African traditionalism retains a resiliency and adaptability that enables it to maintain cohesion both in non-Western environments and in the context of faiths such as Christianity and Islam” (p. 79). Thus, African new religions within the threshold of globality and globalization are characterized by their negotiation between continuity, change, and transformation.

The *raison d'être*, motivations, and *modus operandi* of these new religions are as diverse as the movements themselves. While it is difficult to generalize as to *why* these new religions are emerging, any attempt to understand this religious development must take cognizance of *how* and *where* they are emerging in different historical epochs. Local and global considerations are integral to these processes. A multiplicity of factors is adduced to explain the emergence of new religions in Africa. Certain factors may be more prominent than others depending on the specific context, and the remote and immediate circumstances surrounding their emergence and expansion.

An understanding of the complex identities of new religions is central to any definition and description of their growth locally and globally. It is within this context of globalization that questions about the *why* and *how* of new religions' expansion and success have become intriguing. New religions have been defined from a variety of perspectives. The collective identities of new religions also derive from each group's self-identity. Social science approaches to new religions investigate how they respond to change. To account for

the emergence and spread of new religions in Africa, some sociologists concentrate on the role of deprivation and anomie as causes of growth. New religions in Africa were largely described as an urban phenomenon—the religion of the poor, the masses, the disenfranchised, and displaced persons. Such interpretations undercut the dimensions of new religious cultures. The narrow emphasis on the *why* of conversion and recruitment undermines *how* new religions negotiate or transform the cultures into which they are introduced.

Religious fervor, charismatic vision, religious expansion and innovation, cultural renaissance, economic empowerment, personality clashes, land dispute, and social and religious protest, combined with the desire for religious and political self-determination, have inspired a variety of new religions throughout Africa. Some scholars regard the new religions that emerged during the colonial era in Africa as manifestations of social or religious protest—by-products of the struggle for political self-determination and the establishment of independent nation-states. Independent or indigenous churches, such as the Ethiopian, Zionist, Aladura, Spiritualist, prophetic, and Kimbanguist movements, that emerged and proliferated in various regions of sub-Saharan Africa in the wake of European colonialism were interpreted as one response of Africans to the loss of cultural, economic, and political control. Some of these arose in reaction to European Christianity and played a significant role in the postcolonial struggle for independence. The political factor in terms of social or religious protest hardly does justice to the complex phenomenon. The resilience of the earlier indigenous churches several decades following the independence of African societies makes this explanation tenuous. Similar movements continue to emerge that can rarely be linked to any forms of social or religious protest. As new movements of this kind are very diverse and found in different parts of Africa, any causative explanation must take into consideration the internal religious dynamic, characteristics, and peculiarities of a specific new religion and their articulation within the external social processes, conditions, and circumstances of globalization. The rich, local varieties, manifestations, expressions, and experiences of new religions in Africa shed significant light on their consideration as a global phenomenon. The

next section of this entry draws, very briefly, on concrete examples of these new religious developments within the indigenous religions, particularly highlighting their responses to social change and their interplay with the globalization process.

Indigenous Religions

The historical and cultural significance of indigenous African religious traditions is partly discerned in their plurality and multivocality both in Africa and the African diaspora. In various parts of Africa, the indigenous religions have encountered other religious forms and responded to social change, leading to revitalization of indigenous religions and in some contexts synthesis, reinvention, and change.

The Afrikania Mission, also known as the Afrikan Renaissance Mission or Sankofa Faith, marks one striking example of this tendency toward indigenous religious revival. Founded in Ghana in 1982 by Rev. Dr. Osofo-Okomfo Kwabena Damuah, a Ghanaian theologian and former ordained priest of the Roman Catholic Church of Ghana, Afrikania took a reformist stance toward the traditional religion, setting for itself the task of redefining, reforming, and renaming the religion of Africa. Quite unequivocally, the group disavows any claim of Afrikania as a new concept and asserts that it is the rebirth, revival, and reorganization of the African traditional religion. Such a religious innovation, with its teaching and modus operandi, was meant as a critique of Christianity and other religious forms considered as external to African sensibilities but that were also inherently intolerant. Afrikania indicts slavery and colonization for the loss of African traditional spirituality and criticizes government, foreign diplomatic missions, and nongovernmental organizations for corrupting and demonizing traditional values and imposing foreign religious beliefs. Nevertheless, the Catholic background of its founder seems to leave significant Christian imprints in Afrikania's belief and ritual systems, thus producing a religious synthesis. The attempt to rebrand or reposition indigenous African religious traditions has also resulted in the tendency to universalize, canonize, and institutionalize them.

The Mungiki, a movement outlawed by the Kenyan government in 2002, was cofounded in

1987 by Ibrahim Wairunge (a secondary school leaver) with six other young people. Mungiki's ideology was particularly attractive to Kenyan youths and students, and also the poor and the unemployed within the society. Beyond Mungiki's self-description as a religious movement, public perception varies in considering the group as a political movement. One account suggests that the initial Mungiki members were followers of The Tent of the Living God, another new religion founded by Ngonywa wa Gakonya in Kenya. Raised as a Christian, in later life, Wa Gakonya began to question the Christian faith as professed by his parents. He was intensely involved in sensitizing people about African religious beliefs through public campaigns. He was banned by the Kenyan government under Arap Moi in 1990, arrested, and imprisoned. The Tent of the Living God eventually disintegrated, with some members forming a splinter movement, the Mungiki. Mungiki and the Tent of the Living God share a similarity in that they emerged owing to a feeling of alienation from the dominant religions in Kenya (Christianity and Islam) and an attempt to seek religious "truth" in African religious heritage. Mungiki's religious and ideological roots are also traceable to Mau Mau as a result of the distinctive nature of their political engagement and resistance. A strong desire for the resurgence of indigenous religions and cultures becomes a striking commonality between Mungiki and Mau Mau.

The Mungiki aimed to "redeem the *Gikuyu* (Kenyans) from Western culture; to unite the Gikuyu people, and consequently, other Kenyans to fight against both 'mental' and 'political' oppression." This political, religious, and cultural liberation was pitched against both colonial and contemporary governments in Kenya. The Mungiki movement attributes the enormous crisis and ills of the Kenyan society to the political apparatus and to the erosion of indigenous values. It demonstrates with optimism that a return to indigenous culture and religion will result in the restoration of indigenous values. To facilitate the restoration of indigenous values, *Kirira*, the teaching of African indigenous values, must occur, which will lead to *guthera*, a cleansing ritual where foreign cultures and faiths are denounced through traditional rites. Mungiki vehemently rejected Christianity and Islam until September 2000, when 13 leaders publicly announced their conversion to

Islam, claiming that this would aid their fight against corruption, bad governance, poverty, immorality, and diseases in Kenya. This deflection to Islam represents a transition from a local, marginalized religious movement to a global one.

Mungiki members remained critical of successive Kenyan governments despite the alleged connections made between their activities and the ruling elite/Kenyan government. The popular understanding of Mungiki's involvement in the electoral violence of the 1997 general elections in Kenya explains the public negative image about them. The movement's emergent history and development is one characterized by incessant persecution and intimidation, with members of the group often being jailed or murdered in extrajudicial killings by the police. Their activities, mostly considered as subversive by Kenyan security agencies, attracted reprehension, leading to their eventual proscription in 2002. The government responses had been criticized in some circles as a breach of the right to freedom of religion and as gross human rights abuses.

Not all neo-traditional movements in Africa have political overtones as the examples above may suggest. There are examples of new religious creativities that are less controversial, whose activities are less prone to conflict and public criticisms. With the growing revitalization and internationalization of indigenous religions, many sub-Saharan Africans are beginning to appreciate their "indigenous" religions. Indigenous peoples have experienced something of a religious revival and have become concerned with the preservation of their cultural and religious heritage. Communal rituals, ceremonies, and festivals in commemoration of specific local divinities are becoming internationalized. The annual Osun-Oshogbo festival for the Yoruba divinity Osun has become an international event and attracts devotees and tourists from all parts of the world. This ritual has thus been transformed from an ethnic-based one to one with an international audience and participation.

African-Derived Religions in the Diaspora

The global dimension of indigenous African religions is manifest in varied forms, being introduced to new geo-cultural contexts through

migration, tourism, and new communication technologies. The African diaspora influences cultures in Brazil, Cuba, and Haiti, partly leading to the development of African-derived religions such as the Santería, Candomblé, Vodou, and Yoruba-Orisa traditions across the Americas. In 1981, an Act of Parliament in Trinidad and Tobago raised the Yoruba religion to the status of an official religion. In contemporary Cuba, Orisa veneration exists as part of a larger continuum of religious change in the Americas, in which religious practices, now known as Santería but also referred to as Lukumí and Regla De Ocha, have transformed the shape of Orisa veneration outside West Africa.

These religious forms are proliferating in the diasporic context, with their practitioners and clientele widening ethnically and racially. The 20th- and 21st-century proliferation of groups of Orisa practitioners outside West Africa continues to attract millions of adherents of Yoruba and Santería religious practices. Ifa priests and devotees now include Yoruba, Africans, African Americans, and non-Africans alike. As Patrick Bellegarde-Smith points out, the growing presence of Western adepts indicates that African-derived religions have entered a new phase in their evolving tradition. Santería practitioners—some claiming Hispanic roots, others claiming Afro-Cuban national identities, and still others claiming American or African heritage—are active participants in the production of Yoruba-based practices in America. The growth of indigenous African religions in the United States and Europe has been characterized by the proliferation of virtual-based religiosity in which most Orisa and Ifa priests exist, operate, and communicate through their Internet websites with old and new clientele as well as with the wider public.

With the proliferation of indigenous religious forms in Africa and the African diaspora, Africa has become fully part of a global cosmos in religious terms. The character of African religions in conditions of globality will continue to be determined and shaped by how and to what extent they negotiate continuity, identity, and change. A consideration of religious development in Africa must be seen in terms of its relation and links with the global context and also in how and to what extent it interrogates and negotiates

wider external influences and global forces. In addition, the ways in which African diasporic religions are contributing to the enrichment and pluralization of new geo-cultural and religious spaces become more and more significant. The diaspora setting provides a new space for the contestation, reinvention, and shaping of these indigenous religious ethos, polity, rituals, and worldviews in the face of globality.

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See also Africa; Global Religion; Indigenous Religions; New Religions; Postcolonialism; Syncretism

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NEW RELIGIONS IN CUBA

Some religious traditions in the Caribbean island nation of Cuba could be considered “new” as they have not long been present on the island, even though most have been practiced in other locations of the Americas. For example, the Assemblies of God currently have congregations in Cuba but were not part of the island’s religious landscape earlier. Though not new in Cuba either, the Jehovah’s Witnesses are currently more visible in urban centers, among tourists if not island inhabitants. That these two traditions are now observable in the nation is a new phenomenon, and they are joined by distinctively Cuban religious practices in the novel situation of visibility. Indeed, the two observable practices as well as the distinct Cuban religious traditions have had global representation for some time. But the island’s open tolerance and recognition of Cuban religions is a new state of affairs, in sharp contrast to the clandestine existence imposed on these distinctive customs over the course of the four previous centuries. Consequently, a discussion of “new religions” in Cuba will necessarily center on what is new for religions “in” Cuba: public recognition and tolerance toward distinctively Cuban religious traditions that have been exported and practiced across the globe. This entry focuses on Cuba’s distinctive religions and their changed situation within the nation.

Cuba’s Religious Traditions

There are five to seven religious practices with origins in the history of the island but that are currently experiencing a new openness toward their sacred customs. The traditions are Palo Monte/Mayombe, Regla de Ocha/Lukumí, Arrara, Vodou, Abakuá, Espiritismo, and maybe Muertéra Bembé de Sao. Muertéra is questionable because it has yet to be confirmed as a religious practice that has history and ritual practices embedded in Cuba and separate from the others. Similarly, Abakuá should not be considered a religion because it is a secret and exclusively male fraternal organization, although it possesses rituals that come from one or more of the other practices and is particular to Cuba. For more than four centuries, all of these

distinct practices were subjected to police harassment of ritual activities, persecution of their priest leaders, denial of public expression of sacred symbols, members' denial of their practice, and communities holding clandestine meetings. The intensity of official ridicule and persecution varied with sociopolitical events and with the historical time period. However, at times, practitioners could be incarcerated for their religious activities.

During Cuba's long colonial period (1500s to 1898), the Catholic clergy disdained and forbade practice of the island's unique religions. The Church's four-century opposition was mostly because nearly all of the religions were either Africa based in ethos and cosmic orientation or distinguished by their close relationship to these two aspects. Both the Catholic Church and Cuban official authorities saw no value in the unique religions but deemed them idolatrous, fetishist, or even demonic. No small part of the antagonism was based on the fact that rather than convert to Catholicism, the vast number of enslaved Africans and their descendants continued to adhere to their adapted customs. Even as Catholicism became firmly entrenched in Cuba's sociopolitical reality, the African descendant population, as well as some Black and White Cuban-born *criollos*, continued to revere the Africa-related traditions. When these practices began to reflect incorporations from Catholicism, clergy officials still saw no legitimacy in the distinct Cuban creations and continued to support social controls that greatly discriminated against practitioners and their sacred ways of life.

As the island's several republics moved from the colonial roots into the 20th century, disdainful and suspicious attitudes, harsh discrimination, and severe social oppression were the norm for the religions. The story is told that the future band-leader Desi Arnaz's father, mayor of Santiago de Cuba at the time, banned his son from attending the city's drumming events associated with these religions. But the prohibition was unsuccessful, for in the 1940s and 1950s, Arnaz would become internationally famous for his Cuban-derived singing and drumming. The negative attitudes and restrictions were pervasive and continued into the early 1980s, with a social norm of public attitudes that neither accepted nor allowed public visibility of Cuba's distinct religious customs. By the 1980s, changes in attitudes toward the practices took a

positive turn, changes significant enough to call the national atmosphere one of "newness" for religious believers in Cuba.

The 1959 success of the Cuban Revolution did not automatically usher in religious freedom, nor did it immediately lead to religious persecution. Early in the 1960s, a failed invasion attempt by U.S.-trained military forces included religious leaders and literature that implied that the armed mission had a religious, specifically Christian evangelist agenda. This was a catalyst for citizens who supported the revolution and their new government to implement informal and formal social controls against all counterrevolutionists, including religious leaders and practitioners of a variety of belief traditions. Citizens took informal action against religious buildings, particularly churches, and the new government became repressive toward religious believers and practitioners. Religious leaders of all categories were arrested and put in "reeducation" camps, even when they or their tradition had not necessarily been part of counterrevolutionary activities. The formal national policy was stated as intending to avoid spontaneous citizen outbursts against religious structures and persons; the government also implemented procedures whereby neighborhood members could vote and petition to open a church building. The assumption was that by such a collective decision destruction of public property would cease.

The new community-based policy did not apply, however, to the sacred spaces and activities of Cuba's distinctive religions. The police continued to raid ritual sessions of these six or seven island traditions, and practitioners were officially and unofficially subjected to scorn, ridicule, and persecution. Official policy also prohibited acknowledged religious believers from being employed in several job categories, even if they had otherwise superior qualifications. The situation did not degenerate, but it also did not improve until the organization COEBAC (Co-ordination of Baptist Workers and Students in Cuba) began Christian theological studies guided by external ideas, ideas outside the boundaries of western provinces' denominational seminaries. The doctrinal explorations expanded the group's understanding of Christianity and what it meant to practice their faith. Leaders of COEBAC were particularly

inspired by the life and teachings of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and they led the way for other groups of believers.

The organization worked collaboratively with other like-minded religious groups, took action to be more visible contributors to building their socialist society, began to challenge state prohibitions against religious believers, and engaged in dialogue with national and international thinkers open to such conversations. This series of actions opened a social space for many Cuban Christians but did not necessarily provide openness for practitioners of distinctive Cuban religions. Part of the change to full religious inclusion came from the Cuban government's observations of Liberation Theology and religious leaders' participation in the political struggles of Central and South America. Changes on the island were also due to the success of COEBAC in its dialogues with theological groups from those locations, as well as with its "Marxist Christian" Symposia with the Black Theology Project in the United States.

Several congregations of COEBAC had already begun conversations with leaders from Cuba's distinctive religions, but it was the 1984 visit between President Fidel Castro and the U.S. presidential candidate Rev. Jesse Jackson that was the catalyst to open a national review of governmental policy against the social inclusion of all religious practitioners. The two public figures attended a memorial service in a Havana church for Martin Luther King Jr. This historic meeting opened televised dialogues with governmental officials to reconfigure national policies about religion in Cuban society. Both groups in the televised events advocated more socially inclusive participation by religious practitioners of all belief systems. By the fourth meeting of the Cuban Communist Party, the constitution was changed, and in 1991, a religious minister was elected to the Cuban National Assembly. In 2000, the Cuban Institute of Philosophy released a volume that compared the ethical foundations for one of the country's distinct religious traditions and found compatibility with many of the socialist government's core values. Similarly, a large Yoruba temple in the center of Havana was opened in a renovated building with governmental approval. This temple is also part of a distinctly Cuban religion.

Implications

Of the six or so distinct religious practice systems in Cuba, only one or two have officially reached national recognition and visibility, yet the very existence of this status for Cuban religions is at least as significant as the presence of religions that have more recently become established on the island. Equally significant is the global potential for Cuban traditions, given the new societal openness. These religions have always had communities of practitioners in locations such as the United States, France, Japan, Argentina, Germany, Spain, and Italy, though their representatives have had difficulty renewing spiritual connections in Cuba. Communications were not reliable, and visits did not always allow sufficient time for successful spiritual work. Nevertheless, practitioners and communities of practitioners from outside Cuba have continued to maintain their religious commitment, and now that some barriers to open acceptance have been removed, the number of pilgrimages to the island are bound to increase.

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See also Cuba; New Religions; New Religions in Africa; New Religions in South America; Santería; Syncretism; Vodou

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NEW RELIGIONS IN JAPAN

The new religions of Japan are called *shin shūkyō* or *shinkō shūkyō* by most Japanese scholars. *Shin shūkyō* means "new religion," and *shinkō shūkyō* means "newly arisen religion." The former is usually regarded as a more value-free expression and is preferred in academic circles. *Shin shūkyō* include a variety of newly established religious groups in modern Japan. It has been estimated that some 10% of the Japanese population currently have some degree of adherence to or membership in *shin shūkyō*. This entry reviews the development, history, and chief characteristics of the modern new religions.

Shin shūkyō are often contrasted with what are called “established religions,” namely, the various preexisting, traditional sects of Buddhism and shrine Shinto. Although *shin shūkyō* possess deep connections with the established religions in terms of teachings and rituals, they present new features in terms of the ways in which they respond to the lifestyle changes that have resulted from factors such as urbanization and industrialization, the growth of knowledge with the spread of secondary and higher education, and other changes in modern Japanese social life. *Shin shūkyō* are also distinguished from small local groups of people with no particular mutual connection among themselves who visit shamans to ask for healing or counseling. Although such shamans are sometimes charismatic, similar to leaders of *shin shūkyō*, they do not establish continuing relationships with their clients. These groups rarely develop into successively larger entities that might be categorized as *shin shūkyō*.

Shin shūkyō can in a sense be seen as a kind of innovation on the established religions of premodern Japan, or as a more developed form of groups based on folk religious beliefs, that emerged in the course of modernization. As such, it might be more appropriate to call them “modern new religions.”

Modern new religions can be divided into two main groups, depending on whether their origins lay in Shinto or Buddhism. Very few new groups are of Christian origin; those that exist are quite small in scale. Modern new religions of Shinto origin include Tenrikyō (established in 1838), Konkōkyō (1859), Seichō no Ie (1930), Sekai Kyūseikyō (1935), Tenshō Kōtaijūngyūkyō (1945), Sekai Mahikari Bunmeikyōdan (1959), and Sūkyō Mahikari (1978). Modern new religions of Buddhist origin include Nenpō Shinkyō (1928), Gedatsukai (1929), Reiyūkai (1930), Soka Gakkai (1930), Shinnyoen (1936), Rissho Koseikai (1938), Myōchikai (1950), Bentenshū (1952), and Agonshū (1954). Based on a comparison of memberships, groups of Buddhist origin have more members than groups of Shinto origin. Both categories, however, are roughly equal in terms of the total number of groups involved.

Modern new religions started to make their appearance in Japan in the first half of the 19th century. This was deeply connected to the modernization process in many respects. During the Edo period, which lasted for almost 270 years, few changes could be seen among both institutionalized

religions and folk religious beliefs. This was mainly due to the strict religious policies of the Tokugawa government, which ruled throughout that period. The government established the *danka*, or Buddhist parishioner, system in the first half of the 17th century as a means of blocking Christian influences. Under it, almost all Japanese had to belong to one or another of the Buddhist sects and were unable to change their affiliation on their own accord. In the Meiji period (1868–1912), however, the new government enacted policies that made it possible to establish new movements, albeit with several strict conditions. Social changes during those years and beyond also helped spur the birth and growth of new movements. The decline of the farming population and an increase in the industry workforce, the transfer of population from rural to urban areas, and the spread of the educational system all proved beneficial to the activities of the modern new religions.

The modern new religions began to make their appearance in the latter half of the 19th century. The conditions for these new groups to win official approval were quite strict in prewar Japan; they became relatively looser after 1945, mainly because of the new principles of religious freedom and separation between religion and state prescribed in the new constitution. Since 1945, modern new religions have been granted the same legal protections that were awarded to the traditional religions. The government was most generous in granting legal approvals to the new groups in the early years after the defeat in World War II. Conditions gradually became stricter thereafter and have become considerably so since the sarin gas attack on the Tokyo subway in March 1995 by the group Aum Shinrikyō, owing to harsh criticisms after the attack claiming that the government’s too ready approval of new groups had led to the appearance of “dangerous cults” such as Aum Shinrikyō.

Several thousand such groups have been established over the decades, and while many have died out, some have grown into much larger organizations. Several hundred new religions are thought to be active at present (2010). The largest of the groups—those with memberships in excess of 1 million—include Sōka Gakkai, Risshō Kōseikai, Reiyūkai, Shinnyoen, and Tenrikyō. Sōka Gakkai is especially large, with some 4 million

active members. Groups with memberships in the hundreds of thousands include Sekai Kyūseikyō (Church of World Messianity), Perfect Liberty, Bussho Gonenkai, Sūkyō Mahikari, Myōchikai, Seichō no Ie, and Ennōkyō. Many smaller groups also exist, each with memberships between several hundred and several thousand.

Chief Characteristics of Modern New Religions

Modern new religions are chiefly distinguished from traditional religions by the strong trust members place in the group founders, the development of teachings intelligible to lay people, and the groups' utilization of active proselytizing methods.

On the first point, the founders of modern new religions are mostly individuals—both men and women—from lay rather than clerical backgrounds. Most founders expounded their teachings using the ordinary vernacular; this accessibility of thought has helped them attract large numbers of followers in relatively short periods of time. Followers obey the founder's directions during life, and frequently, they treat deceased founders as deities or buddhas. Furthermore, a large number of women have acted as founders or are currently leaders of these new groups. The most famous female founders include Nakayama Miki of Tenrikyō, Deguchi Nao of Ōmoto, Fukada Chiyoko of Ennōkyō, and Kitamura Sayo of Tenshō Kōtai Jingukyō. In a number of cases, a man and a woman have jointly founded a group. The relationships between these pairs have varied; among others, they include a wife and husband (Shinnyoen, Kōdōkyōdan), a woman and her son-in-law (Ōmoto), and a man and his brother's wife (Reiyūkai).

As to the second point, the teachings of the modern new religions are considerably simpler than those of the traditional Buddhist sects. This is closely connected with the fact that most of the founders are laypersons. For example, Nakayama Miki, Deguchi Nao, Fukada Chiyoko, and Kitamura Sayo were ordinary housewives before they had their special religious experiences. Similarly, Konkō Daijin of Konkōkyō was a farmer, Makiguchi Tsunesaburo of Sōka Gakkai was the principal of a primary school, Taniguchi Masaharu of Seichō no Ie was a clerk, and Okada Mokichi of Sekaikyūseikyō was a merchant.

These founders tended to explain their teachings by stressing morals and ethics directly related to daily life. The content, though, was mostly based on traditional Buddhist sutras or ideas from Shinto mythology. People who are not members of these groups often see their teachings as new and strange because of their unique interpretations of the sutras, Japanese mythology, and folk beliefs. Many of the modern new religions of Buddhist origin have connections with the traditional Nichiren sect and rely on the Lotus Sutra. Most of the rest have connections with esoteric Buddhist sects, while a small minority derive in some way from the Pure Land or Zen sects.

Groups of Shinto origin were frequently established by founders who experienced a specific religious conversion, sometimes accompanied by an experience of so-called divine possession. The objects of worship for these groups are various deities, who usually have been given unique names by the groups based on the polytheistic tradition of Shinto.

While priests of traditional religions tended to deal mostly with rituals, the leaders and teachers of the modern new religions usually tried to heal diseases and resolve various psychological troubles and conflicts among the people. They explained the meaning of events in life to those who were in distress. Their talks were relatively simple and effective for those who wanted mental or spiritual release, and accordingly, they appear to have been easily understood by their listeners.

The third point is quite an important one, especially in light of the rapid growth of some organizations. Traditional religions maintained their organizations based on both regional and kindred ties. During the Edo period, people were not free to move from the land where they were born, and population mobility was quite low. Shrine Shinto and Buddhist sects depended on these fixed human relationships. Even if Buddhist monks were not eager to instruct the people, the parishioners could not change temples.

However, population mobility rapidly increased with Japan's entry into its modern age in the Meiji period. The modern new religions were equipped to respond to this new social condition because the principle of their organization was basically separate from regional ties and sometimes even from kindred relations. They formed a kind of voluntary association based on the same belief.

It should be also noted that in the 1960s, the bigger organizations adopted two networking systems for their members, known as the “vertical line” and the “horizontal line.” The vertical line refers to networks based on the relationship between those who led others to a belief and those who were lead. The horizontal line refers to networks constructed based on regional unit. Followers were thus bound to their group by dual connections.

Development of Modern New Religions and Their Social Activities

Among the various changes that have occurred in Japanese society since the mid-19th century, the two biggest events that influenced every aspect of social life were the Meiji Restoration in the latter half of the 19th century and the changes in the national polity resulting from defeat in World War II. These two events influenced the development and social activities of modern new religions—whose responses to these social changes, it should be noted, were much more flexible than those of the traditional religions as a whole.

Modern new religions experienced varied treatment under prewar Japanese law. Some groups such as Kurozumikyō, Tenrikyō, and Konkōkyō were able to become independent Shinto denominations, and others found approval as branch churches of officially authorized Shinto denominations such as Ontakekyō, Shintō Honkyoku, and Shintō Shūseiha. Some Buddhist groups likewise were legally recognized as branch churches of Buddhist denominations including the Shingon and Tendai sects. Most other groups, however, including Seichō no Ie and Reiyūkai, were considered “quasi-religious,” and while they were permitted to engage in proselytization, they did not receive preferential tax treatment such as that given to recognized religious groups. Too much stress placed on faith healing or political statements, moreover, would result in oppressive treatment from the government.

The total number of modern new religions rose with the appearance of more groups in the 1930s. However, as Japan rapidly turned into a military state in the 1930s, control of religions became more severe. Some modern new religions were repressed by the government. The most famous examples were the Ōmoto incidents in 1921 and 1935, which saw Deguchi Onisaburō and pivotal

members arrested and Ōmoto’s activities halted. Miki Tokuharu of Hitonomichi Kyōdan was also arrested in 1936 along with his son.

The modern new religions gained an advantage through their missionary activities from the social changes that occurred after World War II. It became quite easy for even relatively small groups to register as independent organizations under the Religious Corporations Ordinance in 1945 and Religious Corporations Law in 1951. More than 100 new groups were registered in the immediate postwar period. However, since most had engaged in religious activities even before the end of the war, it might be more appropriate to say that the postwar legal changes resulted in a rapid increase of the number of *registered* religious groups just after the war.

Viewed overall, the activities of modern new religions have become more influential socially in the atmosphere of postwar Japan. Some have branched out into education, establishing junior high schools, high schools, and colleges. Others have established hospitals, and still more are promoting peace movements in cooperation with the traditional religions.

It has often been said that the three main reasons why people joined modern new religions during the immediate postwar period were poverty, disease, and conflicts in human relationships. Sociologically speaking, such explanations are appropriate to some degree because many modern new religions actually insisted that people could solve such troubles and problems if they followed the teachings and practices of the group.

Around the middle of the 1970s, Japan confronted a kind of social change unprecedented in its history. The goal of achieving a relatively affluent society had been achieved, and consequently, the sense of direction that had guided the nation had been lost. As a consequence, people began to put greater emphasis on seeking spiritual or mental satisfaction than on material wealth. Reflecting this change, more people came to join modern new religions in order to solve their psychological and spiritual problems. Conversely, the percentage of people who joined them in the hope of improving their economic condition fell considerably. Moreover, an increasing number of people rejected partaking in collective activities with other members in a religious group. They tended to prefer personal guidance rather than guidance through small-group counseling.

Few large organizations have formed since the 1970s. *Sōka Gakkai* and *Risshō Kōseikai* seem to have experienced slight declines in their membership. An exception is *Shinnyoen*, which has seen a large increase in its membership since the 1970s. The activities of small religious groups came to draw more attention from scholars and journalists.

At the same time, modern new religions have come to be a stable presence in the society. While strong negative attitudes toward them remain to some degree in Japanese society, they have also gained to a degree their “civil rights” in society, so to speak.

In March 1995, core members of *Aum Shinrikyō* (presently *Aleph*) carried out an attack using sarin nerve gas on the Tokyo subway. This incident has led to strong social distrust of new religious movements as well as religion as a whole. Use of the term *cult* spread immediately, not as a sociological term related to the “church, sect, and cult” typology but rather in the sense of dangerous religious movements led by suspicious leaders. Wary attitudes toward religious organizations increased, especially among the younger generation.

New Types of Groups: The “Hyper Religions”

Globalization and the spread and impact of information technology progressed rapidly in the last quarter of the 20th century. The resulting social changes have promoted the formation of new types of religious groups that differ from the modern new religions. These groups have been termed “hyper religions” and seem to have begun appearing since around the 1970s.

Hyper religions have little connection with the traditional religions in Japan in terms of their teachings and rituals. They are characterized instead by their tendency to freely adapt in various ways from teachings and rituals that are not common in Japan. They also are often forthright about incorporating nonreligious elements, including scientific concepts.

The condition that led to the appearance of hyper religions may be supposed to have been a change in people’s consciousness of religious matters. That is, the objects of concern for religious thought, rituals, and religious practices have become borderless. It has become quite easy to come into contact with various kinds of religious

information in daily life thanks to advances in information technology. Contact with foreign religious cultures also increased significantly as a result of the progress of globalization. Meanwhile, the influence of the traditional religious culture in their mother country has been declining. People have become more indifferent toward whether or not a religious group is associated with traditional religion when they accept its ideas, teachings, and rituals. Similar changes have been observed with respect to folk religion, and this tendency seems to be more apparent among the younger generation.

Conventional religious culture is thought to have had a great influence in the process of forming the views people have regarding morals and other important values. Now, thanks to the weakening of traditional value systems and the open acceptance of various religious cultures, people are increasingly likely to adopt religious rituals, teachings, and practices from religions that once were unfamiliar.

This hyper state of religious consciousness, so to speak, may have provided the basis for the appearance of the aforementioned hyper religions. Such groups form their teachings from various religious sources—for example, from the Judeo-Christian Bible, Buddhist sutras, Hinduism, Islam, or Shinto. Groups of this type appear to have been accepted by people to a certain degree because people tend to be less likely to feel hesitant toward the juxtaposition of plural religious ideas and rituals within a single religion.

The GLA (God Light Association) and *Kōfuku no Kagaku* contain elements of hyper religion. GLA was established in 1969 by Takahashi Shinji. After Takahashi died in 1976, his eldest daughter Takahashi Keiko became his successor. She made it the main goal of the GLA’s activities to deepen human existence to a new dimension by combining the spiritual world and material world. She has published several books aimed at this goal, including a three-volume work on *Shin Sōseiki* (True Genesis), with its “Volume of Hell,” “Volume of Heaven,” and “Volume of Apocalypse.” She has also preached about the “Total Life of Human Science” as being the “Study of Soul.” The group has become increasingly similar to a self-development group grounded in psychological theory rather than a religious body since Takahashi Keiko became its leader.

Kōfuku no Kagaku was established by Ōkawa Ryūhō. Ōkawa decided to live as a religious person in 1980, after he had resigned from Tōmen, a major trading company. Ōkawa proclaimed his true nature to be that of “El Cantare” and claims that Buddha and Hermes were previous manifestations of El Cantare in this world. He has published many books, most of which have been best sellers. Kōfuku no Kagaku has made animated films titled *Hermes*, *Law of the Sun*, and *Law of the Gold* as a means of carrying out its proselytizing activities. It is difficult to find reflections of Japanese religious culture in these films. A political party, *Kōfuku Jitsugen Tō* (Happiness Realization Party), was also established in 2009.

Aum Shinrikyō may also be thought of as having had some of the characteristics of a hyper religion. Although the founder, Asahara Shōkō, was once a member of Agonshū, one of the modern new religions, he developed his teachings and rituals without any connection with Japanese traditional Buddhist sects. Rather, he liked to use ideas such as karma from Indian religion, *phowa* from Tibetan Buddhism, and Armageddon from Christianity. He also introduced yoga practices for his followers.

Nobutaka Inoue

See also Asahara, Shōkō; Aum Shinrikyō; Japan; Mahayana Buddhism; New Religions; Shinto; Soka Gakkai; Syncretism; Zen Buddhism

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NEW RELIGIONS IN SOUTH AMERICA

Despite the overwhelming Catholic majorities in most countries in South America, the populations across the continent maintain adherence to a variety

of alternative religious traditions, including Amerindian, African, Spiritualist, and folk traditions. Brazil, for instance, besides being the world's largest Catholic country, is the world's most Kardecist country (it has the most followers of spiritual doctrines promulgated in the 19th century by Allan Kardec). In the decades at the end of the 20th century and beginning of the 21st, the religious map of South America has been further enriched by the presence of new religions. The novel aspect of such groups is the way in which they expand rapidly or suddenly attain visibility; in addition, many of these groups have a major presence in the region. The Baha'i religion, for example, has boasted groups in South America since 1930, and although its followers are not particularly numerous, it does have centers in all the countries in the region. In Paraguay, Chile, and Argentina, the Baha'is have also established missions among different indigenous communities. On the other hand, principally in Bolivia, Peru, and Ecuador, there are flourishing aboriginal movements and cults based on ancestral beliefs. These include the veneration of Pachamama (Mother Earth) and many autochthonic cults, such as the Vegetalist religious practices in the Amazonian and Andean regions. In addition, many new centers dedicated to studying the Kabbalah have sprung up across the region. The Bnei Baruch Center has offices in Chile, Colombia, and Argentina, while the Kabbalah International Center has affiliates in Argentina, Venezuela, and Brazil and study groups in the principal cities of Colombia, Paraguay, Peru, Ecuador, Venezuela, and Chile.

The following sections examine five of these “new religions” in South America: the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, Pentecostalism, Afro-Brazilian religions, New Age, and Asian religions.

Catholic Charismatic Renewal

Created in the United States in 1967, the Catholic Charismatic Renewal (CCR) is a movement whose members claim to receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit, especially healing, prophecy, and glossolalia (“speaking in tongues”). By the beginning of the 1970s, the CCR had arrived in Brazil (1969), Peru (1970), Bolivia (1971), Colombia, Chile (1972), and Venezuela (1973). The movement grew steadily throughout the 1980s and became fully visible in the 1990s. Currently, CCR has more than 700 prayer

communities in Chile, nearly 24,000 participants in Peru, and an additional 50,000 in Argentina and Brazil. Between 1994 and 1999, the number of CCR Catholics tripled.

The CCR is organized in prayer groups and periodic meetings, in which participants read the scriptures, pray, study catechism, and recount their conversion experiences. In addition, congresses are organized for youth, consecrated lay people, and couples. Such meetings combine preaching, prayer, glossolalia, music, stories of how believers converted, and miraculous cures.

Throughout South America, Charismatic Catholic groups have a special affinity with the media. The Colombian priest Darío Betancur is renowned for his TV show *Hablemos con Dios* and for his books about intercessory prayer and healing. In Brazil, the singer priest Marcelo Rossi became very popular, and his CD *Minha Bênção* (My Blessing) was the best-selling Brazilian album in 2007. With the goal of evangelizing audiences through the media, *TV Século XXI* (21st-century TV) was founded in 1990 by the American Brazilian priest Eduardo Dougherty, and the CCR community *Canção Nova* (New Song) opened radio and TV stations across the country.

More recently, “new communities” have emerged where Charismatic Catholics seeking sanctification come to live together and share their belongings. Among the founders of these communities in Brazil are the priest Jonas Abib, who founded the community *Canção Nova*, and the priest Roberto Lettieri, who created the community *Toca de Assis*. Similar communities have been founded in many other South American countries.

(Neo-)Pentecostalism

Pentecostalism was the result of a syncretism between Protestant Christianity and ecstatic religious traditions and has become very attractive to South Americans. Since the 19th century, many Protestant missions arrived to found churches in Argentina, Brazil, and Chile. Pentecostalism began growing steadily in Chile and Brazil starting in the mid-20th century, making South America the region with the world’s highest number of Pentecostals. Pentecostalism has been strongest in Chile, followed by Brazil, where Protestants represent 15%

of the population. In Ecuador, there are more than 1,000 Pentecostal churches that coexist with a population that is 90% Catholic and boast a great amount of indigenous activism. In Colombia, *Dios Es Amor*, a Pentecostal church created in Brazil, combines elements from Catholic rituals with symbols of the regional culture.

By the 1980s, Pentecostalism had attained greater visibility, and it was transformed into what has been called “Neo-Pentecostalism.” The Neo-Pentecostal churches are spin-offs of the missionary churches that acquire their own characteristics by adopting the religious beliefs and practices of the surrounding popular culture. Their practices are based on the presence of charismatic leaders, large-scale evangelization, the Theology of Prosperity (also known as the “Health and Wealth Gospel”), and spiritual war against Umbanda, Candomblé, oracles, and medicine men that are quite widespread among the local urban working class.

One of the most successful Neo-Pentecostal churches is the *Iglesia Universal del Reino de Dios* (IURD), founded by Edir Macedo in 1977. The rituals at IURD are based on driving out the demons that already exist in the local folk culture where the churches are located. At the same time, even when these Afro-Brazilian and Spiritist demons are not part of the local culture, the IURD introduces them only to later expel them. Like most Neo-Pentecostal churches, it uses the mass media for evangelization. Besides owning radio and TV stations, IURD has managed to influence political elections in Brazil. Its growth has not been limited to South America; IURD churches have opened across the globe, with cathedrals founded even in cities in eastern Europe.

Many other Brazilian, Argentinean, and Colombian Neo-Pentecostal churches also use the media and send missionaries abroad. Presence in the media and in politics is a trademark of various Neo-Pentecostal churches in South America, whose founders are mass media priests. In Argentina, charismatic pastors such as Carlos Annacondia, Claudio Freydzon, Omar Cabrera, and Héctor Gimenez have played fundamental roles in developing Neo-Pentecostalism through mass evangelization campaigns launched in the 1970s and 1980s.

Afro-Brazilian Religions

Afro-Brazilian religions are an urban phenomenon that dates back more than 150 years. Brought in by African slaves (especially the Yoruba of Nigeria and the Ewe from Benin and Togo), their religion syncretized with Spanish Catholicism, Kardecist Spiritism, and local aboriginal beliefs. The Orixás, Afro-Brazilian saints or personal deities, have different Catholic saints as their counterparts and syncretize with them. The different combination of these four elements led to regional variations: Catimbó, Tambor de Minas, Xangó, Candomblé, Macumba, and Batuques.

The first *terreiro* (Afro-Brazilian religious temple) of the Candomblé, which is considered the most African and most traditional of these religions, was founded in the Brazilian city of Bahia in 1830. Another of these religions, the Umbanda, originated in the southeast of Brazil in the 1920s. Although the 2000 Brazilian census reports that only 0.34% of Brazilians claim to practice religions with African roots, most analysts assume that a greater percentage of such believers are actually listed as Catholics; these individuals prefer to identify themselves as Catholics even when they participate in both religions, due to the fact that the followers of Afro-Brazilian religions are often subjected to discrimination.

Mãe de santo (Mother of Saint) designates the female leader of an Afro-Brazilian religion temple, and *Pai de santo* (Father of Saint) denotes the male leader, because they are understood to be the parents of the Orixás. Participation in these religions involves many steps and different degrees of commitment that are manifested in initiatory rituals. Those who go through all these rituals become *Filhos de santo* (Sons or Daughters of Saint).

Since 1980, participation in Afro-Brazilian religions has dropped. There has been a 20% drop in Umbanda followers in the last census. At the same time, practitioners of Candomblé are on the rise—this is due, in many cases, to followers migrating from one such religion to another. The Brazilian sociologist Reginaldo Prandi attributes this movement to the social changes in Brazil over the past century. Umbanda reflects the type of society that gave birth to these religions, one characterized by nationalism and the aspiration for rising up the social ladder. Candomblé, in contrast, attracts a

greater audience because it shares the values of the contemporary postmodern society: individualism, hedonism, and narcissism. The popularity of Candomblé has been facilitated by music and the media since the 1960s. The rediscovery of African culture, on the other hand, attracted the middle (and White) classes to Candomblé centers, and these new followers also helped the religion earn its legitimacy.

In Argentina, Umbanda and Candomblé are practiced in urban centers among the working class and lower middle class. Both religions came to Argentina from Brazil and Uruguay, starting in the 1960s. There are currently more than 400 temples.

New Age

New Age, a spiritual movement that started in the United States at the beginning of the 1960s, arrived in Latin America in the 1970s. Given that it does not involve an institutional organization or a unified system of beliefs and practices, it is difficult to measure exactly how widespread it is. However, many authors have shown that the New Age movement has a significant presence across South America. Participants are mainly urban dwellers with a high level of education and income.

Participation in the New Age movement involves the occasional purchase of goods and services, of which there is an enormous variety; it also can involve visits to therapy centers where Western medicine is combined with Asian treatments and local aboriginal medicine. In Brazil, for example, the practice of consuming the drug *hoasca* (ayahuasca) as promoted by the Union of the Vegetable (*Uniao do Vegetal*, UDV) and by the religion Santo Daime is common among New Age believers as well.

The New Age movement springs from different sources and brings together different religious and philosophical trends as well as self-help; these are often dissociated from their original contexts and lack institutional and dogmatic structure. New Age is based on the idea that sacredness is not limited to religion; what is sacred involves a complex universe of knowledge, beliefs, and actions through which an attempt is made to control the environment.

The “neo-esoteric” or “alternative” circuit allowed the New Age movement to spread over the past two decades. It includes different places where people come to search for health, spiritual development, and conscious illumination. The core of this circuit

consists of people participating in a vast selection of spiritual, mystical, ritual, therapeutic, and body knowledges, techniques, and practices. Some of these disciplines existed in South America even before the New Age boom, including astrology, Buddhism, homeopathy, vegan eating or macrobiotics, yoga, and Gestalt psychology. Others arrived in the past 15 years—such as art, crystal, color, gem, or aroma therapies; tai chi chuan; Dō in; Reiki; Rebirthing; and Feng Shui, to mention just a few.

María Carozzi and Guilherme Magnani have classified the diverse New Age activities that can be found in all the main cities in South America. They are divided into holistic centers that provide different services—from oracular consultation, therapies, and alternative body movement workshops to conferences and classes—and a wide variety of stores that offer products for consumers, including bookshops, pharmacies, tourist agencies, organic groceries, and religious artifacts shops. All converge in a variety of New Age and alternative magazines as well as at New Age festivals and fairs. People come and go at many of these holistic centers and shops without creating strong bonds or making a commitment to stay, both of which are encouraged by therapists and gurus.

In terms of therapy, the New Age movement has integrated a great number of Asian and aboriginal techniques as well as Western nonallopathic medicine, including psychological, body-related, and spiritual procedures. The Neijing school of Chinese medicine, for example, boasts three schools in Montevideo where healers can train and has been a presence in Uruguay for many years.

As María Carozzi has argued, unlike in the United States, participation in the New Age circuit entails a more radical cultural transformation in South America that requires making autonomy, continuous circulation, and participation in temporary groups sacred in some way. At the same time, the movement has created a novel urban lifestyle in major South American cities that sustains the demand for specific consumer products.

Asian Religions: Hare Krishna and Buddhism

ISKCON, or the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, is the official denomination for the

Hare Krishna movement. It is possible to consider the rise of ISKON in South America as part of the alternative movement that characterized the 1970s and 1980s, principally among the young urban middle classes. The largest Hare Krishna center of South America is in Brazil.

The Hare Krishna movement appeared in Brazil during the mid-1970s and was particularly popular among young urban dwellers from the middle and upper classes with a high level of education. During this decade, the books of the Indian guru Prabhupada Bhaktivedanta Swami were translated into Portuguese, and the New Gokula community was founded. This community would go on to become one of the most important Hare Krishna centers in South America. From then on, the Hare Krishna movement spread, and many new temples opened in different cities. In 1985, the National Meeting of Alternative Communities was held in New Gokula, a meeting that increased the popularity of the Hare Krishna movement across the country. In the 1990s, attracted by the improved lifestyle, many Brazilian devotees traveled to India to stay at the ISKCON guesthouse. To reproduce the Indian lifestyle, Hare Krishna practitioners from Brazil brought back Indian clothing, food, and music. In 1996 and 1997, new Hare Krishna cultural centers were created, and a monument to Prabhupada was constructed at the New Gokula, whose centennial celebration attracted 2,000 people.

Buddhism, which is characterized by a wide variety of traditions, arrived in South America in the 20th century. The spread of Buddhism can mainly be attributed to Buddhist schools, Japanese Zen, and Tibetan Buddhism. Starting in 1950, South American intellectuals began to take a growing interest in Buddhism. Works by Alan Watts, D. T. Suzuki, and Eugen Herrigel helped Buddhism reach a wider audience. There are Buddhist groups in Argentina, Chile, Bolivia, and Uruguay, though the greatest number of Buddhists can be found in Brazil (due to its demographics). According to the 2000 census, Buddhists constitute 3% of the Brazilian population, a percentage similar to that of Spiritists, Jews, Muslims, and Hindus.

Of the three schools of Japanese Zen Buddhism, the Sōtō Zenshu School, which privileges meditation, or zazen, as a practice for enlightenment, is the one that was brought to South America by Japanese immigrants in the 1950s. Although

Buddhism was initially limited to the immigrant community, which attempted to maintain its traditional rituals and ceremonies, at the end of the 1970s, Brazilians who had no Japanese roots had also become interested. Ryokan Tokuda and Daygo Moriyama were two of the most important figures in opening up Buddhism to the non-Japanese population.

In around 1980, Japanese Buddhist masters began visiting the region, while local Buddhists began traveling abroad to complete their studies; later, these Brazilians would return to lead the local centers. Around the same time, Zen Buddhism was brought to Argentina by Chinese and Korean immigrants (with the goal of serving their respective ethnic communities), Japanese missionaries arriving from Brazil, and non-Asian Argentines who traveled to study in Brazil, France, and Japan and later founded their own centers when they returned to Argentina in the 1990s. At the turn of the 21st century, the French master Stephan Kosen Thibaut brought his mission to Argentina, Uruguay, Chile, Bolivia, and Cuba. Kosen had split from the International Zen Association in the 1990s to found his own community; his first center was in Europe, and then, he came to South America. In 1999, he founded the first Zen temple in Latin America, the Shobogenji Temple in Argentina, where the annual Latin American Zen congress is held.

Eloísa Martín

See also Batuque de Porto Alegre; Candomblé; Catholic Charismatic Renewal; Evangelical Movements; Japanese Religions in Latin America; Latin America; Native Latin American Religion; New Age Movements; Santería; Syncretism

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NEW RELIGIONS IN THE UNITED STATES

The United States has provided fertile soil for thousands of new religions, in large part because the constitutional separation of church and state led to a vigorous religious voluntarism that allowed for any religious expression imaginable. Most new religions have roots in older traditions but are new by virtue of unorthodox practices or beliefs, the charisma of a prophet who receives new revelations, or the tension in which they coexist with the dominant society. In the United States, four primary types of new religions predominate: communitarian, millenarian, Asian inspired, and Western esotericist. Some of these categories are overlapping, while a few groups may fall outside this typology. Overall, however, most new religions in the United States fall comfortably within these four categories.

Pejoratively called “cults” by their critics, new religions are difficult to define. Sometimes they are called new religious movements, alternative religious movements, or emerging religions to avoid calling them cults, a word loaded with negative connotations. A religion that is new to the United States, such as the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), may be old in India, where the roots of the movement are found. Many immigrant religions may be considered new as a result of their novelty in America. Some scholars of new religions have argued that what characterizes

them is their marginalization by the broader culture, while others maintain that the newness of a religion makes it distinctively different from older forms of the same faith, and still others claim that “alternative religion” best describes the variations found in nontraditional groups. The umbrella term *new religion* encompasses all of these theories.

New Religions in the 19th Century

The 19th century saw the rise of dozens of new religions that practiced communal living. Growing in part out of dissatisfaction with the dislocations caused by the Industrial Revolution coupled with the rise of the Romantic movement, which idealized nature, many groups capitalized on the abundance of available land. The most successful communitarian experiment in American history was that of the Shakers, started by an English visionary named Ann Lee (1736–1784). Lee’s followers believed that she was the second coming of Christ, and they lived communally in anticipation of the Kingdom of God on earth. The Shakers built 19 self-contained agricultural communities from Maine to Kentucky and grew steadily throughout the 19th century, but they died out because their practice of celibacy failed to attract new members. In contrast, the Oneida Perfectionists practiced a form of sexual freedom called “complex marriage.” Under the leadership of John Humphrey Noyes (1811–1886), the Perfectionists believed that exclusive marital ties were inherently selfish. Thus, men and women should be married to all in the community and could have sex with multiple (heterosexual) partners as long as it was approved by Noyes. The group ran a successful commune in upstate New York for about 30 years until Noyes’s death; afterward, members formed a joint-stock corporation best known for the manufacture of Oneida flatware.

Nineteenth-century millennial expectations led to the development of three new religions within the Christian tradition, which survived into the 20th century and today are successful globally due to widespread missionizing. The Seventh-Day Adventists began with the failed predictions of William Miller (1782–1849) and others in his movement, who set particular dates for the return of Jesus based on their interpretations of the Bible. After the final “Great Disappointment” on October 22, 1844,

Ellen G. White (1827–1915) and others reinterpreted the Millerite predictions and thus began the Seventh-Day Adventists, who observe the Sabbath on the 7th day of the week, Saturday. Joseph Smith Jr. (1805–1844) started the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints when he translated what he claimed were some golden tablets he had discovered, thus bringing the *Book of Mormon* to light. Like the Adventists, the Mormons believe in ongoing revelation and the imminent return of Jesus. Unlike the Adventists, however, Joseph Smith and his successor, Brigham Young (1801–1877), practiced polygamy, which brought them into conflict with wider American society, until the practice was officially abandoned in 1890. A final group that expects the impending arrival of Jesus is the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, better known as the Jehovah’s Witnesses. Its founder, Charles Taze Russell (1852–1916), provided specific dates for Jesus’ advent and encouraged followers to missionize people so that they can be saved before the end of the world comes.

In addition to the communitarian and millenarian new religions of the 1800s, a number of groups indebted to the Western esoteric tradition emerged. Western esotericism is a diffuse philosophy that encompasses beliefs in gnosticism, hermeticism, the unity of all religions, and the idea of correspondences (as it is above, so it is below). Some movements were short-lived. Spiritualism, for example, in which living mediums make contact with the souls of the dead, waned amid charges of fraud. But other movements have lasted into the 21st century. The Theosophical Society, founded by the Russian émigré Helena P. Blavatsky (1831–1891) and Americans Henry Steel Olcott (1832–1907) and William Q. Judge (1851–1896), claimed to teach a perennial wisdom: All religions of the world have esoteric teachings that lead one to knowledge of the self and the universe. Theosophists adopted and popularized beliefs and practices from Eastern religions, such as karma, reincarnation, awakened masters, salvation as gnosis or knowledge of the cosmos, and meditation and yoga, and attracted a small, well-to-do following. Although the organization split over philosophical and political issues, the Theosophical Society in America exists to this day as a branch of the international Theosophical Society. New Thought, another movement indebted to the

Western esoteric tradition, emerged from Christian Science and emphasizes the power of thought over matter, especially over illness. Mary Baker Eddy (1821–1910), who founded the Church of Christ, Scientist, taught that God is mind, spirit, soul, life, and love. Because God is all, illness, and indeed physical existence, is false consciousness and a delusion; a correct comprehension of God results in healing. New Thought movements emerged when Eddy's students formulated their own teachings and founded separate organizations, most notably Emma Curtis Hopkins (1849–1925), whose students went on to develop Divine Science, Homes of Truth, Unity School of Christianity, and Religious Science. These groups emphasized healing, the reality of the spirit, and the primacy of thoughts and their determining effects on matter.

New Religions in the 20th Century

In response to Jim Crow laws in the South, and de facto segregation in the North, African Americans turned to alternative religions with a millenarian orientation in the first half of the 20th century. The Moorish Temple, set up by Noble Drew Ali (1886–1929) in the second decade of the century attracted those who were disaffected with White Christianity and inspired by the Black nationalism of Marcus Garvey (1887–1940). In 1930, Elijah Muhammad (1897–1975) assumed leadership of the Nation of Islam, another Black nationalist group. The Nation of Islam explained the inferior status of African Americans with a creation myth that posited a fall from racial superiority due to the machinations of an evil scientist. A program of self-help and Black separatism promised a brighter future. After Muhammad's death, his son Warith Deen Mohammed (1933–2008) took the Nation of Islam in the direction of orthodox Sunnī Islam, and the group became the American Muslim Mission. In the late 1970s, Louis Farrakhan (b. 1933) revived the Nation of Islam and its founding myth. In recent decades, however, Farrakhan has emphasized the movement's ties to Sunnī Islam. The 1930s also saw the rise of the Peace Mission, established by Father Divine (ca. 1880–1965), who claimed to be God. In contrast to Black separatist groups, the Peace Mission preached an integrationist message, in which Blacks and Whites lived and worked together, pooling resources and living cooperatively. Given

the times in which it arose, however, Divine also insisted on celibacy, so that the group could not be accused of miscegenation.

Father Divine and the communitarian program of the Peace Mission influenced another millenarian and communal group in the United States, namely, the Peoples Temple. Jim Jones (1931–1978), a charismatic Pentecostal evangelist in Indiana, started Peoples Temple in Indianapolis in the 1950s. His message of “apostolic socialism”—that is, living the life of the early Christian church—attracted thousands of followers once he moved to California in the mid-1960s. Jones visited the Peace Mission several times and modeled much of his language and style after Father Divine. About 1,000 Peoples Temple members moved to an agricultural commune located in Guyana, South America, in 1977 and 1978. Reports of abuses in the community, called Jonestown, prompted the visit of a U.S. Congressman in 1978, who was assassinated on leaving the jungle community. More than 900 individuals then took poison in a murder-suicide ritual that shocked the world.

Yet another millenarian and communal group, the Branch Davidians, had a tragic end. Victor Houteff (1885–1955) established the Davidian community in Waco, Texas, in the 1930s as an outgrowth of Seventh-Day Adventism. The Branch Davidians under the leadership of Ben Roden (1902–1978) emerged from the Davidians in the early 1960s, and they lived communally outside Waco. By 1984, the leadership of the Branch Davidians had been assumed by a charismatic prophet named Vernon Howell (1959–1993), who, as David Koresh, prophesied imminent apocalyptic events. A violent confrontation on February 28, 1993, between the Branch Davidians and agents of the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF) left four ATF agents and six Branch Davidians dead. A 51-day standoff between the Branch Davidians and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agents ended when tanks were used to insert CS gas (potent tear gas) and dismantle the community's housing. A fire began, killing 76 men, women, and children still in the buildings. The cause of the fire remains in dispute.

Despite these incidences of violence, dozens of other communal groups peacefully rose, fell, or changed throughout the late 20th century. The Holy Order of MANS began as a type of esoteric

monastic community in the 1960s but eventually affiliated with the Orthodox Church in America. The Farm, begun in the 1960s by the followers of Stephen Gaskin (b. 1935), a charismatic professor at San Francisco State University, today has about 200 members living in a cooperative, but no longer communal, agricultural project in Tennessee. Some young Christians living the hippie lifestyle in the 1960s became “Jesus freaks”—long-haired evangelicals who proselytized a message of Jesus’ love. The Children of God (now called The Family International) took this message further, practicing free love under the inspiration of their leader David Berg (1919–1994). The Twelve Tribes, like The Family, are a millenarian Christian group living in what they believe are the world’s end-times. They practice a strictly monogamous lifestyle, however, and live in self-sufficient agricultural communes. Jewish new religions in the 1960s mirrored their Christian counterparts. Young Jews wearing hippie garb and cooking vegetarian meals moved into Shlomo Carlebach’s (1925–1994) House of Love and Prayer in San Francisco, where they engaged in ecstatic practices of Hasidic Judaism.

The Turn East

Americans’ familiarity with the religions of Asia prior to the 1960s was limited. Swami Vivekananda (1863–1902) introduced Hindu Vedanta philosophy to Westerners at the World’s Parliament of Religions at the 1893 Chicago Exposition. In 1920, Swami Paramahansa Yogananda (1893–1952) founded the Self-Realization Fellowship in California, which taught the unity of all the world’s religions and direct personal experience of God. During the 1950s, the Beatniks practiced what they believed to be Zen Buddhism, some misinterpreting its doctrine of emptiness to be a reflection of their own nihilistic attitudes, while the writings of D. T. Suzuki (1870–1966) popularized and clarified Zen for a mass American audience.

It was not until the repeal of the Asian Exclusion Act in 1965 that Americans began to have greater access to the religions of Asia. With the lifting of limitations on immigration from Asia, a new generation of Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh, and other teachers of Eastern religions found a receptive audience among members of the counterculture. Drug experimentation, coupled with antiestablishment

protests, prompted young Americans to seek alternatives to their parents’ religions. The alignment of Asian immigration with an openness to new religions saw a “turn East” that was intense, though short-lived.

A number of gurus came from India, bringing both traditional and innovative teachings of Hinduism. Best known was ISKCON, founded by A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada (1896–1977). The Hare Krishnas attracted young men and women, some emerging from the drug culture, who could be seen wearing colorful Indian clothing as they sang and danced in praise of Krishna on street corners. After the death of Prabhupada, the organization experienced mismanagement and a series of abusive gurus, but today, families of South Asian origin comprise the majority of ISKCON temple members. Also quite successful throughout the 1970s was 3HO—the Healthy, Happy, Holy Organization—brought to the United States by Yogi Bhaajan (1929–2004), who taught Kundalini Yoga to members, who practiced a type of Sikh dharma (religious doctrine and way of life). Maharishi Mahesh Yogi (1918–2008) introduced yogic practices through Transcendental Meditation, in which thousands followed very simple meditation techniques. Today, a large community of Transcendental Meditation devotees have settled in Fairfield, Iowa, where the Maharishi University of Management is situated. Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, later called Osho (1931–1990), was perhaps the most notorious of the Indian gurus. His collection of 90 Rolls-Royces and the crimes committed by some of his devotees overshadowed his message of free choice and love in all its aspects.

Interest in Buddhism grew slowly in the United States, where it has seen its greatest popularity in the decades of the 1990s and 2000s. Nichiren Buddhism came to the United States from Japan in the 1960s, and practitioners learned to recite the mantra *Nam Myoho Renge Kyo*, which was said to lead to success and prosperity. Soka Gakkai International, a lay society, was instituted in 1975 as an organization separate from Nichiren Shoshu and has surpassed its parent organization in global membership and influence. Shambhala International is the organizational expression of one of the largest and most important Tibetan Buddhist movements in the United States today, which was founded by Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche (1939–1987) in 1971. Trungpa appealed to young countercultural

Americans with his unconventional approach to religion, and though Shambhala went through a series of hard times after his death, it has emerged as a very successful group.

The Anticult Movement and Cult Wars

In response to the defection of young adults from traditional religions in the United States, during the 1960s and 1970s, an anticult movement (ACM) arose. Initially comprising parents concerned about the welfare of their adult children, it soon became dominated by health professionals and anticult experts. Both parents and professionals claimed that brainwashing—the idea that individuals were forced to adopt new beliefs through compulsory measures such as sleep deprivation, fasting, and isolation—explained the radical changes they had seen in their relatives. As a result, the ACM adopted its own coercive practices, and several deprogrammers served prison time on kidnapping convictions. In addition to the ACM, an evangelical Christian countercult movement (CCM) arose. The CCM considers any religion that is not its version of Christianity to be a cult. The ACM, in contrast, has a more secular outlook. Representatives of the ACM and CCM often charge sociologists and historians of religion who are not explicitly anticult as being “cult apologists,” insufficiently critical of the abuses practiced by members of a few new religions.

Two of the most controversial groups have been the Church of Scientology and the Unification Church. Founded by the entrepreneur and science fiction writer L. Ron Hubbard (1911–1986), Scientology is a religious philosophy that incorporates elements from Western esotericism, Buddhism, and other religions into a practical program that promises success and well-being through the practice of auditing, which eliminates the effects of negative memories. The Unification Church, now called the Family Federation for World Peace, was started by the Rev. Sun Myung Moon (b. 1920), a Korean minister who claims to be the second Messiah, come to fulfill the work of perfecting humanity left undone by Jesus. Both Scientology and the Unificationists have been criticized for aggressive proselytizing tactics and for requiring members to work long hours for little or no pay.

The news media have played a role in defining a “religious fringe” and pushing new religions to the margins by focusing on rare occasions of

violence and abuse rather than on accomplishments and successes. Although such violence is the exception rather than the rule, the perception of “dangerous cults” dominates the popular understanding of new religions. According to researchers, the Satanism scare of the 1980s, for example, was almost entirely fabricated by zealous law enforcement officials, ambitious mental health professionals, and the news media and led in some cases to the prosecution of child care workers and others. It is clearly the case that some new religions have coercive practices or threaten their critics, but the majority are peaceable.

The Future of New Religions

Immigrants continue to bring new religions and new expressions of old religions to the United States. A variety of Christianity-based new religions have come from South America and Africa. New types of Buddhism have come from Taiwan, and Japanese new religions have found U.S. adherents. Groups that once seemed out of the mainstream now appear to be part of larger world religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam.

One rapidly growing new religion in the 21st century is the New Age movement, the most recent manifestation of Western esotericism. Although the millennial expectations of 20th-century New Age practitioners have moderated, interest in a New Age lifestyle nevertheless remains visible in the many bookstores that sell crystals and Tarot cards and offer courses in yoga and Tai Chi. J. Z. Knight (b. 1946), who claims to channel an ancient spirit named Ramtha, is one of many channelers who blends “New Thought,” Spiritualist, and other esoteric elements together into a philosophy that attracts those who claim to be “spiritual but not religious.” Contemporary Paganism, like the New Age movement, mixes Western esotericism with other types of spirituality, most notably pre-Christian religions in which the natural world is animate. Even UFO (unidentified flying objects) groups, which believe in the salvific function of science and technology, have adopted elements from Theosophy and Western esotericism. Thirty-nine members of the Heaven’s Gate group, for instance, who collectively committed suicide in 1997 to reach “The Level Above Human,” believed that they had true gnosis about their noncorporeal nature.

While theories of deprivation have argued that new religions arise in times of economic crisis or political repression, it is perhaps also true that the health of a free society can be measured in the vibrancy and diversity of the religious landscape. Unlike some countries, in which only a handful of religions are sanctioned by the state, the United States, both historically and constitutionally, grants most religious groups recognition in the form of nonprofit, tax-exempt status. Although persecution of new religions has occurred and will likely persist, the cycle of the rise and decline of new religions in the United States is likely to continue as well.

Rebecca Moore

See also Black Muslims; Blavatsky, Helena P.; Branch Davidians; Hare Krishna (International Society for Krishna Consciousness); Millenarian Movements; Mormons; Neo-Pagan Movement; Neo-Shamanisms; Neo-Sufism (Sufi Renewal); New Age Movements; New Religions; Peoples Temple; Scientology; Soka Gakkai; Theosophy; 3HO (Sikh Dharma Fellowship); Unification Church; United States of America; Vedanta Society; World's Parliament of Religions

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NEW YORK CITY

Located on the northeastern coast of the United States, New York City (NYC) is a global city with great religious and cultural diversity. It consists of

five boroughs, Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens, Staten Island, and the Bronx, and is the most populous in the United States, having a population of approximately 8.4 million people. As a leader in the commercial, financial, fashion, education, art, entertainment, and media industries, NYC's influential networks hold sway over global markets, culture, and innovation. Despite its prominence in all of these areas, NYC remains multiracial, multicultural, and multireligious—a city of immigrants and migrants who live in approximately 500 distinct neighborhoods, comprising 200 separate ethnic groups attending several thousand places of worship.

The first inhabitants of the area that eventually became NYC were the Lenapes, a band of indigenous people that included the Canarsee, Rockaway, Manhattan, Hackensack, Wiechquaesgeck, and Rechgawawank Indians. The Lenape way of life, largely oriented around agriculture, hunting, and trading, was governed by a belief in spirituality and that all people were created by Kishilemukong's (the Creator) thoughts. They also believed that every natural thing possessed a spirit or *manetu* and was alive. As a result, the land around them was perceived to be a gift from the creator and, thus, was treated with care and respect.

The arrival of Giovanni da Verrazano, the first European to see Manhattan in 1524, marked the beginning of a new phase in the religious history of the region. In the years that followed, several Dutch, English, French, and Spanish explorers visited the area to trade and fish. This diversity and emphasis on trade seen in these early expeditions were to become the defining characteristics of the early Dutch settlement and later the City of New Amsterdam, on two levels. One, because of the diversity among the colonists, toleration of other cultures and religions was necessary for the harmonious functioning of the colony. Second, as a result of the difficulty that the Dutch West India Company experienced in attracting settlers, the company was amenable to accepting religious, cultural, and social diversity within the colony. Thus, in 1654, when Governor Peter Stuyvesant attempted to establish the exclusive rights of the Dutch Reformed Church by preventing the disembarking and settlement of 23 Jews from Brazil, he was rebuked by the directors of the Dutch West India Company for intolerance, an act that in their opinion would interfere with their economic ventures.

The city's tradition of religious freedom was further solidified by the "Remonstrance of the Inhabitants of the Town of Flushing" (1657)—a document in which the colonists in the Town of Flushing protested Governor Stuyvesant's proclamation banning Quakers from New Amsterdam and threatening to fine anyone found guilty of "harboring" a Quaker. Both actions served to affirm that the city would be one governed by tolerance and be a place where the oppressed and persecuted from any country would find refuge.

In 1664, the city of New Amsterdam was captured by the British and renamed New York in honor of the Duke of York. With British rule came the establishment of the Church of England and, at different times, several heated disputes between colonists adhering to the Dutch Reformed, Presbyterian, and Anglican faiths. Despite these arguments, however, the city's defining characteristics of diversity and tolerance remained. In 1664, the city had a population numbering approximately 1,500 people, consisting of Dutch, English, Flemish, Walloon, French Huguenot, German, Danish, Swedish, African, and Jewish—each living their lives and practicing their religious beliefs in various ways.

For much of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century, NYC mirrored the rest of the United States in being predominantly Protestant. This dominance began to undergo dramatic changes in the 1830s as a result of the emigration of Catholics from Ireland and continental Europe. The growth of Catholicism in the city was met with tension and controversies over the teaching of religion in public schools and differences in religious observance—chiefly in Sabbath keeping. Adding to the tension were various stereotypes about these new immigrants—who were seen by some city leaders as poor people who had a propensity to concentrate in areas that fostered criminal activity and delinquency. However, due to the valiant efforts of the immigrants and their leaders, like Bishop John Hughes, NYC would become a center for Catholicism by 1863.

The religious diversity of the city was further augmented in the latter half of the 19th century by the influx of thousands of Jews who were fleeing eastern Europe. In Harlem and the Lower East Side, where they settled, the Jews established places of worship. The Jewish community was not without conflict due to differences between the German Jews, who were generally more financially stable, had a longer residence in the city, and

established Conservative and Reform congregations, and the newer immigrants from eastern Europe, who were poorer and Orthodox in their beliefs. The Reform and Conservative forms of Judaism that were transplanted to NYC continued to develop and later would become very influential in the continually intellectual focus and practice of those branches of Judaism, both in the United States and worldwide.

In the closing decades of the 19th century, the city continued to be a place of refuge for immigrants from various ethnic groups. These included the Italians, East Europeans, Greeks, Russians, and Chinese. For each of these ethnic groups, religious practices became one of the primary ways through which they could intentionally preserve various aspects of their identities and cultures while creating a place of community, affirmation, and belonging within their new home. For many of these immigrants, their houses of worship served multiple functions—a place to worship, a place for social gatherings, and a place to find assistance (social, informational, financial, etc.) in navigating the new context in which they found themselves.

NYC's position as a place of refuge for those seeking a better life was not limited to those who came from other countries, as evidenced by the influx of African Americans from the South following World War I. For these Blacks, many of whom settled in Harlem, NYC provided a place where they could collaborate with one another over their shared experiences to begin creating new ways of seeing African American culture—the arts, politics, the wider society, and ultimately themselves. All of these elements became the seedbed for the Harlem Renaissance and, later, the Black Power, Pan-African, and civil rights movements. Although some of these social movements may have found religion on the whole to be confining, the spirituality that forms the bedrock of African American life continued to be visible in the works and social engagement of various artists and political figures and in the lives of the African American people. For most of the African Americans in NYC, their faith tradition was primarily Protestant. However, for many of the younger African Americans, the Protestant faith being practiced seemed to be out of touch with many of the real issues that made up Black life in America—namely, racism, economic and social inequality, and the continual disregard and neglect of Black identity

and culture. This discontent would lend to the rise of the Nation of Islam and other movements such as the Black Panther Party in the 1960s.

In the 1920s, the face of Catholicism within the city began to undergo ethnic and cultural diversity as Puerto Ricans took up residence in the city. This trend has continued and, due to the influx of large numbers of Catholic immigrants from various Latin American countries in the late 20th century and early 21st century, has resulted in the creation of several Spanish-language congregations whose practices of faith, festivals, and culture have ties to the peoples of the Americas instead of Europe.

In the decades following the passage of the Hart-Cellar Immigration Act in 1965, the religious landscape of NYC became more diverse. As many non-European immigrants who took advantage of the removal of the national quota system traveled to the United States and to NYC in particular, they brought with them their religious beliefs and practices. In their new home, they gathered for fellowship, established places of worship, and built communities. For some, NYC became the headquarters of worldwide ministries that they would take to other countries, including their country of origin (e.g., some Pentecostal denominations). For others, however, NYC became the place of discovery of new forms of worship practices (e.g., Hindus having classes to teach their children about their faith) or a place where they could freely practice their faith without suspicion (e.g., Santería). For these new religious adherents and for those who have long resided there—Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, Catholic, and Protestant—NYC remains a place of welcome, religious diversity, and tolerance. Although these characteristics have been buffeted in light of the events that occurred on September 11, 2001, they still remain and continue to thrive in the city of New York.

Janice McLean

See also Christianity; Diaspora; Global Cities; Global Religion; Globalization; Hinduism; Immigration; Islam; Jewish Diaspora; Judaism; United States of America

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NEW ZEALAND

Voyagers from eastern Polynesia evidently settled in the South Pacific islands of New Zealand from the late 12th century onward. Their descendants, the Maori, developed a unique variant on Polynesian religion, identifying features of the natural world with their gods and heroes. The land itself was said to have been formed when the trickster Māui caught a great fish (the North Island) while standing in his canoe (the South Island). Despite a brief encounter with the Dutch in 1642, New Zealand was not reincorporated into the wider world until its rediscovery by the British in 1769. Protestant missionaries encouraged Maori chiefs to sign the Treaty of Waitangi (1840), which brought them under British rule and legitimated large-scale immigration of mostly Christians from the British Isles.

By then, ravaged by new diseases and intertribal musket warfare, Maori increasingly adopted the religion brought by Anglican (1814), Wesleyan (1822), and Catholic (1838) missionaries, initially valued more as conduits of European goods and skills than as preachers of the gospel. In an effort to restore lands and *mana* (status, ultimately spiritual in origin) lost through colonization, Maori prophets founded syncretistic religious movements, often identifying their people as Israelites. Most Maori, though, joined the increasing variety of imported denominations and sects, including the Latter-Day Saints (Mormons), from 1881.

New Zealand religion has been characterized by a peculiar blend of conservatism and innovation—both usually following but occasionally leading international trends. Interest in esoteric and New Age religions has always been high by Western standards. The Women's Christian Temperance Union promoted female suffrage (achieved in 1893), and prohibition of alcohol was almost introduced in 1919. While the world's first female Anglican diocesan bishop was ordained in 1990, denominational priorities undermined the Council of Churches in Aotearoa, New Zealand, in 2005. Liberal Christians have applauded recent legislation decriminalizing

prostitution (2003), recognizing heterosexual and homosexual civil unions (2004), and removing the right of parents to forcefully hit their children (2007), but conservatives have vociferously denounced such “attacks on the family.” The 1857 organization of the Anglican Church through a “voluntary compact” ruled by the laity, clergy, and bishops meeting in synods influenced Anglican constitutions overseas, but the 1992 establishment of parallel episcopates and synods for Maori, European, and Pacific peoples remains unique.

Despite intimations of a distinctively New Zealand spirituality, Christianity is waning, with only 52% of the country’s 4 million inhabitants claiming to be Christian and 32.2% explicitly rejecting any religious affiliation. Anglicans (13.8%), Catholics (12.6%), Presbyterians (10.0%, including Congregational and Reformed), and Methodists (3.0%) form the largest churches. Their decline, slowed by immigration, especially from the Pacific Islands, is not compensated by the sometimes high-profile “Christians” (4.6%), Pentecostals (2.0%), or Baptists (1.4%). Changes in settlement criteria since 1987, moreover, have led to increased arrivals from Asia and the Middle East, accounting for rapidly growing percentages of Hindus (1.6%), Buddhists (1.3%), and Muslims (0.9%).

Christopher John van der Krogt

See also Anglicans; Australia; New Age Movements; Pacific Islands/Oceania; Pentecostal Movements; Postcolonialism; Protestant Christianity; Roman Catholicism

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NICARAGUA

Nicaragua, located in Central America between Honduras and Costa Rica, has a Catholic majority, but its population also includes Protestants, Jehovah’s

Witnesses, Mormons, Jews, Buddhists, Muslims, and adherents of Myalism-Obeah. According to the 2005 census, in a population of 4,537,200 people, 58.5% are Catholic, 23.2% are Protestant, 2.5% profess other religions, and 15.7% declare none.

In 1523, the first of the Spanish conquistadors arrived, bringing the Roman Catholic apostolic religion to the animist aboriginals and building a church in 1524. In 1620, British explorers conquered the Caribbean coast and founded some Anglican missions; missionaries of the Moravian Church arrived in the Caribbean in 1849.

In 1881, the Nicaraguan president, Joaquín Zavala, expelled the Jesuit order under the suspicion of their provoking an aboriginal rebellion against the government. Under the regime of José Santos Zelaya, conflicts escalated; Zelaya separated the Catholic Church from the state, established schools with Protestant teachers, and in 1899 exiled Bishop Simeón Pereira y Castellón.

Several Protestant denominations later became established: the Central American Mission (1900), Seventh-Day Adventists (1904), Baptist Convention of the North (1917), and God’s Assemblies (1919); their growth was slow but accelerated in the 1960s.

The American Capuchins created “Delegates of the Word” in 1967, raising awareness among farmers and organizing lay people for a political pastoral project against the Somoza dictatorship (1937–1979). With a similar objective and inspired by Liberation Theology, the Ecclesiastical Communities of Base were founded (*Comunidades Eclesiales de Base*, CEB) in Managua in 1970, and subsequently spread throughout the country. Miguel Obando y Bravo was appointed archbishop and condemned the dictatorship. The Sandinista Rebellion triumphed in 1979, and four priests were named ministers: Miguel D’Escoto, Foreign Relationships; Ernesto Cardenal, Culture; Fernando Cardenal, Education; and Edgar Parrales, Social Affairs. Thus, the “Church of the Poor” began during the Sandinista regime.

Following a visit from Pope John Paul II in 1983, the archbishop began an offensive against the government and denounced the “Church of the Poor.” In 1975, Miguel Obando y Bravo was appointed Cardinal of Central America and met with the opposing parties, businessmen, armed-opposition chiefs, and the U.S. government in an effort to debilitate the regime.

In 1990, the Sandinista Front of National Liberation lost in the national elections, and the

CEBs retreated, delegitimated by the Catholic hierarchy. According to Pierre Vayssière, during the following decade, the Church collaborated with neoliberal policies, leaving the impoverished population isolated in the CEB while Protestant churches grew.

As a result of pressure by the Catholic Church, the government's sexual education guide was withdrawn in 2003, owing to what was characterized as a lack of Christian values. Afterward, in 2006, the Alliance for Life (a Catholic-Protestant partnership) obtained congressional support for reform of the Penal Code, which was approved in 2007 and which penalizes therapeutic abortion. Although previously legal in Nicaragua, at present abortion is illegal in all cases, even if the mother's life is in danger.

Laura Fuentes Belgrave

See also Abortion; Caribbean; Indigenous Religions; Latin America; Liberation Theology; New Religions in South America; Politics and Religion; Religion and State; Roman Catholicism

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- 2005 Census (Nicaragua): <http://www.inide.gob.ni/censos2005/ResumenCensal/Resumen2.pdf>

NIEBUHR, REINHOLD (1892–1971)

Reinhold Niebuhr was the most prominent Christian intellectual in the United States during the middle half of the 20th century. Born on June 21, 1892, in Wright City, Missouri, to a theologically

inclined family of German immigrants, he was raised in Lincoln, Illinois, and among his siblings were the Yale ethicist H. Richard Niebuhr and Hulda Niebuhr, Professor of Christian Education at McCormick Theological Seminary. Educated at Elmhurst College, Eden Theological Seminary, and Yale University Divinity School, Niebuhr was ordained a minister in the German Evangelical Synod of North America in 1915.

From 1915 to 1928, he served as the minister of the Bethel Evangelical Church in Detroit, where his experiences as pastor to working-class automobile industry laborers led him to become an outspoken critic and an advocate of socialist principles. Denouncing the demoralizing effects of industrialism on workers, Niebuhr openly criticized Henry Ford and used his pulpit as a forum on workers' rights. In addition, he spoke out against the Ku Klux Klan, which held unusual sway in Detroit. Those years as a pastor were documented in his autobiographical *Leaves From the Notebook of a Tamed Cynic* (1929) and led Niebuhr to abandon the popular Social Gospel movement.

Rejecting the moral idealism and unconditional abhorrence of violence among liberal churches, Niebuhr's viewpoint of "Christian realism" became the hallmark of the ethics that he taught at Union Theological Seminary in New York City, where he was professor of applied Christianity from 1928 to his official retirement in 1960, though he continued to teach at Union for several years afterward. Among Niebuhr's most notable books during this period of time are *Does Civilization Need Religion?* (1927), *Moral Man and Immoral Society* (1932), his 1939 Gifford Lectures, *The Nature and Destiny of Man* (1941 and 1943), and *The Irony of American History* (1952).

A major theme of these books was that humans' capacity for sacrificial love could only be expressed by individuals and that collectivities—including business and governments—were the agents of self-aggrandizement. Hence, a realistic approach to ethics required structures of justice and countervailing power (e.g., labor unions) to force collectivities to have more social responsibility than they were inherently capable of having. This Christian realism was the foundation of a Christian approach to politics that scoffed at the efficacy of idealism and thereby allowed the former pacifist to become a supporter of U.S. military action in World War II, anticommunism, and the

development of nuclear weapons. At the center of these commitments was a radical distinction between individual and group morality and the acceptance of group egoism as our inescapable reality.

Niebuhr founded and served on the editorial boards of several journals, including *The Christian Century* (1922–1940), *Radical Religion* (1935), *The Nation* (1938–1950), *Christianity and Crisis* (1941–1966), and *New Leader* (1954–1970). In addition, Niebuhr helped found the Fellowship of Socialist Christians in the 1930s and the Union for Democratic Action in 1941. Niebuhr was married to Ursula Keppel-Compton, chair of the religion department at Barnard College, with whom he had two children. He was the author of the Serenity Prayer, a version of which is now famously used by Alcoholics Anonymous. Niebuhr was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1964 by President Lyndon Johnson. He died in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, on June 1, 1971. His political thought continues to be a strong legacy in the United States for both foreign and domestic policy and is claimed by both liberals and conservatives.

Stephen Butler Murray

See also Christianity; Ethics; Liberal Protestantism; Politics and Religion; Protestant Christianity; Religion and State; Social Justice

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NIETZSCHE, FRIEDRICH (1844–1900)

The 19th-century German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche was victimized, posthumously, by the distortion of his work by Nazi propagandists, but in subsequent decades, scholars have convincingly shown his critical thinking to be completely incompatible with, and opposed to, Hitler's

National Socialism. Influenced by his formal training in philology, Nietzsche's first work is a critique of the metaphysical prejudices that inform epistemological language. In *Beyond Good and Evil* (1886), he attacks philosophical idealism and Descartes' classic thesis, "I think, therefore I am," rejecting the effect of a "grammatical illusion" that falsely presupposes that all action (thinking) has a subject ("I"). Nietzsche's refutation is an assault on the illusions of a free consciousness and the unity of the thinking subject, as well as on all philosophic positions based on the theory of truth. As a precursor to modern depth psychology, Nietzsche conceived of consciousness as a reflection of the multiple forces that escape human rational control. Thus, behind all morality lies a pathos that is masked by its principles.

For Nietzsche, Western metaphysics originates with Socratic philosophy and, to a greater extent, with Christianity, defined as a "morality of the weak" in *On the Genealogy of Morality* (1887). The fundamental pathos is a vengeful resentment directed against superior humans and therefore represents a negation of the world and life. According to Nietzsche, Christianity invented God to maintain humans in a state of resignation and pessimism achieved through piety and guilt. A cruel moral system was constructed based on a fictitious equality to impede human distinction and growth. Even the postreligious Enlightenment notions of liberty and individual responsibility are products of the same slave morality; humans, as social animals, define their duties within the repressive herd. The ideal consciousness remains dominated by the base instincts it is supposed to combat.

In *The Anti-Christ* (1888), Nietzsche proposed a controversial transvaluation of values: Dionysus versus the Crucified One, or the will to power of the *Übermensch*, or Superman, against the falsifying values of Christianity. The *Übermensch* is an individual who accepts the strongest instincts and discovers in them a superior creative will. The opposition between aesthetics and ethics, the notion of the *Übermensch*, and the desire to eliminate the weak has been interpreted as the prelude to, or the proclamation of, the racial theory, the "final solution," and the "aesthetization" characteristic of National Socialism's political totalitarianism. However, the notion of the *Übermensch* can better be understood

as the individual exaltation of assumed instincts resolved through a battle of the spirit. In Nietzsche's writings, there is no racial or anti-Semitic connotation; rather, the implication is an awakening of a critical spirit and individual will, which subvert the reactionary and mass fanaticism of Nazi totalitarianism as well as contradict its criminal ideology. The famous proclamation "God is dead," in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (1885), celebrates the unleashing of the will to power against religion. It should be interpreted as a critical antihumanism, not intended to destroy humanity but rather to overcome humanism's ideological illusions. Nietzsche's philosophy aims to emancipate and better protect humanity from totalitarian threats, using "suspicion" rather than good intentions.

Malik Tahar Chaouch

See also Atheism; Enlightenment; Ethics; Germany; God; Modernism; Postmodernism

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NIGER

The Republic of Niger is a landlocked country in the Saharan Desert in northern Africa, bordered by Algeria, Burkina Faso, Chad, Benin, Libya, Mali, and Nigeria. It takes its name from the Niger River, which runs through its southwestern tip. Like its neighbors Chad and Mali, it has a very low population density and low rates of urbanization, concentrated in the capital Niamey. Niger is one of the poorest countries in the world and relies heavily on mining exports, particularly uranium ore.

Niger's religious history is closely tied to that of North Africa, evidenced by the high percentages of

Muslims and the minimal presence of Christian groups. Modern-day Niger spans an area that was home to four distinct cultural regions before colonization: the Djerma civilization in the southwest; Hausaland along the southern border, which stretched into modern-day Nigeria; the nomadic Tuareg civilization in the north; and the farming settlements of the Toubou in the Lake Chad basin. Evidence of settlement in the area dates back to the 10th millennium BCE. Parts of Niger were first consolidated by the Muslim empires of the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries CE. Contact with European explorers and colonizers occurred in the late 19th century. The French established administration over the area in 1922, after heavy resistance from the Tuareg people of the north. Niger became an independent republic in 1960, and after a series of economic difficulties and political transitions, it now functions as a multiparty democracy with free elections. Many of its minority groups, however, continue to struggle for representation in the government.

Islam first arrived in Niger in the 15th century, brought by Arab traders along the trans-Saharan trade routes. Over the following three centuries, Islam was solidified as the majority religion, though many of the region's inhabitants continued to practice traditional religion in addition to Islam. Christianity came late to the area and has seen limited growth. Most of the earliest Christian missionaries came north up the Niger River from Nigeria, but there were no Christian missions in Niger itself until the 1930s.

Today, more than 90% of the population is Muslim, and the majority of these are Sunnīs. Christian groups account for less than 5% of the population. There is also a small community in southwest Niger that has followed the Baha'i Faith since its arrival in the 1960s. Although very few of Niger's inhabitants follow traditional African religion exclusively, elements of indigenous religion continue to be widespread among the Muslim population. Among the Hausa people of Niger and Nigeria, the female-dominated spirit possession cult of *Bori* is still popular. The republic's constitution guarantees freedom of religion, and the country's religious groups have a long history of peaceful coexistence.

Nicolette D. Manglos

See also Baha'i; Christianity; Indigenous Religions; Islam; Missions and Missionaries; North Africa

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NIGERIA

Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa, the eighth most populous country in the world, and the most populous country in which the majority of the population is Black. Nigeria is situated on the Atlantic coast in the West African region and has a landmass of 923,768 square kilometers. It shares land borders with the republics of Benin in the west, Chad and Cameroon in the east, and Niger in the north. The more than 150 million people of Nigeria have evolved a cultural setting that is a study in contrasts and one with complex dimensions. Nigeria is a vast country characterized by cultural complexity, a multiplicity of religious loyalties, ethnic plurality, and linguistic differences as well as diverse historical experiences.

Nigeria's social boundaries are often described as artificial. This characterization is correct in the sense that certain ethnic groups and communities were split and located within the colonial state territories of different European powers following the 1884 to 1885 Berlin conference. Thus, although Nigeria formally became one entity in 1914, after the amalgamation of the then northern and southern protectorates along with Lagos, many members of the different ethnic groups found their kinsmen and neighbors just outside Nigeria's political boundaries. The name *Nigeria*, derived from the River Niger that runs through the territory, was coined by Flora Shaw, the future wife of Baron Lugard, who at the time was the colonial governor-general. Today, there are estimated to be more than 250 ethnic groups in Nigeria. While no ethnic group enjoys absolute numerical majority, four main groups can be identified, including Hausa and Fulani in the north, Yoruba in the west,

and Igbo in the east. Some other groups include Kanuri, Ibibio, Idoma, Efik, Ijaw, Itsekiri, Nupe, Tiv, and Urhobo. All the ethnic groups have different cultures, which together constitute the country's variety of cultures and religions, often expressed in terms of "unity in diversity."

Contemporary Nigeria seems to have produced the most profound religious vitality, with interaction of the indigenous religions, Christianity, and Islam producing new religious constellations that have attracted more scholarly attention than anywhere else on the African continent. Although several religions exist in Nigeria, religious affiliation appears to be characterized by rather distinct regional divisions, thus helping accentuate regional and ethnic distinctions. However, by the 1990s, Islam dominated the north and has competing numbers with Christianity in the southwestern Yoruba, while among the southeastern Igbo group, Christianity appears predominant. The growth and transformation of these religions can be better understood when considered within the locus of mutual religious interaction, rivalry, and influence. This contest for space and influence has produced new religious movements, which appropriate symbols and employ religious imageries from one or the other of the religious traditions. This gives them an innovative interpretation and produces a new kind of religious creativity. Beyond the focus on religion as a coterie of belief and ritual patterns, the treatment of religion as an epistemological phenomenon allows for a deeper understanding of the complex interaction between Nigeria and other parts of the world. One important aspect of the interconnectedness between globalization and the religious diversity of Nigeria lies in the fact that its religious constituencies both influence globalization and respond to the challenges and opportunities that globalization offers. The connection between globalization and religion in Nigeria can partly be understood in terms of the legacy of European colonial conquest and occupation, neocolonialism, and the introduction of Islam and Christianity. The global scope of religions in Nigeria transcends the country itself and extends into the diaspora. The institutional capacity, demographic mobility, and public visibility of these religions in Nigeria and in the Nigerian diaspora have integrated them into the global religious map.

The spread of Islam and Christianity saw the introduction of new religious ideas and practices

into indigenous communities. The encounter transformed indigenous religious thought and practices but did not replace it; rather, it remains resilient and able to maintain cohesion in a global context. In the face of globalization, religions in Nigeria are characterized by their negotiation between continuity, change, and transformation. With the growing revitalization and internationalization of indigenous religion, many Nigerians are beginning to appreciate more fully their indigenous practices and becoming more concerned with preserving their cultural and religious heritage. Thus, communal rituals, ceremonies, and festivals in commemoration of specific divinities are becoming internationalized. The annual Osun-Oshogbo festival for the Yoruba Osun divinity and the Ngenukwenu of Uburu, an Igbo clan, have become international events that attracts devotees and tourists from all parts of the world. Orisa—a Yoruba religion—now has a much broader spectrum of worshippers from all countries, with tremendous diversity in educational background, cultural exposure, professional experience, and skill.

Furthermore, Orisa is being affected by consumerism and the new technologies of the information age. Books and pamphlets of the do-it-yourself or teach-yourself type are being published by some people, particularly in the Americas, who perceive the religion as marketable. Films and videocassettes, for instance, of Orisa ceremonies and rituals are broadcast and commercialized. The growth of Orisa in the United States and Europe has been characterized by the proliferation of religiosity, in which most Orisa ritual leaders operate and communicate through Internet websites with old and new clients as well as with the wider public. Interestingly, some of these leaders are “White” Americans or Europeans rather than Africans. This accentuates the demographic shift from an ethnic-based religion to a global, multiethnic congregation. Orisa in the West is assuming alternative forms of spirituality for Africans and a growing number of Americans and Europeans.

Nigeria has continued to serve as a significant theater for the dramatization of Islam and Christianity, especially since the beginning of the 20th century. While three major religions exist in Nigeria, cases of violence have largely revolved around the different traditions of Islam and Christianity. Members of these two religions have

continued to live as rivals as they battle for supremacy in the political and socioeconomic spheres of the country. Underlying some of the religious violence is the quest for dominance and authenticity; some adherents or proponents of the competing religious groups attempt to unseat the rival religion, impose their values, and control the state. Some of the violence has also been motivated in part by local and global events such as the Miss World show in 2002 and the Danish editorial cartoon controversy of 2005, thus exemplifying how the local is global and the global is local.

Nigeria has witnessed an increasing proliferation of Pentecostal and charismatic churches, especially since the 1950s and 1960s. Their social-political involvement in both the local and the international religious space has been a force in shaping contemporary Christianity in Nigeria. Many of them constitute ministries that offer social services that state and local governments often fail to provide, including schools, hospitals, and other welfare-related services for members and communities. The mission-related churches have also acted in ways that have put them on the global map. The antigay stance of the Church of Nigeria, Anglican Communion, partly in response to the ordination of homosexual bishops by the Western Anglican body, has drawn both local and global attention. In pursuance of global evangelization, some of the Nigerian churches engage in what is often termed “reverse mission,” aimed at re-evangelizing what they perceive as the secularized or “pagan” West. Thus, some of these churches define themselves as global or international churches with a “global mission.”

Some of these churches have continued to maximize use of the mass media and Internet websites as conscious strategies of self-insertion and identification within a global religious landscape. It is common to find on such websites pages for submitting prayer requests, payment of tithes, and online live worship, thus compressing worship space and time. Islam has also continued to employ various print and electronic media, including Internet satellite broadcasting systems and websites, to widen its reach as a global religion and to facilitate ties among communities of origin and the Muslim diaspora. Like some Nigerian churches, the Islamic groups are also taking up extrareligious functions such as social welfare programs within the diaspora context. Thus, their focus is not only the

spiritual well-being of their members but also the transactions of transnational economics in combination with religious activities. Religions in Nigeria could therefore be said to traverse geographical and cultural space through missionization, migration, tourism, and mediatization. Therefore, a consideration of Nigeria and its religious development must be seen in relation to the global context and its patterns of negotiating global forces.

Elijah Obinna

See also Africa; Anglicans; Global Religion; Indigenous Religions; Islam; New Religions in Africa; North Africa; Postcolonialism; Sexuality; Syncretism

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NILE CIVILIZATION

See Egypt

NIUE

Niue, known as the “Rock of Polynesia,” is a predominantly Christian island in the South Pacific. While indigenous practices remain evident both in communal life and in syncretic beliefs, the Protestant Church of Niue, a Congregationalist

body also known as the Ekalesia Nieuve, commands adherence of 75% of the population. Owing to its history of missionary activity, another 15% of the populace are members of the Church of Latter-Day Saints, with 7% identifying as Roman Catholic and 1.5% as members of the Baha’i Faith. Christian and indigenous practices have been synthesized to a greater or lesser degree on the island and can be seen in the belief in *aitu* (ancestral ghosts) and prohibitions around places where violent deaths occur. The *fono* (prohibition) that falls on such places can be lifted by a pastor, illustrating the attribution of traditional Niuean powers to the Christian clergy.

The island, which in 2003 became the first “WiFi Nation” with free wireless Internet service provided across the country, was for many years known as Savage Island after the inhabitants drove off Captain Cook, preventing him from landing there in 1774. The reputation of the Niueans kept colonial powers at bay, but Samoan missionaries arrived on the island in the mid-19th century, followed by English missionaries from the London Missionary Society in 1861. The presence of the religious institutions played a role in the politics of the island by softening the Niuean perception of the British Crown, which resulted in King Fata-iki offering to cede Niue’s sovereignty to the British Empire in 1887; however, his offer was not accepted by the British until 1900. Niuean national identity too is a direct result of missionary and colonization activity coupled with service in foreign wars and trade; up to the 20th century, community was understood at the village level, with Niueans first identifying as members of a village rather than as citizens of Niue. With export migration to New Zealand, which had annexed the island in 1901, national identity grew to distinguish the newly emigrant Niueans from other Pacific Islanders. New Zealand granted Niue independence in October 1974, resulting in the self-determination of Niue but with continued financial and military support from New Zealand.

Christianity has become associated with modernization in Niue, evidenced in the names of villages (e.g., *Hakupu*, lit. “Any Word of God”) as well as the local anthem *Ko e Iki he Lagi* (lit. The Lord in Heaven). Pastors of the Ekalesia Nieuve, normally trained in Samoa, play a large role in the civic life and are consistently popular choices for

election to political office. One of the country's main secular holidays, Peniamina's Day, celebrates the day the missionary hero Nukai Peniamina returned to Samoa with the Christian gospel after (as the legend goes) being abducted from the island and trained as a pastor at the Malua Theological College in Samoa. A secular holiday celebrating the introduction of Christianity to the island illustrates the extent to which religion has become enmeshed with the state.

John Soboslai

See also Christianity; Missions and Missionaries; Mormons; New Zealand; Pacific Islands/Oceania; Protestant Christianity; Syncretism

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NONVIOLENCE

Nonviolence can have many meanings. Sometimes it means merely avoiding, or intending to avoid, causing physical injury to anyone. When nonviolence is motivated or justified by religious commitment, it usually means refraining from violence on principle rather than merely for practical reasons, intending to avoid harm of any kind to anyone, and wanting the best for everyone. However, there can be no single definition, because every religious community or tradition defines and deals with nonviolence in its own distinctive way. Sometimes there are differing views about nonviolence within the same religious tradition.

This entry demonstrates the complicated relations between religion and nonviolence by focusing on three traditions in which nonviolence has

played an especially important role: Christianity, Hinduism, and Buddhism. It also briefly explores the relation between religious and nonreligiously based nonviolence in the contemporary world.

Roots of Christian Nonviolence

Scholars debate about the role of nonviolence in early Christianity. It may have been a common and important part of Christian life from the beginning. Within a few decades of Jesus' death, the author of the Gospel of Matthew recalled that the early followers of Jesus claimed that he admonished his followers to "love your enemies" and, if struck on one cheek, to "turn the other cheek" (Matthew 5:25–27). However this teaching may not have been a central tenet of the young religion. While some early Christians died as martyrs without resisting—and gave the early Church a reputation for pacifism—others served as soldiers in the Roman army.

After Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire in the fourth century CE, there continued to be some Christians who tried to follow the teaching of "love your enemies" by refraining from all violence. However, they were a rather small minority. Christian leaders and theologians generally found ways to legitimate war (using theories of a "just war") and other forms of violence sanctioned by the government.

The first organized Christian groups strictly committed to nonviolence that left a strong mark on the historical record emerged in the 1520s, the early years of the Protestant Reformation, in German-speaking lands. They called themselves Anabaptists ("baptized again") because they believed that religious faith must be a free choice of the individual, not bestowed or mediated by any agent of the church.

The Anabaptists split into numerous groups, including Mennonites, Hutterites, Brethren, Amish, and others. They intended to live by all of Jesus' teachings, including the one in Matthew 5 about nonviolence. Seeing no hope of changing the sinful ways of the world, they withdrew into their "gathered" communities so that they could pursue perfect love and peace, which they thought was possible for them since (they believed) they had been saved from sin by their faith. Thus, they generally stayed out of political involvement or movements for social change. However, they were rarely left in peace by

the authorities; they often had to move to escape persecution. These churches, sometimes called the “historic peace churches,” are still found all over the world today, though some have become more involved in society and politics in recent years.

The Quaker movement, which began in 17th-century England, was committed to nonviolence as a way of cultivating love for all people. Quaker theologians claimed that all outward violence is an expression of selfish desire and pride, which leads to anger, which leads to aggression. People whose behavior is guided by their relationship with God will purge themselves of desire and pride. Thus, they will not do violence to anyone.

But Quakers believed that every person has both the potential for godliness—the “inner light,” as they called it—as well as the potential for evil within him or her. So all should be treated as equals and friends. And all should be free to find their own way to God; no one should be coerced, especially in matters of religion. Moreover (and here was their great innovation), if every person has “that of God” within him or her and is on the way to being saved, then every society can eventually become free from sin. Quakers therefore got involved in efforts to improve political and economic conditions, drawing on humanism as well as their own religious beliefs. But they were committed to keeping all their efforts strictly nonviolent. Their primary concern was not political change but religious virtue.

As time went on, some Quakers compromised their strict nonviolence. This led to reform movements that pushed for withdrawing from the world. However, some Quakers continued to be concerned about social problems, and in the 20th century, they emerged as strong proponents of political and social change.

One of the issues that concerned Quakers most was slavery. They played a large role in outlawing the slave trade in England in 1807. In the United States, by the 1820s, an alliance including Quakers and other Protestants was demanding the abolition of slavery. A faction of the abolitionists led by William Lloyd Garrison insisted on nonviolence. Their opposition to slavery grew out of their religious belief that all humans should be ruled only by God, not by another person. They argued that a person who uses violence is trying to impose his or her will on, and thus rule over, another. So a true Christian will renounce all violence.

Garrisonian abolitionists helped free slaves in practical ways, most notably through the underground railroad. But Garrison, a gifted writer and orator, emphasized the power of words. His movement’s goal was not to free slaves one by one but to outlaw the institution. When the Civil War broke out, even Garrison and many of his followers decided that they could achieve that goal only by violence, and so they joined the prowar ranks. Others adhered to their nonviolent principles. The most famous was Adin Ballou, who had founded a utopian community in Massachusetts called Hopedale, where he put the principles of nonviolence into practice in daily life.

Christian Nonviolence in the Early 20th Century

Through the end of the 19th century, nonviolence was not seen primarily—and in the historic peace churches not at all—as a method of social and political change. It was seen, above all, as a way to maintain individual spiritual purity by refusing to accept the authority of human rulers and worldly values. Yet the Garrisonian abolitionist movement created an important precedent by combining principled nonviolence with organized political effort.

That tradition came back to life during World War I. Predictably, members of the historic peace churches in Europe and the United States refused to fight. More surprisingly, a significant number of men and women from other Protestant churches denounced the war as morally wrong, and some were led to question the legitimacy of all war, or even all forms of violence. In 1919, this new turn to nonviolence sparked the formation of the International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR). Its founding document declared that love, as revealed in Christ, is the only sufficient basis of human society, and it set forth the goal of creating a world order based on Christian love. By 2009, IFOR was active in 53 nations around the world.

The men and women in IFOR see sin manifest less in individual misbehavior than in unjust and degrading social conditions. So they expect society to be improved by reforming social, political, and economic structures. Many believe that capitalism is a fundamental cause of war and most other forms of violence. Christian love, in their view,

calls for a new economic system so that all might share equally in the abundant goods and services produced by industrialization.

In the United States., IFOR was also heavily influenced by the new trend of pragmatism, which judged beliefs by their practical results, especially their ability to help every individual fulfill his or her highest potential and to improve material conditions for all. IFOR rejected the idea of a military draft, since forcing men into the military would deprive them of their personal freedom. The most important innovation of the World War I era was to treat the ancient religious appeal to the individual conscience and the modern concern for reforming institutions as two sides of the same coin.

This era also saw women rise to leadership positions in the nonviolence movement for the first time. Many of those who founded the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom in 1915 were religiously inspired, although the organization was not explicitly Christian.

Nonviolence in South Asia

The traditional religions of South Asia have always put a strong emphasis on reverence for life. Each of the many religious communities there had its own interpretation of nonviolence and how to implement it. Jains, in particular, have gone to great lengths to avoid doing harm to any living creature. However, before the 20th century, all agreed (and resembled traditional Christianity) in one respect: Nonviolence and the avoidance of harm were observed as a way to maintain individual spiritual purity. Often, this was explained in terms of avoiding the bad effects of karma, the residue of actions in this life that would prevent one from escaping the wheel of rebirth.

In the 20th century, Mohandas "Mahatma" Gandhi brought a great change. Although he always declared himself a Hindu, he drew on Jain and Christian sources to develop a view of nonviolence as a method of social and political change that resembled the view emerging in the United States and Europe. However, Gandhi always insisted that his religious life was his highest priority. Social and political work was merely a method for pursuing spiritual perfection. His goal was to be a perfect living embodiment of Truth, for he believed that "Truth is God."

Gandhi taught that the most basic barrier to following Truth is desire, which leads us to pursue selfish goals rather than Truth and thus reinforces the illusion of the self as a separate reality. When we selfishly pursue our own goals, we try to control others, coerce them, and make situations turn out the way we want. The only way to transcend desire is to practice *ahimsa*, Gandhi's term for nonviolence (a Sanskrit term for noninjury), which literally means having no intention to coerce others or control the outcome of events. *Ahimsa* means never asking "What do I want others to do?" Others are always left free to make their own choices. Nor does *ahimsa* mean asking "What do I want to do?" since "want" is a sign of desire. *Ahimsa* means asking only "What is my duty toward others? How can I serve others?"

Loving service is the way to "persist in truth," the literal meaning of Gandhi's term *satyagraha*. Since satyagrahis must serve the needs of the whole world, the term came to denote primarily acts of nonviolent resistance to political, social, and economic wrongs. Gandhi admitted that this means each of us making ourselves the judge of what is true. But since satyagraha forbids coercing others, when conflict arises, satyagrahis do not inflict suffering on others in an effort to defeat them. Rather, they take suffering on themselves as a test of their own commitment to the truth as they see it, while always remaining open to other views of truth. Thus, they can take a firm stand on a moral issue—unto death, if necessary—without imposing their view of truth on others.

Gandhi taught *ahimsa* throughout India from 1915 to 1947, as leader of the movement to free his land from British rule. His followers included not only Hindus but also Muslims committed to nonviolence, organized in the Khudai Khitmagar. At independence, Gandhi called on the new nation to be a model of nonviolence; he was devastated to see Hindu-Muslim conflict turn violent and break the nation apart, into India and Pakistan. Although neither nation has been governed by Gandhian principles, there are still numerous movements following those principles in South Asia, working for social, economic, and political reform.

Modern Religious Nonviolence

Gandhi was already famous in Europe and the United States by the 1930s, and his example

helped inspire a small number of Christians to refuse participation in World War II. In the United States, some of these were Catholics, inspired more by Dorothy Day's Catholic Worker movement, the first Catholic group to advocate strict nonviolence. Gandhi's greater impact came when Martin Luther King Jr. led African Americans in a largely nonviolent movement to win their civil rights. King's nonviolence blended Gandhian teaching with the Christian theology of personalism, based on the idea that every person is endowed by God with unique potentialities. Justice is a condition in which all are equally free to explore and fulfill their own potentialities. But everyone needs the help of other people, indeed the help of a whole society, to fulfill his or her potentialities. So justice and freedom require that each member of society should care about all the others and help them become what they are meant to be.

Ideally, in what King called the beloved community, everyone will extend selfless care and mutual support to everyone else, realizing that no one can be free and fulfilled unless all are free and fulfilled. When such a cooperative spirit of love and interconnection pervades every aspect of life, there is full and positive peace.

King recognized that as society is now, people are tragically separated from each other and all too easily come into conflict. The goal of religion, King preached, is to move society toward the beloved community by acting for justice. Our acts must involve unyielding confrontation and pressure, because oppressors will usually change their ways only when coerced. However, as long as we are motivated by selfless love offered equally to everyone in the conflict, we participate in the divine force working to harmonize the opposing sides. Acting nonviolently for positive change makes the beloved community real in the present.

King also pointed out that nonviolence is the most practical way for a powerless people to gain their rights. He represented a growing tendency to see nonviolence primarily as a way of creating concrete improvement in society and only secondarily as a way of individual spiritual growth—as opposed to Gandhi, who saw nonviolent action as an end in itself and denied that its value could be measured by its results.

This shift toward a pragmatic view opened the way for nonreligious people to join nonviolent

moves in greater numbers. In the 1960s, for example, millions around the world protested against the U.S. war in Vietnam, motivated by many different faiths or no specific religious faith at all.

Buddhist Nonviolence

Some of the earliest protests against the Vietnam War were in Vietnam itself, led by Buddhist monks. Since its origins in India, Buddhism has tended to support nonviolence (though Asian history certainly records instances of violence committed by Buddhists). Vietnamese Buddhists held to the tradition of nonviolence. But they reflected modern influences in the early 1960s, when they began to use nonviolent techniques to create powerful pressures for political change.

One who became especially famous was Thich Nhat Hanh. Exiled from Vietnam, he has traveled the world promoting what has come to be called “engaged Buddhism,” a melding of Buddhism and political activism. Another very famous leader of this movement is the Tibetan spiritual leader, His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

Both base their teachings on the traditional Buddhist principle of emptiness: Nothing has any independent permanent essence; nothing can exist by itself. Whatever appears to be an isolated “thing” is actually a combination of its constituent elements. Everything that looks like a separate entity is actually a process dependent on, and therefore interwoven with, other processes.

This Buddhist view of the world necessarily leads to principled nonviolence. Nhat Hahn teaches that the root of violence is anger. Yet there is no real boundary between our inner anger and the world's anger, the source of all conflict and violence. What we call the external violence of society is interwoven with our own aggressiveness; to harm another is actually harming ourselves. On the other hand, the preservation of oneself is the same as the preservation of all; the healing of one's own suffering is the same as the healing of all suffering. Nonviolence and compassion for all are thus natural responses for one who is mindful of the true nature of what Nhat Hahn calls “inter-being.”

The Dalai Lama shares much the same point of view. However, he starts from the principle that all people want to be happy and avoid suffering.

Experience shows, he claims, that we are happiest when we are realistic—that is, when we recognize our interconnection with all beings, letting ourselves feel whatever they are feeling. To be happy, then, we should consciously offer empathy and compassion to all beings, doing whatever we can to promote their happiness and relieve their suffering.

Since violence increases the suffering of another, and all people are connected, an act of violence inevitably reduces the happiness and increases the suffering of the one who perpetrates violence, too. Kindness, generosity, and nonviolence are the only route to happiness. And an individual can be happy only when he or she is extending compassion to all humanity, which means working to change the political, economic, and social structures so that they will be more conducive to the happiness of all.

Engaged Buddhists recognize that even the most powerful or unjust people are harmed by the suffering they create. Seeing that the antagonists in any conflict are merely two sides of the same reality, engaged Buddhists stop fighting and extend compassion to all.

Both Nhat Hanh and the Dalai Lama have added another new element to nonviolence: Every person is connected not only to every other person but to all of nature. Nonviolence should therefore be extended beyond human relationships to our relationship with the natural world and indeed the entire cosmos.

By the late 20th century, the quest for personal spiritual growth that originally motivated nonviolence had been merged with a larger quest for a society of genuine liberty and justice for all. Despite their many differences, all the major nonviolence movements in the 20th century have agreed that all humanity is interconnected; whatever any one person does, or whatever happens to any one person, has an effect on everyone else. If any one person is dominated or harmed by another, the harm from that domination undermines the freedom and well-being of everyone. Therefore, no one has the right to exercise authority over another against the other's will. Responsible freedom means respecting and promoting the freedom of all others; it means working for justice. It also means an attitude of universal love. Only a loving society can be just; only a just society can express love. No individual can attain the ideals of freedom, justice, and love

unless society is built on, or at least moving toward, those ideals as shared values.

Ira Chernus

See also Christianity; Dalai Lama; Engaged Buddhist Groups; Fellowship of Reconciliation; Gandhi, Mohandas; Hinduism; Jainism; King, Martin Luther, Jr.; Liberal Protestantism; Mahayana Buddhism; Protestant Christianity; Vietnam; Violence

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NORDIC COUNTRIES

The Nordic countries are Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden. A common feature in all five countries is the existence of majority Evangelical Lutheran churches with different

degrees of autonomy in relation to the state. The populations demonstrate high membership rates in these churches combined with high participation in church-based rites of passage but low rates of church attendance. The religious landscapes are changing, partly due to processes of modernization and globalization and partly due to immigration of people who are adherents of non-Lutheran and non-Christian religions.

Church and State

Soon after the Reformation, the Evangelical Lutheran churches were established as state churches in all five countries. During the 1800s, growing revival movements developed into free churches in Sweden and into movements and organizations inside the frames of the majority churches in the other countries.

Today, the relations between church and state vary. The most stable church-state relations are found in Denmark (5.4 million) and Iceland (290,000), where few changes have taken place. According to the Danish Constitution of 1849, “the Evangelical Lutheran Church is the Danish popular church and supported as such by the state.” Denmark achieved freedom of religion and also instituted a folk church that received “support” from the state and that the state could use for its own support. An important feature in the Danish case is the lack of democratic institutions inside the Danish Folk Church, a development that has taken place in the other countries. The Danish Folk Church is a relatively liberal church that integrates different groups into its fold. The large majority of Danes seem to accept that the state rules the church and has the final responsibility in determining the framework for its activities. The relations between church and state in Iceland are not controversial either. However, the Church of Iceland has since the late 1950s formed democratic institutions such as the Church Assembly, which represents a development of autonomy from the state in internal matters.

In Norway, church-state relations are under pressure. The constitution of 1814 states that “the Evangelical Lutheran religion is the public religion of the state.” In contrast to the other Nordic countries, Norway (4.7 million) continues to have a defined state religion. Norway was the first of

these countries to debate autonomy from the state within a state church system. Partly due to the struggle during World War II to maintain an independent church away from the Nazi occupational forces, the Church of Norway took the initiative during the postwar years to form a representative church council with certain governing functions. Once these and other democratic institutions (the annual Church Assembly) were formed, they implied a growing autonomy from the state in internal matters. Today, the state church system is debated, and there are calls for reforms.

The most profound changes have taken place in Sweden (9 million), where church and state separated in 2000. Historically, a law from 1809 stated that “the King should always be of the pure Evangelical teaching.” Consequently, it was argued that “the religion which the Swedish King must confess . . . thereby is state religion.” During the 1950s to 1980s, several state-appointed commissions dealt with church-state relations. In 1982, the “Church of Sweden Law” was introduced, which gave more autonomy to the church. In 2000, a new law defined the Church of Sweden as an open, democratic Evangelical Lutheran church with autonomy from the state.

Finland (5.2 million) constitutes a unique case, as it has two national churches, the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church and the Orthodox Church. The Lutheran Church has long enjoyed broad autonomy from the state. The Church Assembly was in 1870 granted decision-making rights in internal matters, and when Finland became independent in 1917, its constitution did not mention church or religion, even if the president became the highest protector of the Lutheran Church. The Orthodox Church was also declared a national church on par with the Lutheran Church. Although the state church system was formally abolished in 1919, the Lutheran Church continued to fulfill its traditional role and receive public funding. The Religious Freedom Act from 2003 (replacing the one from 1922), stated that the role of the state was to secure freedom of religion for all in Finland. Today, Finland has a situation similar to the one in Sweden.

The differences in church-state relations have increased during the past 30 years. On one side is Sweden with autonomy from the state, followed by Finland with a great amount of autonomy. On the other side is Denmark, where the Folk Church

is closely tied to the state. Iceland maintains a state church system, although with some church autonomy. Norway resembles Iceland but is moving in the direction of Sweden and Finland, with looser ties to the state.

Church Membership and Rites of Passage

Even if church-state relations are undergoing change and contemporary Nordic countries are modernized and secularized, large parts of the populations are members of the majority churches and use their rituals during important events in life. On one part of the scale is Iceland, which scores the highest on church membership and participation in its rites of passage. In 2005, more than 90% of Icelanders were members of the church, almost 95% of newborn children were baptized, and the same number were confirmed. Most weddings and practically all funerals took place in the church.

On the other end of the scale is Sweden, which has the lowest scores. In 2003, the members in Church of Sweden amounted to 80% of the population. The same year, 70% of all infants were baptized, 58% of all weddings took place in the church, and 87% of all funerals were conducted by the church. However, only 39% of all 15-year-olds were confirmed.

In the middle are Finland, Norway, and Denmark. Traditionally, Finland has been more similar to Iceland, Denmark to Sweden, and Norway in the middle. In 2003, 84% of Finns belonged to the Evangelical Lutheran Church and about 1% to the Orthodox Church. In that year, 87% of all infants were baptized in the Lutheran Church, and 68% of all weddings and 98% of all funerals took place there.

In 2006, 83% of Norwegians were members of the Church of Norway. Seventy-four percent of all infants were baptized, and 67% of 15-year-olds were confirmed. One peculiar phenomenon in Norway is the growing Norwegian Humanist Association (*Human-Etisk Forbund*), with 80,000 members (2007). The association arranges humanist rites of passage, such as infant name giving, confirmation, weddings, and funerals.

In Denmark, 83% of the population were members of the Danish Folk Church in 2004. The same year, 76% of all infants were baptized in the church, 72% were confirmed, and 90% of all funerals took place there.

The membership rate in the majority church relative to the population continues to be relatively stable in Iceland, but it has decreased in Sweden, Finland, Norway, and Denmark since the 1970s. Participation in rituals has also been declining, but more so for confirmations and weddings and less for infant baptism and funerals. The decline can partly be explained by secularization and partly by changes in the populations due to immigration of people of non-Lutheran or non-Christian religion. This is especially true for Sweden, Norway, and Denmark.

Religious Identity, Practice, and Faith

A Nordic survey from the mid-1990s asked, "Do you consider yourself to be a confessing Christian, Christian in your own way, or not a Christian?" This survey confirmed the pattern of Icelanders as the most religious and Swedes as the least, with Finland closer to Iceland, Denmark closer to Sweden, and Norway in the middle. Forty-two percent of Icelanders saw themselves as "confessing Christians" but only 17% in Finland, 15% in Norway and Denmark, and 10% in Sweden. The largest group in all the countries answered "Christian in my own way," which indicates a subjective religious identity. This was true for 76% in Finland, 70% in Denmark, 69% in Sweden, 58% in Norway, and 53% in Iceland. When it came to the identity "Not Christian," Norwegians scored the highest with 27% (probably due to the influence of the Norwegian Humanist Association), followed by Sweden (21%) and Denmark (15%). Only 7% of Finns and 5% of Icelanders considered themselves non-Christian.

Even if church membership is high and few see themselves as non-Christian, people's religiosity is not necessarily demonstrated by going to church. The European Social Survey (ESS) from 2006 showed that the number of people who said they attended Sunday services and religious meetings at least once a month or more was 13% in Finland and Norway, 11% in Denmark, and 10% in Sweden. A study (World Values Survey) in 2000 showed that 12% of Icelanders attended religious meetings at least once a month or more.

The low rates of church attendance do not mean that religious faith is absent. Rather, there is

a widespread private religiosity in all five countries. Once again, Icelanders seem to score the highest and Sweden the lowest on these measures of religiosity. The European Values Study in 2000 showed that 84% of Icelanders and 69% of Danes but only 53% of Swedes believed in God. The same year, 74% of Finns reported in a study that they believed in God. A study in 1998 (International Social Survey Programme) showed that 76% of Norwegians believed in God or a higher power.

A unique feature of Iceland is a widespread faith in spiritualism, which appeared in the early 20th century and constitutes part of popular religiosity today. For example, funerals in Iceland are often accompanied by séances, where a medium will provide proof that the spirit of the deceased lives on.

Several new religious movements appeared in the Nordic countries during the 1970s, but they remained small. More significant are New Age values, which have a wider effect on popular culture and appear in settings not traditionally considered religious—TV entertainment, rock concerts, magazines, and commercials. Some New Age values and beliefs, such as faith in reincarnation, also find support in the population. Surveys from Norway (International Social Survey Programme, 1998) and Sweden (2005) showed that 20% believed in reincarnation. A survey from Denmark (World Values Survey, 1990) showed that 16% of Danes believed the same. Thus, New Age ideas and values play a role in the media and have some support among the population.

Church attendance is low, and only a small group can be classified as “active believers.” Icelanders and Finns scored higher than their neighbors, Swedes, Norwegians, and Danes, when it comes to private religiosity. Nevertheless, people in the Nordic countries have not abandoned their religious beliefs. They generally practice religion in a low-key way and believe in God, but in their own, private way.

Ethnic and Religious Minorities

Among the largest indigenous groups in Europe are the Sami (80,000–100,000), who inhabit the northern parts of Norway, Sweden, Finland, and the Kola Peninsula of Russia. They speak various Sami languages, classified as Finno-Ugric. Traditional Sami shamanism existed until the 18th century, when the Sami were forced to convert to

Christianity. In the 1840s, Swedish Sami vicar Lars Levi Læstadius led a strict Lutheran revival among the Sami. Today, most Sami belong to the majority Lutheran churches in Norway, Sweden, and Finland, and among these, Læstadianism is still dominant. Some Sami belong to the Orthodox Church, as in Russia and Finland, and a handful in Norway. There have also been recent trends of a return to shamanism among some Sami.

Due to processes of globalization and international migration, the Nordic countries are becoming increasingly diverse, even if they vary in this area. Iceland and Finland are still exceptionally homogeneous, whereas Sweden is the most heterogeneous country in this region, followed by Denmark and Norway. Few Icelanders belong to any other religious denomination than the Lutheran majority church. For historical reasons, Finland is more heterogeneous religiously speaking than Iceland. The Finnish Orthodox Church dates back a thousand years when Greek-born monks founded monasteries there. When Finland was annexed by Russia in 1809, the Church of Russia invested in the growing Orthodox Church. In the 1950s and 1960s, the Finnish government funded several new churches, rectories, and cemeteries. Today, the Finnish Orthodox Church (57,044) is a national church, and services are held mainly in Finnish.

In 2003, only 2% of Finns belonged to registered religious communities outside the national churches, such as Jehovah’s Witnesses (19,195), Free Church of Finland (13,443), Roman Catholicism (897), Islam (2,603), Baptist (2,595), Methodist (244), and Jewish (1,189). In 2005, 14% of Finns (800,000) did not belong to any religious community, which included unregistered Pentecostals and Muslims. Indeed, the first Muslims in Finland immigrated during the 19th century. The Tatar Muslims came from central Russia during the 1870s and 1930s, and they founded the Finnish Islamic Congregation in 1925. Finland was one of the first countries in the West to officially recognize a Muslim community. Today, the Tatars (800) constitute a small, well-integrated minority belonging to the urban middle class. The fastest growing group of Muslims in Finland consists of immigrants, who come from Somalia, the Middle East, and former Yugoslavia. In 2003, more than 20 Muslim community organizations were registered. Although the official membership counted 2,100 in 2001, the estimated number is more than 25,000.

The most religiously heterogeneous country is Sweden. In 2001, 3% of all Swedes belonged to free churches, of which Pentecostalism was the largest (90,000). Roman Catholicism (160,000) constitutes the second largest church, followed by various Orthodox churches (100,000). The largest community of faith outside the Church of Sweden is Islam (250,000–300,000), which constitutes approximately 3% of the population. Swedish Muslims consist primarily of immigrants or people of immigrant descent from Bosnia, Iran, Iraq, Turkey, and the Middle East. There are three Muslim national organizations in Sweden, with more than 100 organized communities. Other religious minorities are Jews (20,000), Buddhists (10,000–15,000), and Hindus, Sikhs, and Baha'i (a few thousands each).

In Denmark, Muslims constituted 3.8% of the population in 2006 (207,000). Danish Muslims are for the most part immigrants and immigrant descendants from Turkey, Iraq, and other countries of the Middle East, North Africa, Pakistan, Somalia, and former Yugoslavia. Other religious minorities are Hindus (12,000), Buddhists (20,000), Orthodox Christians (7,000), and Baha'i (260). Estimates suggest that there are 35,000 registered Roman Catholics, 2,400 members of a Judaic faith community, and 5,500 members of Pentecostal churches.

In 2007, almost 9% of Norwegians were registered as members in faith communities outside the Church of Norway. The Christian churches that have experienced the most growth are Roman Catholicism (51,508) and Pentecostalism (40,398). However, the largest community of faith outside the church is Islam, with 79,068 registered members in 2007, a little less than 2% of the population. Muslims of immigrant origin come primarily from Pakistan, Iraq, Somalia, Bosnia, Iran, or Turkey. Other religious minorities are Jehovah's Witnesses (14,756), Buddhists (10,753), Hindus (4,098), Sikhs (2,440), and Jews (868). The toleration of multiculturalism in Norway and the fear of a rising Muslim population triggered the tragic terrorist attack by Anders Breivik on July 22, 2011, killing 77 people.

Whereas Iceland and Finland are more homogeneous than Sweden, Denmark, and Norway, the latter four countries are all becoming increasingly heterogeneous. Finland is the only Nordic country

with a Muslim minority dating back to the 19th century. Today, Islam constitutes the largest religious community outside the majority Lutheran churches in Sweden, Denmark, and Norway. These four countries also have a growing group of Muslim converts. Studies suggest that about one third of Muslims go to religious meetings on a regular basis. A 2003 Danish study found that 35% attended religious meetings regularly, and a 2006 Norwegian survey showed that 30% participated in religious gatherings once a month or more. Estimates from Sweden also confirm the picture that one third of Muslims are religiously active. In addition to the growth of non-Christian religions in the Nordic countries, there is also an array of Christian immigrant churches.

Changing Religious Landscapes

The Nordic countries have majority Lutheran churches with different relations to the state. Even if large parts of the populations support these religious institutions, the ties are weakening, and there is a growing subjective religiosity. In many ways, there is a polarization of the religious landscape in the sense that increasing parts of the populations, especially in Sweden, Denmark, Norway, and Finland, are moving away from the majority churches. At the same time, there is a growing diversity with the formation of new immigrant religious communities—Christian, Muslim, and others—with a more active membership. Altogether, religion in the Nordic countries is less dominated by the majority churches than it was just a few decades ago.

Inger Furseth

See also Denmark; Finland; Iceland; Immigration; Indigenous Religions; Islam; Norway; Public and Private Religion; Religion and State; Sweden

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NORFOLK ISLAND

Norfolk Island is located approximately 900 miles east of Australia (1 mile = 1.609 kilometers) in the southwest Pacific Ocean, and as an external region and dependency, it is part of the Commonwealth of Australia. It has no established religion since Section

116 of the Australian constitution prohibits the Commonwealth from establishing a state religion or imposing religious observances. According to the 2006 census, of the approximately 2,000 residents of Norfolk Island, 593 identified as members of the Church of England, 370 reported having no religion, and 308 declined to answer the question. There is a significant Catholic population (214), and other Protestant denominations include the Uniting Church in Australia (198), Seventh-Day Adventists (60), Australian Christian Churches (17), and Jehovah's Witnesses (15), with 15 residents belonging to a non-Christian religion. Actual attendance has become relatively low, and many ministers are only temporarily assigned to the island.

The English explorer James Cook found these 13 square miles uninhabited in 1774 and claimed the island for Britain. From 1788 to 1814 and again from 1825 to 1855, the island served as a penal settlement. Norfolk Island was virtually abandoned again for 13 months, until Queen Victoria gave the land to the 194 residents of Pitcairn Island, who had outgrown its 1.7 square miles, and they formed the first free settlement on Norfolk Island. The Pitcairners were the descendants of the mutineers of the well-known HMS *Bounty*, a British merchant ship, including English sailors and Tahitians; the Tahitians were mostly women who had married the sailors and converted to Christianity. Over half of the islanders today are Pitcairn progeny, and their story remains central to the cultural history of Norfolk Island; in fact, along with English, their official language is “Norf’k,” a blend of 18th-century English and old Tahitian. While some Tahitian traditions remain part of cultural celebrations, the religious beliefs and practices of their Tahitian ancestors are largely absent from Norfolk Island today.

The mutineers had established Seventh-Day Adventism on Pitcairn Island before bringing it to Norfolk Island, and some of their descendants identify as such today. In 1867, the Church of England set up the Melanesian Mission, a missionary agency supporting Anglican churches in the geographical region of Melanesia, which was then headquartered in Norfolk Island. Though the headquarters have moved, the mission continues today, providing financial and staffing support for the Church of the Province of Melanesia, an independent province of the Church of England.

Catholic missionaries also visited the Island during the late 19th and 20th centuries. Currently, Norfolk Island, like Australia, is becoming increasingly secularized: In the 1996 census, 13% identified as having no religion, compared with 18% in 2001 and 20% in 2006.

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See also Anglicans; Australia; Pacific Islands/Oceania

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NORTH AFRICA

North Africa is a culturally and geopolitically bounded region of Africa that includes the modern states of Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, and Tunisia and the disputed territory of western Sahara. The United Nations' definition of northern Africa as a geopolitical subregion also includes Sudan, and Mauritania is also sometimes included. The majority of the regions' inhabitants are Muslim, although there are significant religious minorities of Jews and Christians, particularly in Egypt.

The region is sometimes referred to as the Maghreb, meaning "west" in Arabic, to denote its position as the western portion of the Islamic world. However, most technical definitions restrict the Maghreb to Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia. The region has been of central importance to the development of both Christianity and Islam since its initial Christianization by the third century CE. Central tenets of Christian thought were developed in the region's notable urban centers, particularly Carthage (in modern-day Tunisia), Hippo (in modern-day Algeria), and Alexandria (in modern-day Egypt). Although little is known about religion in the region prior to the arrival of Christianity

and Islam, preclassical Egyptian civilization is a significant exception. Written records and archaeological evidence from Egypt have provided some of the best preserved data regarding traditional religion on the continent.

The population of the region is made up of Arabs, Berbers, and Egyptians (in the east) and those of mixed Arab-Berber descent. The term *Berber* refers to the indigenous peoples of northern Africa, though this label was originally imposed by Roman outsiders, and many Berbers today prefer the term *Imazighen*. Although Arabic is now the first language of the region, Egyptian or Coptic is still spoken in Egypt, and Berber languages are still spoken by a small minority of those living in the mountains of Morocco. Some Berber groups, including the Kabyles in Algeria and the Chleuh in Morocco, retain much of their traditional culture and identity.

The geography of the region is dominated by the Mediterranean coast along its northern boundary and the Saharan desert in the south, which covers nearly 90% of the region. The Atlas Mountains stretch across Morocco and northern Algeria and Tunisia, forming a steppe landscape that recedes to the Sahara. Berber and Egyptian groups have traditionally cultivated the fertile land found in the valleys of the Atlas Mountains, the Nile valley, and along the Mediterranean coast. Economically, Algeria and Libya rely heavily on rich oil and natural gas reserves. Both Egypt and Tunisia have strong tourist economies, and Egypt has developed significant textile, electronic, and engineering industries as well. Apart from the western Sahara, which is controlled partly by Morocco and partly by an independent military front, the states of the region have been independently governed since the 1950s and 1960s.

Due to the desert boundary, Egyptian history has been politically, religiously, and culturally distinct from the rest of the region. Ancient Egyptian civilization developed along the Nile River with close ties to the Mediterranean world, and this produced remarkable architectural and cultural achievements, including written records dating from the beginning of the 3rd millennium BCE. It is thus one of the oldest recorded civilizations in the world. Today, Egypt is the most industrialized and urbanized country in the region and is highly influential in the Arab world.

Religious and national identities have been closely linked across the region due to the pervasive influence of Islam. Although all of the modern states in the region are considered secular, Islam has played a significant role in the formation of postcolonial government institutions and legal codes. For most of the region's population, the teachings of Islam and Islamic practice are of central importance for how cultural and social institutions are to be organized. However, in the modern era, there has been significant diversity in approaches to the application of Islamic tradition to politics, and debates between traditionalist and reformist Islamic political parties have produced a range of results across the region. Morocco, for example, on attaining independence enacted a system of family law that adhered strictly to traditional Islamic law, and only recently has it reformed some of these laws to grant more rights to women and minority groups within the country. Tunisia, by contrast, implemented radical reforms in family law in its postindependence period that reflected the vision of a modernizing secular state.

Pre-Christian History

The preclassical religion of Egypt has been illuminated through a variety of written records, though none of these provide a complete picture of the Egyptian religion. It is believed that before the political consolidation of Upper and Lower Egypt in 3100 BCE, Egyptian religion was characterized by numerous local nature gods and very little widespread unity. Pharaohs, as local rulers, were associated with particular gods, and rituals revolved around the Nile and its utilization and control. After consolidation, centralized rule became increasingly associated with certain gods, primarily the sun god Ra, and a more universal, hierarchically organized pantheon of gods developed. The cults of Osiris (a central male deity) and Isis (his female counterpart) became increasingly widespread. These cults are often categorized as "mystery religions," due to the fact that devotees underwent extensive secret rituals to attain salvation.

Outside Egypt, significantly less is known about the region's religious history prior to the Roman conquest. As in many other parts of Africa, the traditional religions of the Berber people are obscured due to the absence of recorded evidence. After Phoenician, Greek, and Roman colonies

were established in the western portion of North Africa, there began a long history of cultural and religious exchange along the trade routes of the Mediterranean and the Sahara. The Phoenician colony of Carthage, in modern-day Tunisia, had extensive economic and cultural influence in the region well into the Roman-Christian era. Though most of its written records were destroyed in the Roman invasion, references to Carthage in other sources indicate that it was a wealthy and flourishing urban center. Two other nearby colonies, Africa and Numidia, were later founded by Rome. The colony of Africa was named for a local people called the Afri, and later it gave its name to the entire continent.

The Christian Era

The history of Christianity in North Africa begins almost as early as Christianity itself. Founded by Alexander the Great in 331 BCE., the city of Alexandria on the Nile River delta later became a center of early Christian history, perhaps second only to Jerusalem and Rome. When the Emperor Constantine established the Christian Byzantine Empire in 330 CE, Alexandria was named one of the three sees of Christendom, along with Rome and Antioch. Alexandria was home to many of Christianity's founding theologians, including Clement and Origen, who engaged in debates over the doctrine of the divinity of Christ and the nature of the Trinity. The term *Coptic* is used to refer to the church in Egypt that, according to tradition, originated with Saint Mark's evangelization of Egypt. The Coptic Church produced the first Christian monastic movement. These Coptic monks and hermits, called the "Desert Fathers," are today the subject of many traditional stories and fables. Today, the Coptic Church is the largest religious minority group in the Arab world, with roughly 4 million adherents.

The spread of Christianity to the rest of North Africa began around 250 CE and was nearly complete by 400 CE. The reach of the North African church was primarily confined to the coast, extending only about 200 miles inland from the Mediterranean. Both Carthage and the colony of Hippo became Christian centers, though in the second and third centuries the Christians in both cities were frequently persecuted and martyred. Important figures during this time included Cyprian, a

Carthaginian convert who later became bishop of Carthage and died a martyr in 258 CE, and Augustine of Hippo, a Berber from modern-day Algeria, born in 354 CE. Augustine of Hippo became one of the most important figures in church history. His extensive writings include the *Confessions* and *City of God*, which are still widely read.

The Islamic Era

Muslim Arabs first entered the Byzantine province of Egypt in 635 CE and then spread quickly across the Maghreb. Since the terms *Islam* and *Muslim* did not develop until the latter part of the 8th century, these invaders were usually just called “believers” or “emigrants.” By 710, they had reached the far western end of North Africa, had destroyed the city of Carthage, and had founded two new cities, Kairouan and Tunis, in modern-day Tunisia. The decline of Christianity was initially slow, and yet, with the exception of the Coptic Church of Egypt, it was nearly complete by the 12th century.

Islam in the Maghreb was shaped by numerous waves of Islamic dissidents, who frequently fled west for refuge or to establish new Islamic sects. Thus, Maghrebi Islam combines a variety of elements from various Islamic groups. Some of its most characteristic traditions have been the Mālikī School of Islamic law and the tradition of the Mahdi, a coming prophet who will restore justice in the world. Another influential sect, the Kharijites, were puritans who believed that the Muslim world should be ruled according to populist, democratic principles. These teachings took root among some of the Berbers in the Maghreb, fueling a series of later Berber revolutionary movements.

During the period between 900 and 1300 CE, a series of Islamic empires ruled the Maghreb and its surrounding areas. Each of these empires was influenced by Sunnī Islam, a movement begun in the 8th and 9th centuries that emphasized the study of right action and legal codes based on the teachings of Prophet Muhammad. Sunnī Islam thus became firmly established in the Maghreb during this period. The last of these empires, the Almohads, was defeated by Spanish and Portuguese forces in the early 13th century. For several centuries, the region was ruled by fragmented states until the 16th century, when all of North Africa except

for Morocco came under the rule of the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman influence was slight, however; in most cases, it was limited to indirect rule. Prior to European colonization, independent monarchies had been established by deposing Ottoman authority in Morocco, Tunisia, and Algiers (modern-day Algeria).

The popular Islam that became firmly rooted in the region during this period emphasized order, respectability, and decency in public life coupled with the focus on the Muslim family as the center of social organization. The adult Muslim male, as the head of the family and its representative to the wider society, carried a number of particular responsibilities and privileges as outlined in Islamic legal codes. The focus of teaching and practice was based on the responsibility of the male individual to behave properly in society rather than on the society’s or state’s responsibilities to its citizens. The advent of the secular nation-state model in North Africa would later come into conflict with this firmly rooted orientation toward Islamic religious law and the Muslim family structure.

The Colonial Period

The colonial experience of North Africa was marked by intense and persistent armed conflict as well as the persistence of precolonial religion, language, and traditional cultures. While in other parts of Africa, Christianity came to dominate religious life and European languages were adopted as primary, North Africa retained its near-universal Muslim identity and use of Arabic. Prior to colonization by Great Britain and France, Islamic state-building movements originating in western Sudan had established the Sokoto Caliphate across the region from 1804 to the late 1850s. The Sokoto Caliphate extended its reach from Sudan into western Africa and offered a model for Islamic nationalism throughout the colonial period. It also contributed to the indigenization of Islam and the spread of Arabic literacy among the mass population in the region.

During the height of the Islamic empires of North Africa in the 10th century, the Muslim world was the foremost civilization in areas such as mathematics, astronomy, and medicine. By 1800, however, European nations had come to dominate international conquest and trade, and North Africa was one of the first regions to feel the effects of this transition. In 1897, the Sokoto Caliphate fell to the British, and

over the previous three centuries the Ottoman Empire had become gradually weakened by British conquest. In the end, though, France was to play the most dominant role in the colonization of North Africa throughout the 19th century. The French colonized Algeria in 1830, Tunisia in 1881, and the northern half of Morocco in 1907. Spain controlled southern Morocco and Italy controlled Libya through the colonial period. Egypt was ruled by France for 3 years after being invaded by Napoleon in 1798, then was technically independent, though dominated by British influence, through most of the 19th century. It became a British protectorate in 1882.

Before colonization, the Islamic community based on kinship ties and religion was the primary political unit across North Africa. Although colonization had little effect on the importance of Islam to the national identities of North Africans, it shifted the primary unit of political action to the territorial state. The region had been ruled by foreigners for centuries, but before European colonial rule, these empires had always been Islamic. The importation of a state based on secular principles transformed the role of religion in society, and the colonial and postcolonial period saw a range of responses to this change. Some political leaders and Muslim intellectuals embraced many Western ideas and technologies, while others saw modernization as fundamentally contradictory to their belief system and even took extreme measures of withdrawal from modern education and technology. Sufism, a mystical branch of Islam that emphasizes the radical purification of society according to religious principles, had a huge impact on the region during this period. Sufi orders often fueled both religious revivals and armed nationalist struggles. Short-lived independent Islamic states were established by the Sufi leader Abd al-Qadir in Algeria and by Berbers in the mountains of Morocco during this time, but they were quickly dismantled by the French.

Of all nations, Algeria has one of the bloodiest histories of colonial struggle. Between 1830 and 1871, armed uprisings took place almost yearly; and its independence in 1954 was achieved only after the bloodiest war of independence in the 20th century next to the Vietnam War. Algeria had been considered part of France itself and had been governed as such, though Algerians could only gain French citizenship if they renounced Muslim law. By the mid-20th century, French settlers constituted more than 10% of the population, and close connections to the French educational

system had created an influential francophone Algerian elite.

Egypt was home to some of the most prominent Islamic modernists, including Muhammad Ali (1761–1849), who made radical attempts to modernize the country and adopt Western technology and knowledge. Egypt experienced industrialization beyond that of its neighbors, coupled with a heavy burden of foreign debt and increasing economic inequality. Across the region, however, there were also huge numbers of rural dwellers whose religious and social lives were changed very little by modern ideas. The impact of colonization in North Africa was felt in the creation of parallel worlds: the traditional, Arabic-speaking Muslim masses and the Western-educated, secularized, francophone elites.

The Independence Period

After the states of North Africa achieved independence in the 1950s and 1960s, they began the long process of building state governments that would balance the demands of the Islamic society on the one hand and modernization on the other. The states that have emerged have all been officially secular and in favor of modernization; however, they also name Islam as the state religion. There are also variations in the degree to which popular religious practice has been secularized, with certain elements remaining central in parts of the region and dwindling elsewhere. Generally, elements that survive across the region include pilgrimage to Mecca (Makkah), prayer in mosques and the role of the mosque as a community center, some presence of ecstatic and mystical sects, nationally and locally celebrated festivals and feasts, the observance of the fast of Ramadan, and the ban on consumption of pork. Additionally, the central role of the Muslim family persists, and despite the influence of Western feminism and an increase in women's participation in politics, men and women continue to inhabit segregated public and private spheres. The wearing of the veil continues to be widespread, though the reasons for doing so are diverse and not always religious.

Islamic revivalism in North Africa has been highly publicized in the past two decades as a reaction against secularization and fuel for terrorist activity. Although it is true that "Islamism," as the political ideology of the modern revival is sometimes called, tends to involve skepticism of Western values and

dissatisfaction with the results of independence, very few of these groups engage in violent activity of any kind. Instead, they generally work to build Islamic schools and hospitals and engage in other grassroots activity to strengthen the religious fabric of their societies. Usually, their political writings have focused on the renewal of an Islamic society in North Africa based on religious ideals. The democratic protest movements that toppled authoritarian regimes in Tunisia in 2010 and in Egypt in 2011, along with armed struggle in 2011 against the established regime in Libya, has brought a new political vibrancy to the region involving democratic religious parties.

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See also Africa; Algeria; Arabic; Augustine; Coptic Christianity; Egypt; Islam; Islamic State; Islamism (Political Islam); *Khariji*; Mediterranean World; Middle East; Morocco; Postcolonialism; Secularization; Sufism; Tunisia

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these regions have been included in the entry on Latin America, so this entry will focus on the North American countries of Canada and the United States, which are quintessential modern experiments. Nearly from the beginning, these nations have separated religion from national government, created a pluralistic religious settlement, and opened the public square to competing religious claims. Nonetheless, at various times in their histories, religion has dominated the cultural and, more rarely, the political ethos. This has been especially true with regard to Christianity in the contemporary, globalized era. Thus, creating an open religious market allowed the religions of North America to thrive rather than wilt as some theorists of secularization have suggested. Indeed, religions are innovative and have seized opportunities to insert themselves into the public square. This entry examines the present demographics and the history of religions in North America, concluding with an analysis of the consequences of these movements with regard to the contemporary period.

Modern Demographic Realities

The Christian experiment succeeded in North America, though not without cost. When the Europeans came to the continent in the 15th and 16th centuries, it is estimated that there were 2 million indigenous people already living on the land. Due to disease and warfare, by 1900, only 500,000 remained. Meanwhile, Christians missionized and "Christianized" the indigenous populations, with mixed results. Nonetheless, through the centuries, Christianity was able to dominate the North American religious market. This is apparent when examining the present religious demographics of North America. Out of Canada's 33 million people, 77% self-identify as Christian (43% Roman Catholic, 29% Protestant); other religions make up 6% of the rest, with Islam as the leading minority religion at 2%. Of the Canadian population, 16% claim no religion, which makes this population nearly identical to its counterpart in the United States.

The United States has a similar demography to that of Canada. Seventy-nine percent of the nation self-identify as Christian, but in contrast to Canada, U.S. Protestants dominate at 51% of the population compared with Roman Catholics at 24%. There is a similar percentage of minority religions as in Canada; however, Judaism rather

NORTH AMERICA

Though the term *North America* sometimes includes Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean Islands,

than Islam is the leading U.S. minority religion at 2%. Two demographic trends are critical to keep in mind: First, in both countries, the number of affiliated Christians has fallen by nearly 10% over the past decade, with those claiming no religion gaining the lion's share; second, the makeup of U.S. Protestantism has also shifted dramatically, with a nearly 10% decline in gross population as well as a change in the overall proportion of Protestants to the rest of the U.S. population. Among U.S. Protestants, the mainline churches (Congregationalist, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, and Lutherans) have declined dramatically over the past 40 years, and evangelicals now make up more than half of the total Protestant membership.

In other words, in the open religious markets of North America, Christianity still dominates the culture, but other subcultures, particularly those with no religion, are now becoming a force to be reckoned with. Indeed, religious subcultures are a potent reality in North America, leading to vitality and fragmentation both culturally and politically. Globalization, with its open communication and instant gratification of nearly every impulse, has little patience with the status quo, leading to a fissiparous family of competing religious sects. We now trace the historical etiologies of these modern trends.

Domination and Christianization

The early explorers of the continent were from French and Spanish Roman Catholic backgrounds; they created multiple settlements and sought to convert the natives to Christianity. They were led by Jesuits and Franciscans with good intentions but with little real success. Indeed, early contact was marked by the devastation of Amerindian populations, unprotected from European diseases and nearly helpless against European weaponry. Nonetheless, and particularly in Canada, the French staked their claim and built a foundation that would become the French Catholic-dominated province of Quebec.

The early power of the Catholics, particularly in the United States, was superseded in the 17th century with the founding of the Puritan Boston settlement: a "Christian experiment" that was sustained by a demanding discipline, both in their churches and in their government. One had to be a Protestant Christian to live in the community. This Puritanism

created religious refugees such as Roger Williams of Rhode Island, who demanded a political polity that was open to "others" despite his acceptance of the religious exclusiveness of his fellow Boston Puritans. Williams's experiment was the origin of the Baptist idea of "soul freedom," allowing each one to make up his or her own mind—an innovation that caught fire by the 18th and 19th centuries, particularly in the southern and western colonies.

The Quaker experiment, led by William Penn, seeded Philadelphia as a city of brotherly love and was a critical player in the political culture of Revolutionary America. In the next century, Quakers led in the Anglo-American abolitionist movement. The most recent incarnation of the Quaker culture is its contribution to an anti-institutional spirituality. To be sure, today, these forms of spirituality that abjure formalized religion percolate across the American scene. The early-American egalitarian spirit rejected a professional clergy, leveling the playing field between clergy and lay people in the Baptist traditions, and nearly obliterated the distinctions in the nondenominational Christian churches created in the 20th and 21st centuries. Finally, a spiritual but not religious ethos picked up power and numbers, creating diverse modes of spirituality. Some even adopted forms of Asian religions from the East in 19th-century New England that blossomed on the West Coast in the 20th and 21st centuries.

A third Christian folkway came by way of the Scotch-Irish Church, who were embodied first in the Calvinist denominations—Presbyterians and Congregationalists; 0.25 million Scotch-Irish immigrated to the American colonies between 1717 and 1776 and filled the Appalachians from Pennsylvania to Georgia. This particular type of cultural and religious ethos coveted a "natural liberty" built on creating "elbow room" so that all individuals could provide for themselves and their families. This religious and cultural ethos cultivated an "us versus them" habit of mind and a refusal to associate with those they perceived as different. These so-called others, often Indians, were turned into enemies. This powerful strain of American Christianity has been both a cultural and political force. Andrew Jackson, the first president from this tradition, was notorious for expelling the Cherokee from their legal lands and sending them on forced migration (the Trail of

Tears) in the 1830s. Woodrow Wilson, president from 1913 to 1921, was from this tradition as well. Though more refined than Jackson, he was deeply engaged in cultural, religious, and political crusades “to make the world safe for democracy.” The most recent exemplar of this tradition is George W. Bush, who carved out a religious politics that political historians have seen as shaped by Methodist perfectionism, advocating a compassionate conservatism coupled with a cosmic sense of U.S. destiny, reflecting a clear line between good and evil. Just 9 days after 9/11, Bush remarked, “The course of this conflict is not known, yet its outcome is certain. Freedom and fear, justice and cruelty have always been at war, and we know that God is not neutral between them.”

The last powerful British Christian movement in the early-European settlement of America was the Virginians. They brought to the continent the Anglican religion, called the Episcopal Church in America. Virginian gentry came to the New World as elites or nearly so, cherishing a form of personal dominance based in class and race. They heralded an Enlightenment form of religion embodied in Thomas Jefferson’s Christian deism; following this ideology, they created an Enlightenment-based governmental polity, balancing devotion to religion with restraints placed on it. The First Amendment to the American Constitution (which lacks any mention of God) prohibited the state “establishment” of religion and ensured its “free exercise” and was modeled on Jefferson’s Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom. John Adams, hailing from Boston Puritan roots and the second president of the United States, was nonetheless, in his adult years, a Unitarian—a European American invention. In a letter to Jefferson, he stated that the founding fathers had achieved independence based on the “general principles of Christianity.” Having witnessed the anticlericalism of the French Revolution in 1789, George Washington, Adams, and Jefferson believed that religion, or what they called “General Christianity,” was the truth on which a stable social order must be built.

By 1759, British dominance on the continent had been established with the conquest of New France in Canada and the dominance of Puritans, Quakers, and Virginians, which shaped the American Constitution. Even so, the British Canadians accommodated to the French with the Quebec Act of

1774, allowing the French Catholics to accept British power in the North Country. Early on, Canada had no interest in independence from their mother country, and indeed, many Protestants who remained loyal to the British in the United States fled to the north. These were known as Foreign Protestants, including large numbers of Lutherans who today live in the south shore area of Nova Scotia. After America gained its independence, Protestant immigrants to Canada included Anglicans as well as Presbyterians and Methodists. The Methodists gathered around Toronto, a city that became known as one of the largest gathering places of Methodists in the world, eventually establishing the nondenominational University of Toronto.

The tensions in Canada between various religious groups continued in the 19th century with the influx of Presbyterians from Scotland. This immigration was one of the causes of the 1837 rebellion in upper Canada, which was stopped by the new government, which accepted the growing voice of non-Anglican Protestants. Nonetheless, the Ultramontane French Catholics in Quebec practiced a strict and conservative form of Catholicism, fighting with the anticlerical French Catholics as well as battling the staunchly monarchist and pro-British Anglicans of English Canada. These tensions were eased in part by the large immigration of Irish and southern European Catholics in the mid-19th and early 20th centuries. A similar movement of Catholics occurred in the United States during the same period. Tensions in the United States increased, however, as the Protestant hegemony was undercut and Catholics were seen as corrupting both the “true” faith and American “Protestant” culture.

The early and mid-19th centuries in the United States solidified the Protestant hegemony culturally if not politically. A Pan-Protestant culture made up of Congregationalists, Presbyterians, and German Lutherans in the North and Methodists and Baptists in the South and Midwest colored the country with a churchd religion that was warmhearted and reform minded. Revivals burned over many districts across the country, seeking to light the fire of faith in Holiness movements that became fragmented and exploded with religious entrepreneurs who created new religions, such as Christian Science and the Church of the Latter-Day Saints (the Mormons), as well as creating new sects of Christianity, such as the

Seventh-Day Adventists and Jehovah's Witnesses. Each expressed in some form a deep desire for personal transformation. This was the age of reform. Voluntary organizations expanded, and social advocacy to correct every sin filtered across America. Christian revivalists like Charles Grandison Finney battled alcohol, supported women in ministry, and became a force against slavery. It was the latter, of course, that splintered not only the country but also many denominations along the Mason-Dixon Line; Presbyterians, Methodist, and Baptist were divided by the issue of slavery, each citing biblical verses to support their heartfelt positions.

Modernity and Its Consequences

The secularizing power of modernity increased toward the end of the 19th century to confront religion in North America. It came, chiefly, in the writings of the British naturalist Charles Darwin. In his book *On the Origins of Species* (1859), Darwin argued for an evolutionary theory for the human species. It challenged the most fundamental anthropology of Protestant Christianity and, at that time, the Catholic faith as well. For Protestants, the Bible said that humans were made in God's image. The reaction against Darwin and others who extolled his ideas set off a chain of events that forever fragmented Christianity in North America. Partly in response to the movement of modernity, French Catholic Quebec became ultramontane—that is, conservative Catholic. From 1850 into the mid-20th century, Quebec maintained one of the highest rates of Mass attendance in the Catholic world, adopting the core positions that condemned liberalism and identifying with the first Vatican Council of 1870, which condemned all forms of modern liberalism, including the separation of church and state.

In somewhat similar terms, although manifested in part as a reaction to Catholicism, American Protestant Christianity attacked Darwin's evolutionary theory and, moreover, denied and rejected the so-called higher criticism of the Bible as antithetical to the true Christian faith. This growing counterculture percolated for many years but erupted most profoundly in the modernist-fundamentalist debates of the 1920s. The precarious homogeneity of 19th-century Protestant evangelical culture split apart. Harry Emerson Fosdick, a New York City Baptist, attacked fundamentalism

in his 1922 sermon "Shall the Fundamentalists Win?" His position won the day, but his more conservative comrades turned away from the Protestant mainline to form a powerful and parallel culture that was at first sectarian but later in the century began to engage mainstream culture. The five fundamentals of conservative Christianity included the inerrancy of Scripture, the blood atonement of Christ, the authenticity of Jesus' miracles, the virgin birth of Christ, and the Second Coming; these doctrines became a litmus test for many conservatives in the 20th century by identifying what were thought of as "true" Christians.

Mainline and liberal Christians, beginning in the first decades of the 20th century, argued for a social gospel of justice for the poor and those in the urban areas that had been exploited by the explosive growth of industrial factories. Walter Rauschenbusch, a German Baptist theologian, pleaded for a gospel that not only "saved" the soul but also cared for the body. But following World War I, the social gospel crumbled, and many simply wanted to enjoy the world at peace. The Depression that began in 1929 not only undercut employment but depressed the church and stalled the early-century hope of Christianizing the world. Few had time to think about anything but caring for their own. Modernization and the new global economy brought with them the stark realities of impersonal workplaces, exploitive business practices, and urbanization. Religion in North America became relatively inward and cautious. Conservative Christians, particularly in the United States, began a long process of building a distinctive conservative culture over what they interpreted as the corrupt secularity of American culture. Christian conservatives built schools, colleges, and churches that communicated a strong message of family first, traditional social values, and hard work. Their labor did not go unrewarded, although the full force of their political power was only felt in the last quarter of the 20th century.

In the post-World War II period, with its "return to normalcy," churches boomed, families grew, and the global economy became a reality through new markets, modern transportation, and ever-improving communication. But a new expression of modern secular culture was on the horizon, the counterculture of the 1960s. Against the background of an affluent middle class, an unpopular war, and leaders who seemed uninterested in the voices of young

people, many youth rebelled. The changes to religion were more than cosmetic. The Vatican Council of 1962 to 1965 made accommodations to modernity and undercut some traditional practices and conservative norms in a period of declining attendance and adherence. The “quiet revolution” in Quebec had the effect of changing the Quebecois from one of the most conservative and traditional Catholic populations into one of the least. New seminary candidates declined, brothers and sisters left the monasteries, and attendance at Mass decreased. The Catholic Church continued to express a stable set of conservative moral positions that condemned birth control and took stances against both homosexuality and the ordination of women. The Roman Catholic Church, however, did become more engaged in social justice issues; the 1983 U.S. Bishops’ letter on “The Challenge of Peace” was a powerful indictment of war. Nonetheless, rather than drawing Catholics into the church, every move toward engagement with modernity seemed to provide them with more excuses to leave.

The Protestant mainline churches in the United States and Canada engaged the modern world as well, but they advocated a liberal, rather than conservative, social platform. The United Church of Canada, representing nearly 10% of Canadians, became the most liberal Protestant church in the world, supporting women’s ordination, gay pastors, and homosexual marriage. The mainline churches in the United States—the Presbyterian, Congregational, and Episcopal churches—did not go as far as their northern sister churches, but they instituted the ordination of women and expressed a new openness to talk about homosexuality as well as supporting abortion rights for women. Again, this liberal movement engaged the culture, but it did little to keep young people in the churches. A relatively dramatic decline in church membership occurred over the last half of the 20th century, with most mainline churches losing more than 40% of their membership. The mainline was not only sidelined, but it lost most of its public influence on cultural and political issues of the day.

Key Trends in the Contemporary Cultural Scene

At the end of the 20th century, the secular principles of modernity had deeply affected the religion

of North America. Globalization, as the latest expression of modernity, created new modes of transportation, communication, and technologies that affected culture and religion in profound ways. Nonetheless, globalization has neither destroyed nor homogenized religion but created a space where greater variety can and does exist. In this space, religion has developed multiple subcultures that include many different groups, none of which dominate in quite the same ways as in the past. In this sense, smaller interest groups must partner with others to achieve electoral victories. On the liberal side, gays partner with labor unions, blue-collar workers with liberal elites, and Hispanics with White professionals. For political conservatives the partnerships are equally diverse: libertarians with White evangelicals, southerners with Orthodox Jews, and low-tax atheists with conservative Catholics. Thus, to attain power in Canada or in the United States, coalitions must be developed, and former strangers will have to create unexpected alliances.

Nevertheless, two groups are growing in North America more than others. On the one hand, those who decline to identify with any religion and, on the other hand, particularly in the United States, those who are often called conservative Christians, including evangelical nondenominational types, fundamentalists, and charismatics. The “no-religion” group currently makes up approximately 16% of the population in both Canada and the United States and includes atheists, agnostics, and a variety of humanists. In the United States, writers, scientists, and academics such as Christopher Hitchens and Sam Harris have written best-selling jeremiads against the rationality of a belief in God. This latest barrage of antireligious books surged following the attacks on U.S. targets on September 11, 2001. It was nearly impossible not to notice that religion was implicated in these attacks; to be sure, a rare form of extreme Islamic faith impelled the hijackers to run commercial airliners into the Pentagon and the twin towers of the World Trade Center. In the notes found in the hijackers’ suitcases, nearly every step of their journey was facilitated and directed by verses from the Qur’an. Many have argued that these actions went directly against the Islamic tradition, which forbids the killing of innocents. At the same time, the al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden (d. 2011) made it clear that those in the Twin Towers, the Pentagon,

and the hoped-for final target, the White House, were not innocent of crimes against God due to their position(s) in world economics, the military, and politics. Needless to say, these conflicts offered ammunition for critics of religion. Atheists argued that religion was the problem without fully interrogating the fact that much of the genocide in the 20th century was led by atheistic regimes; American Christians who came out of the Scotch-Irish and southern roots of Protestantism exploited the idea that Islam, as Billy Graham's son, Franklin, argued, was an "evil religion." George W. Bush joined in by speaking of the Crusades. Bush later apologized for these remarks and emphasized that the "War on Terror" was not against Islam per se, which he argued was a religion of "peace," but that extremists had used the religion of peace for their evil ends.

In a sense, North America woke up to globalization on September 11. All the factors that facilitate a world economy focused attention on that one event. Modern transportation that allows for global commerce was affected, and modern communication that brings the world together suddenly brought the world too close. In particular, the military might and capacity of the United States had to be rethought with regard to whether or not having bases in Arab/Islamic countries was wise or expedient. Governments that supported the spread of democracy while gaining most of their energy resources from nations that lacked forms of democracy had to come to grips with these contradictions that were now on fire in front of them.

Perhaps the greatest shock to secular elites in North America was that in a world suffused with the habits of globalization—sophisticated technologies, modern markets, and split-second communication—an act ostensibly motivated by religion had arrested the world's attention and brought "business as usual" to a halt. One reaction, as we have seen, was to push for a return to a naked public square; yet this secular answer, in light of the religious traditions of North America, had little political or cultural impact. In the United States in particular, much of the populace distrusts secularists. Empirical data have shown that of all characteristics, the last thing that Americans find acceptable in a candidate for the American presidency is atheism. Indeed, instead of less religion in North America, the continent seems to be experiencing an acceleration of it. The Liberal Party in Canada has been in

disarray, as is evidenced by that fact that the recently elected prime minister, Stephen Harper, has a relatively conservative social perspective. Contemporary Canadian politics is marked by fragmentation and internecine conflict, while in the United States, some feared and others looked forward to a return to religious politics in the person of George W. Bush. So globalization, rather than pushing it to the sidelines, has empowered religion, at least momentarily.

Religious Politics and Fragmentation

Thus, two forces are headed toward one another in the globalized context of North America: a fragmented cultural scene combined with a revived religious politics. In terms of fragmentation, in both Canada and the United States regional differences now matter more than ever. Mark Silk and Andrew Walsh's work concerning these differences between religion and politics in the United States makes this point. The U.S. presidential elections show dramatic differences in the regional voting habits of Americans, with the South and, to a lesser extent, the Midwest supporting the Republican Party and the Northeast and the West supporting the Democratic Party. We know from history that the religious and political folkways of the Southern Crossroads and the South are deeply rooted in White Baptist culture and mixed with strains of the Methodist Holiness tradition along with a rising charismatic movement, which supports a resolute prosperity gospel (to be blessed both materially and spiritually). Moreover, in this hotbed of religion there is a growing and potent relationship between a conservative Christian culture and the U.S. military. Indeed, White evangelicals share a coalition of Baptists, Pentecostals, Fundamentalists, and conservative Catholics that is the most loyal coalition of the Republican Party. At its heart is an agenda of moral values, the support of family, reproduction (conservatives now outreproduce self-identified liberal families by 2 to 1), and traditional social values that advocate against abortion and gay marriage in particular. Exemplars of this movement include Southern Crossroad leaders, such as James Dobson, originally from Louisiana and now head of the organization Focus on the Family; T. D. Jakes, the Pentecostal prosperity gospel African American

megachurch pastor, originally from West Virginia, now out of Dallas, Texas; and Joel Osteen, the Houston-based megachurch pastor and best-selling author of Christian self-help books. Dobson is by far the most politically active of the three, while Jakes and Osteen rarely, if ever, comment on political topics.

Perhaps the most critical figure in the contemporary American scene is Rick Warren, the pastor of the Saddleback megachurch in California and a best-selling author. Warren has differentiated himself from the Christian Right, as it came to be called in the 1990s. Unlike Pat Robertson and the late Jerry Falwell, he does not make his political affiliations obvious. Nonetheless, he has become the American evangelical that presidential candidates from both parties seek out, having moderated a nationally televised candidate's forum on religion and politics in 2008 between John McCain and Barack Obama. While Warren does not make his politics explicit, he has stated to his constituency in no uncertain terms that a "values voter" cannot support a prochoice candidate. Thus, for Warren, the Republican Party is by definition the "moral party," and it has been shown that an anti-abortion and pro-heterosexual marriage stance is a litmus test for many conservative Christians.

Thus, the religious politics of American conservative Christianity are now what has been called a new civic gospel. This is due to a set of related beliefs: (a) the United States is a Christian nation and should protect its Christian heritage, (b) Christian conversion is the way to solve social issues, (c) it is difficult to be a Christian and a political liberal, (d) the promotion of democracy around the world should be encouraged, and (e) evangelicals should advocate for economic, religious, and political liberty as well as, by extension of these last two, the war in Iraq. This is a powerful elixir of a robust and entrepreneurial American Christian conservative culture that, due to its values, partners with a market economy and wants to open new markets for economic, political, and religious reasons. When conservative Christians speak about the war in Iraq, they speak of it in altruistic terms: They are proud that their sons and daughters are giving themselves to protect the United States, they seek to expand freedom overseas, and they want to open up Islamic lands to Christian conversion. The caveat here is that while

this is a potent political gospel—a politics that is rationalized by religious principles—evangelicals are also suspicious of politicians, surmising that politicians desire to use evangelicals for their own purposes. Evangelicals are less interested in creating theocracies and even more deeply committed to a "moral culture."

To some extent, Canada is more European than American in temper and in demographics; it reacts to the religious politics of the United States with disdain and even indifference. There are very few evangelicals in Canada, particularly in comparison with the United States, though some of the Christian conservative social values are bubbling up from the southern parts of the central provinces, where evangelicals are making inroads. Church attendance in Canada, however, mirrors the levels of Europeans rather than Americans, with 15% for Canada and 35% for the United States. Moreover, the importance of religion in Canada approximates that in Europe, with 30% of Canadians claiming that religion is important compared with 60% in America. Canadians simply take their religion less to heart and have little interest in its political implications. In this way, they are more like the liberal and progressive wings of the American Protestant and Catholic churches. Indeed, both of these latter groups strongly reject the idea that evangelicals are the only ones with moral values. To be sure, religious liberals, whether Christian or Jewish, advocate for what they call "moral choices," supporting the abortion rights of women as well as backing homosexuals and their legal rights to marriage and religious ordination. The Unitarian Universalist congregations, though very small in relative terms within the United States, mirror the United Church of Canada in supporting abortion rights and gay rights. Nonetheless, leading liberal religionists are nearly impossible to identify as public figures in North America.

In the mid-20th century, the liberal Americans Reinhold Niebuhr and Paul Tillich were on the cover of *Time* magazine, but today, liberal religious leaders are nearly invisible on the national scene. When talk shows want a representative to talk on religion, liberals are rarely represented. In part, this is because of the growing strength of conservative Christians in American culture and the growing assumption that Christianity *is* American conservative culture. Perhaps more important, despite the growing influence

of conservative Christianity, the bottom line is that North American culture has moved and continues to move toward more liberal, and indeed secular, values. The separation of church and state has continued apace despite the fact that faith-based initiatives do arise. Moreover, gay rights have gained acceptance, particularly along the coasts in the United States and in the Canadian legal structures. Abortion is legal across North America, and this right seems secure. Indeed, on public policy issues dear to their hearts, liberal religionists and secularists have won the day. In this sense, the rise of a religious politics is significant but not definitive.

The Future of North American Religion and Globalization

Predictions are always dangerous; nonetheless, it appears certain that globalization is here to stay. Open economic and cultural markets are the backbone of market capitalism; communication, travel, and technology show no signs of slowing and are bound to increase exponentially. What appears on the horizon in the North American situation is a growing fragmentation of religious subcultures and, perhaps more ominously for civic peace, the growth of conservative Christian enclaves and more aggressive secular and atheist subcultures. Neither group is dangerous in and of itself, but each shows an interest in pushing its agenda. In this sense, on occasion, they reflect a Manichean worldview that portrays the world in either/or terms, with good and evil confronting one another. In a world that is so diverse and complex, easy answers and superficial labeling are not helpful. Globalization was thought to be the solution since it would lead the world into a secular and rationalized peace. But, clearly, religion does not seem to be going away, and the forces arrayed against it seem to be growing more militant as well.

In the midst of the recent cacophony of religious conflict and civic tension, the 2008 election of Barack Obama as president of the United States was a remarkable event, in that he is widely recognized as embodying many of the cross-boundary qualities of this period of globalization. Whether as president he lives up to his label as a “transformational candidate” is yet to be seen; the religious and nonreligious subcultures of North America are difficult to reconcile, and deep tensions remain.

But the test of any culture is how it manages its divisions. North American culture continues to accommodate the waves of globalization, and some may hope that the tides of secularization are on the rise, but clearly, we have not heard the last of North American religious folkways.

James K. Wellman Jr.

See also Canada; Christianity; Evangelical Movements; Liberal Protestantism; Mexico; Mormons; New Religions in the United States; Pentecostal Movements; Secularism; United States of America

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NORTHERN IRELAND

Politics, religion, and society in Northern Ireland are so deeply intertwined that it is virtually

impossible to discuss issues of religion and society without constant reference to the ongoing political conflict. The creation of Northern Ireland as a six-county region of the United Kingdom (as opposed to the nine Ulster counties) in 1921 was itself based on a religious headcount, since the unionist aim at the time was to ensure a Protestant-Catholic ratio that would guarantee Protestant-unionist political domination in the long term. There had been significant political, social, and cultural differences in the past between members of the Church of Ireland, Presbyterians (who were mostly represented in the northeastern counties of Ireland and thus came to be the largest Protestant group in Northern Ireland), and members of other Protestant denominations, such as the Methodists or the Baptists, but the rise of cultural nationalism in Ireland in the 19th century and its association with Catholicism led to a strategic regrouping of a majority of Protestants under the banner of political unionism, which logically persisted in Northern Ireland when the region was created. This also had clear social implications, with the perpetuation of religious segregation in various areas of society, including housing and schooling, on the basis of a Catholic/Protestant divide.

The sectarian conflict that erupted in 1969 had essentially political and social roots related to the Protestant-unionist domination over the Catholic-nationalist minority. The measure of peace that has been achieved since the Good Friday Agreement in 1998 with the setting up of a power-sharing government has not put an end to the high degree of religious segregation in the region, with so-called mixed marriages still being quite rare and less than 5% of children attending integrated schools. In some ways, the celebration of cultural traditions and differences that came to be part and parcel of the peace process has further entrenched the division of Northern Ireland society into two communities, despite the comparatively high degree of cultural homogeneity among Catholics and Protestants in the region.

As in the Republic of Ireland, while weekly church attendance has fallen for all religions in Northern Ireland in the past decade, it remains exceptionally high by European standards, and the pace of secularization has been much slower than in Great Britain, although there has been a moderate shift toward more liberal attitudes to issues of family and sexual morality among both Catholics and

Protestants. Again, as in the Republic, there has also been a significant increase of people who describe themselves as having no religion—up to 11.5% of the population in 2005. In sharp contrast with both Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland, the number of people describing themselves as being of a religion other than either Protestant or Catholic is still very small—less than 0.5% according to the 2001 census, which did not provide for specific religious affiliations for these minorities.

Karin Fischer

See also Ethnic Nationalism; Ireland, Republic of; Politics and Religion; Protestant Christianity; Religious Nationalism; Roman Catholicism; Secularization; Terrorism; United Kingdom; Violence

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NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

The Northern Mariana Islands (legally known as the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) is one of two U.S. insular areas (an area that is American territory but not one of the 50 states) that occupy an important area of the Western Pacific. It is made up of 15 islands and is approximately 75% of the way between the state of Hawai'i and the Philippines. The primary religious belief is Christian, with most believers following Roman Catholicism.

Among the immigrants moving to the Northern Marianas, most consider themselves Catholic. The majority of social pastimes focus on the Catholic Church and its sacred celebrations, including yearly holidays in reverence of each town's patron saint. In addition, there are a number of Protestant institutions, including many of the mainline denominations found within the United States, such as,

Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, and Seventh-Day Adventists. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints can also be found in the Marianas. The Catholic diocese of the Marianas is headquartered in the United States and was originally a section of the archdiocese of San Francisco.

Although a great percentage of the populace subscribe to Christian beliefs (approximately 85%), many of the indigenous beliefs are still extant, including the worshipping of family members, or *taotaomo'na*—ghosts that are thought to dwell in specific trees and other unusual locales in the various forests. Chamorros (the natives of the Marianas) feel that their ancestral kin have inhabited the islands since time began. Moreover, they believe that the islands are the axis of the cosmos—that is, humanity originally started in Guam. Catholic priests evangelizing the natives strove to eliminate the various customs of the *makahna*, an individual who served as a mediator between this world and the spiritual one, but some may still be found throughout the Marianas. One religious conviction that has continued is the belief in the continuation of an individual's soul outside the physical realm. The Chamorros celebrate All Souls' Day in recalling their dead kin by holding commemorative activities and beautifying their burial places with plants, candles, pictures, and other reminders of the person's life on earth. Although Christianity is the dominant religion, many natives never completely gave up the traditional beliefs.

Roman Catholic beliefs have profoundly influenced life on the Northern Mariana Islands. Matrimony is a sacred relationship between two people who love each other, with both husband and wife remaining monogamous. Most adults get married and have large families. Newlyweds have the option of staying with the bride's family until the birth of their child, at which point the couple move out on their own.

Cary Stacy Smith and Li-Ching Hung

See also Guam; Marshall Islands; Micronesia; Mormons; Pacific Islands/Oceania; Protestant Christianity; Roman Catholicism

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NORWAY

With a population of 4.7 million, Norway has made the transition from an industrial society to an information and welfare society with an oil-based economy. The large majority of Norwegians continue to be members of the national Lutheran church, which has the King of Norway as its head, but there are trends toward more diversity in the religious landscape.

Since the 1970s, a growing number of Norwegians have moved away from the Church of Norway. From 1974 to 1999 membership went down from 93% to 87%, infant baptism from 96% to 79%, confirmation from 93% to 72%, and church weddings from 84% to 54%. Some have joined other churches, some remain outside any religious community, and others have joined the growing Norwegian Humanist Association (*Human-Etisk Forbund*), which had 80,000 members as of 2007.

Parts of the decline in church membership can be explained by changes in the Norwegian population due to immigration. In 2007, almost 9% of the population were members of faith communities outside the Church of Norway, and this number continues to grow. The Christian church that is experiencing the most growth is the Roman Catholic Church (51,508). However, the largest community of faith outside the church is Islam (79,068). Buddhists have 10,753 members; Hindus, 4,098; Sikhs, 2,444; and Jehovah's Witnesses, 14,756. The new religious diversity has led to changes in public policies. The traditional course in Christianity in public schools has been replaced by a new interfaith course. Although all registered religious communities, including the Church of Norway, receive an equal amount of public funding based on membership, the Church of Norway has maintained a privileged position in the military, prisons, and public hospitals. Thus, ties between church and state are under pressure, and there are calls for reforms.

Most Norwegians consider religion to be a private matter. According to a 1998 survey, 76% believe in God or a higher power, but only 10% attend church once a month or more. The content of the Christian tradition has changed to a more subjective turn, even among religious professionals. The older generation relates religion to duty and morality to religion and the law. The younger generation connects religion to their true inner self and morality to individual responsibility. Gender also structures religion. Women are more religious than men, and the two genders speak of religion differently. Women tend to see religion as a source of meaning, whereas many men view it as a moral factor. With the growing diversity and generational divide, the Norwegian religious landscape is undergoing change.

Norway's tolerant acceptance of multiculturalism was the target of a horrendous terrorist attack by Andres Behring Breivik on July 22, 2011. Breivik killed 8 in a bomb blast in downtown Oslo and 69 in an automatic weapon assault on a nearby youth camp. According to his 1500-page manifesto posted online shortly before the attack, Breivik imagined that he was precipitating a new Christian crusade against the rising presence of Muslims in Europe permitted by liberal social policies. During the national grief that followed the attacks, Norwegian leaders encouraged the nation to respond by

renewing its pledge to support the multicultural acceptance of people of all faiths, including Muslims.

Inger Furseth

See also Christianity; Gender; Generational Change; Multiculturalism; Nordic Countries; Pluralism; Protestant Christianity; Religion and State

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OKLAHOMA CITY FEDERAL BUILDING BOMBING

At 9:02 a.m. on April 19, 1995, downtown Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, became the site of the largest single act of domestic terrorism in U.S. history. The bombing was planned and executed by Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols, both veterans of the Gulf War, who, like many reactionary domestic terrorists, believed themselves to be at war with the U.S. government. Federal workers were, in their minds, casualties in an ongoing war, not innocent victims of an act of mass murder. McVeigh followed the “cosmotheist” beliefs advocated by William Pierce, author of McVeigh’s favorite book, *The Turner Diaries* (written under the pseudonym of Andrew MacDonald), which portrayed a grand war in which a secret group of true Christians, “The Order,” would lead a revolution toward the restoration of Christian civilization in America. Acts of terrorism were meant to be the first salvos in this imagined cosmic war. The detonation of a 4,800-pound ammonium nitrate fuel oil bomb in a truck parked at the north entrance of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building was enacted in a way that almost exactly replicated the description of a fictional terrorist attack on the FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation) building in *The Turner Diaries*. The blast killed 168 people, injured approximately 850, and left 30 children orphaned, more than 400 people homeless, and 7,000 people without a workplace.

The bombing immediately became a worldwide spectacle of horror, as the communications media enfranchised people to become part of an international bereaved community. In an era of deeply divisive, often violent clashes of identity politics, bereavement seemed to transcend divisions of race, class, gender, religion, and perhaps even national identity. In the aftermath of the bombing, a powerful icon, “the fireman and the baby”—fireman Chris Fields cradling the bloody and battered body of 1-year-old Baylee Almon—symbolized the particular horror of the killing of infants and children.

The bombing engendered an immediate outpouring of spontaneous memorial expression, as if memorials could somehow contain the impact of the atrocity. Memorial expression began among rescue and recovery workers during their painstaking efforts in the building’s rubble and spread to people gathered behind a fence line that separated them from the site. Eventually, the fence that surrounded the “footprint” of the Murrah Building became an important memorial site as family members offered public eulogies in posted materials of remembrance and visitors brought spontaneous and planned offerings. When it became public knowledge that materials on the fence were being archived by the Oklahoma City National Memorial Foundation, “planned spontaneity” sometimes occurred. Instead of a poem on a piece of paper appearing at the fence, there would be a laminated and copyright poem. Or a poem that contained the message “For copies, please write to . . . ” appeared. During a “fence-moving” ceremony, the day after groundbreaking for the outdoor memorial on October 26, 1998, the chain link

fence was removed, but sections of it were incorporated into the final memorial design.

Spontaneous memorialization was an important element in the democratization of memorial expression, suggesting the influence of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., dedicated in 1982. There, visitors made the memorial their own by touching the wall, tracing names on paper from the wall to carry home, and leaving material traces of their convictions—in essence consecrating the site through individual acts of memorialization.

In Oklahoma City, a formal memorial process began several months after the bombing, even as people from many countries sent unsolicited suggestions for a permanent memorial. The process was also evidence of the democratization of memorial expression. Family members of those murdered and survivors of the bombing played a vital and influential role in the selection of the permanent memorial and in the creation of the narrative of April 19 presented in the Memorial Center.

There were numerous “razor’s edge” issues to engage: For example, should Fifth Street, a busy one-way street in front of the Murrah Building—on which several bombing victims died—be closed forever so that a permanent memorial area would not be divided by an active thoroughfare? If survivors were to be remembered by name in the memorial area, who exactly qualified as a survivor? What about those injured but not in need of hospitalization or those who worked in the Murrah Building and lost many friends but were not in the building that day? The difficulty of resolving this issue is one example of the importance of memorial hierarchies: who gets remembered, how they get remembered, and where they get remembered. Such memorial precision is seen as a debt owed to the dead.

In addition to memorial activity, the bombing was interpreted through various narratives. There were at least four narratives:

- A *narrative of civic renewal*—“Yes, it was horrible, but”: This story celebrated the courage and kindness of thousands of people in Oklahoma City and beyond. It asked people to move beyond the atrocity to recommit themselves to a reinvigorated civic culture.
- A *redemptive narrative* that mobilized various religious resources to situate the bombing within enduring responses to evil.
- A *therapeutic narrative* that spoke with the voice of a “witness” and too often transformed victims of a terrorist attack into “patients” in need of therapy, reduced to victims of posttraumatic stress disorder: The therapeutic narrative too often assumed term limits for “healthy” grieving and assured people that there was a predictable process to measure their progress toward “closure.”
- A *toxic narrative* that revealed, for example, how the bombing continued to afflict the bodies and spirits of many people—disabling injuries, intense and enduring mourning, bitter divisions within families, and harsh treatment of residents of Middle Eastern descent and African American Muslims: People “inhabited” one or more of these narratives simultaneously. As one family member observed, “All the narratives seem to live within my experience, some to greater or lesser degree, from day one to now.”

The Oklahoma City National Memorial was dedicated on April 19, 2000. Its emotional heart is situated in the 168 lighted empty chairs, each inscribed with a name, that rest on the site of the Murrah Building. The memorial is, in part, a protest against the anonymity of mass death, the reduction of a person to a number. Faces, names, and stories insist that these victims of violence will be remembered. The democratization of memorial process and practice, and the emphasis on the faces, names, and stories of those murdered, may be an enduring feature of the memorial landscape of violence.

Edward T. Linenthal

See also Conspiracy Theories; Cosmic War and Cosmic Conflict; McVeigh, Timothy; Terrorism; Violence

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OLCOTT, HENRY STEEL (1832–1907)

Henry Steel Olcott, as cofounder and first president of the Theosophical Society and as an advocate

for Buddhism in both East and West, was a highly influential figure in the globalization of religion.

After investigating fraudulent suppliers for the Union Army during the Civil War, Olcott became a lawyer and a journalist in New York, also maintaining a long-standing interest in spiritualistic phenomena. In 1874, he met the Russian émigré Helena Blavatsky at the site of such alleged activity in Vermont. The next year they, together with several like-minded companions, founded the Theosophical Society. Designed initially to study ancient and modern mysteries, theosophy also promoted a primordial ancient wisdom believed to underlie the religions and philosophies of the world. In his 1875 inaugural address as president of the Society, Olcott referred to the great battle of his day between science and religion, proposing as a third way a return to the wisdom of the ancients, which better integrated spirit and matter.

In 1878 to 1879, Olcott and Blavatsky sailed to India, a land in which they believed that hidden wisdom still lived. There they launched a magazine, *The Theosophist*, and established an international headquarters for the Society. As Olcott tirelessly traveled and lectured, he and Blavatsky, with their respect for the spiritual heritage of India in the heyday of imperialism and Christian missionary endeavors, gave a definite early impetus to the “Hindu Renaissance” and the independence movement. In Sri Lanka, Olcott and Blavatsky “took *pansil*” in 1880, formally becoming Buddhists (the first known Westerners to do so). Olcott was soon advocating on behalf of Sinhalese Buddhists before colonial authorities in both Sri Lanka and London, at the same time seeking to modernize that faith. He wrote a *Buddhist Catechism* (1881), designed a Buddhist flag, and journeying as far as Japan sought to encourage Buddhist ecumenism. While his understanding of the Asian faith and his efforts to update it have been characterized as “Protestant Buddhism,” they certainly helped the ancient religion to become a contender in the world marketplace of ideas. At the same time, the Theosophical movement under Olcott’s guidance did much to advance Western knowledge of, and appreciation for, Hinduism and Buddhism. Olcott remains a national hero in Sri Lanka.

Called “the White Buddhist,” Olcott was a sort of reverse missionary who brought Yankee energy and Victorian single-mindedness not to Western expansionism but to the cause of global respect for the spiritual East. Though more an activist than an intellectual, he was definitely a pioneer in the globalization of religion.

Robert Ellwood

See also Blavatsky, Helena P.; Mahayana Buddhism; Postcolonialism; Sri Lanka; Theosophy

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OMAN

Oman is an Arab country located in the southeastern part of the Arabian Peninsula, surrounded by the Arabian Sea, the Gulf of Oman, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, and Yemen. It has been an independent state since the 18th century and ruled by a sultan—Qaboos Bin Said al-Said—since 1970.

Almost the whole population (2,904,165 in 2004) is Muslim, consisting of the Ibadi, Sunnī, and Shi’a communities. The Ibadi Muslims constitute the largest group—between 40% and 75%. They were named after Abdallah Ibn Ibad al-Tamimi, an early Muslim scholar. Ibadi Muslims, seen by the Sunnī Muslims as an evolution of Kharijism, an early schism in Islam, have been present in Oman since the end of the seventh century. They also live in small communities in Algeria (Mzab) and Tunisia. Omani traders introduced *Ibadism* in east and central Africa (Tanzania, Kenya, Burundi), where they have built their own mosques.

The Ibadi Muslims give particular importance to the way of selecting the leader of the *Umma*—the Muslim community: In theory, any Muslim can be a candidate if he is a male, is mentally and physically fit, and has a good knowledge of religion and politics. According to tradition, the selection should be done by consensus among the community. Their rituals, mosques, and institutions are, however, very similar to those of Sunnī Muslims.

The Sunnī Muslims in Oman follow the Hanafi rite. The Shi'a Muslims (*Ithna'ashariyya*, or “Twelvers”) are mainly of foreign descent and have been present for centuries in the Sultanate: 'Ajam (Iranians), Bahraini, Lawatiyya (from Sind, Pakistan). They are now called Omani.

Besides the Omani population, there is a large community of immigrants, coming mainly from Asia: India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and the Philippines. The majority are Sunnī and Shi'a Muslims, but there are also some Hindus, Christians, Buddhists, and Sikhs. A smaller community consists of European expatriates working in the petroleum industry and the military; most of them belong to the various Christian communities. The foreigners have relative religious freedom, and several churches and temples are to be found in the city of Muscat as well as in the important cities of the country.

Among the non-Muslim cults, Hinduism occupies a special place, historically speaking, since the country has sheltered Indian communities for centuries—for instance, the Banyan, who had their own temples in the country, were an important component of Omani economy until the end of the 19th century, funding some of the Omani trade caravans going to east and central Africa.

Xavier Luffin

See also Islam; Middle East; Shi'a Islam; Sunnī Islam

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OPUS DEI

Opus Dei (or “Work of God”) is a contractual association within the Roman Catholic Church dedicated primarily to the spiritual formation of laypersons who feel called to sanctify the secular world through their everyday occupations. Founded by the Spanish priest Josemaría Escrivá in response to a vision in 1928, the association has grown to more than 80,000 members worldwide. The vast majority of the members are laypersons, both male and female. The source of considerable controversy within the Catholic Church and sensational publicity outside it (e.g., in Dan Brown’s novel *The Da Vinci Code*), Opus Dei has nonetheless enjoyed the support of both Pope Benedict XVI and Pope John Paul II, who approved its designation as a personal prelate in 1982 and canonized its founder in 2002.

As a personal prelate, Opus Dei is a new type of legal entity under canon law that can include clergy as well as both laymen and laywomen. Members are designated, following Spanish academic nomenclature, as supernumeraries, numeraries, and associates. Nonmember supporters are referred to as cooperators. Numeraries, about 20% of the membership, are celibate and live in Opus Dei centers. Male and female numeraries receive the equivalent of a seminary education and are the only ones eligible for key leadership roles within Opus Dei. Supernumeraries, who make up the majority of the members, live in their own homes. Many, but not all, are married. They receive spiritual direction from a numerary and typically go to an Opus Dei priest for confession. A small minority of both numeraries and supernumeraries are priests. The numerary priests typically provide full-time pastoral care to Opus Dei members; the supernumerary priests most often serve as diocesan priests.

Opus Dei members typically perform a series of traditional Catholic devotional practices, including daily Mass, the rosary, examination of conscience, visiting the Blessed Sacrament, and meditation on spiritual readings. These practices support their overarching spiritual goal of sanctifying their ordinary work in professions or in the home. In the understanding of Opus Dei, the religious is not set

off from the secular, life is viewed as a unity, and all of life can be viewed as prayer. Although numeraries have received the most popular attention, supernumeraries in many ways most fully exemplify Opus Dei's commitment to fostering lay spirituality in the world.

Although most Opus Dei members pursue work with no formal connection to Opus Dei, members sometimes come together to found institutions, known as "corporate works," that contract with Opus Dei for theological and spiritual guidance. Corporate works, such as hospitals, business schools, primary and secondary schools, vocational-technical schools, and student residences, have been established in Europe (Spain, Italy, England), Asia (Japan, the Philippines, Taiwan), Africa (the Congo, Nigeria, Kenya), and Latin America (Guatemala, Peru, Brazil). Though more than 40% of Opus Dei's membership are concentrated in Spain, there are substantial numbers in Mexico, Argentina, Italy, the United States, the Philippines, and Colombia as well. Opus Dei centers have been established in more than 60 countries. As an international association that promotes an intensified form of Catholicism within the context of everyday life, it wields influence beyond what its numbers might suggest and is one of a number of new ecclesial movements that promise to have an outsized influence on the shape of Catholicism in the 21st century.

Ann Taves

See also *Comunione e Liberazione; Da Vinci Code, The; Roman Catholicism*

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ORIENTALISM

The term *Orientalism*—the study of the cultures of the East—has no single fixed meaning and historically has gone through various phases. In earlier discourse, it had a wider scope and was seen in a positive light. It was associated with the substantial contributions made by Western scholars in the field of Arabic, Turkish, Indic, Hebraic, Chinese, and Persian studies. It was the late Edward Said's groundbreaking 1978 work *Orientalism* that led to the term becoming a highly contentious one. In Said's view, Orientalism is not simply about the study of the East, it is about the West having power over the Orient by representing, codifying, and classifying knowledge about other cultures. Although there were other European and Islamic scholars who highlighted this aspect, it was Said who was largely instrumental in creating an awareness that the Western study of other cultures and production of oriental knowledge was not an innocent activity and that it was not free from political ramifications. Said was highly critical of classical Western portrayals of Arabic culture and Islam as depraved and effete. Although Said's study has mainly to do with the Near and Middle East in the context of colonial domination in the 18th and 19th centuries, its application extends to South and East Asia and has made an enormous impact on various academic disciplines, including religion. Said's own views underwent subsequent revisions and take note of the heterogeneity of cultures and the active agency of the indigenous people.

There are several marks of Orientalism. First, it is discernible in the assumption that the Western notion of "religion" is a universally applicable category and that Eastern religious traditions could be situated within it. Such a conception of "religion" is deeply rooted in Enlightenment notions such as rationality, modernity, and linear progress as well as in 19th-century Western Protestant theological presuppositions. For instance, Buddhism is seen as a version of "Hindu Protestantism" and Jainism as a form of "Hindu Calvinism."

Second, it is seen in the privileging of certain ancient texts as authentic representations of religion, to the exclusion or marginalization of other legitimate forms of expression of religion through mediums such as dance, music, and art. In the case

ORDER OF THE SOLAR TEMPLE

See Solar Temple Order

of Hinduism, Sanskrit texts were given preference, and other significant texts such as the Tamil Veda were ignored, and in the case of Buddhism, Pali texts were regarded as more genuine than Tibetan or Chinese Buddhist texts. Orientalists believed that true “Hinduism” or “Buddhism” was embedded in the ancient texts and a restoration of their original purity would cure these traditions of their current degenerate state. They also assumed that an accurate knowledge of ancient classical texts would give them insight into religious customs and practices and would assist in the governance of natives. A clear case of textualization was apparent in the publication projects commissioned by the East India Company, such as the translation and codification of Hindu laws by the Orientalist judge William Jones and the production of the *Sacred Books of the East* series by Max Mueller. The underlying assumption behind these textual ventures was that the written word was superior to orality and signified modernity. These textualization enterprises signified the link between knowledge and power, which, although it had been explored by earlier scholars, has become a crucial issue since the publication of Said’s *Orientalism*.

Third, Orientalists advanced the notion of binary thinking—the East as mysterious, passive, effeminate, irrational, ahistorical, and decadent and the West as comprehensible, active, masculine, rational, historical, and progressive. Such classification continues to be replicated in current geopolitical discourses.

Most Orientalists worked on the premise that they were more capable of representing the Orient than the natives themselves. Ironically, the Orientalist “discovery” of a glorious past had an unexpected result: It provided the cultural ammunition that led, in many cases, to anticolonial resistance and religious nationalism.

Sharada Sugirtharajah

See also Other (The Other); Postcolonialism; Religious Nationalism; World Religions

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ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY

See Christianity

ORTHOPRAXY

See Hindu Orthopraxy

OTHER (THE OTHER)

The idea of “the other,” sometimes capitalized as the Other, and the closely associated idea of a “primary” or “constitutive” other entered scholarly discourse through continental philosophy and is a core concept of critical theory and cultural studies, especially subfields such as race theory, sex and gender studies, postcolonial theory, queer theory, and animal studies. To speak of the other is to imagine an opposition between “the same”—for example, the same kind of subjectivity, person, group, gender, sexual orientation, and so on—and “the other” (kind of subjectivity, person, group, gender, sexual orientation, etc.), in which the other plays a crucial role in constituting the same. Thus, one can speak, on the one hand, of the other in general—meaning any being who confronts “us” (the same) as different—or, on the other hand, one can speak of particular, historical others: the black American as the other of the white American, the Jew and Muslim as the other of the European Christian, woman as the other of man, and so forth. As the examples in this list suggest, discourses on the other are frequently deployed to identify and critique the way in which a dominant group justifies the subordination of those designated other. Thus, “the other” is often, though not necessarily, an oppressed other.

Simone de Beauvoir’s analyses of woman as other and Emmanuel Lèvinas’s theorization of the other as one who precedes me and calls me into being through an ethical relation are two of the most influential treatments of the other. Both

de Beauvoir and Lèvinas are critiquing and developing an understanding of otherness developed by Hegel in his well-known account of the master-slave dialectic. In de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*, a foundational text of feminist thought, she argues that the relation of woman to man can be likened to the relationship Hegel imagines between the slave and the master in that men, like the master, understand themselves as the absolute human type, thus judging women by the standard of the male human and thereby finding them inferior.

Lèvinas takes up the theme of otherness or alterity in part to argue that ethics rather than a theory of being should stand at the beginning of philosophy. The other as theorized by Lèvinas is not simply a historical other (say, my literal neighbor) but a phenomenological structure situated in a "dimension of height" that issues the primordial expression "You shall not murder." For Lèvinas, the "I" does not first appear and then go out into the world to encounter others, nor is there an inner self free of obligation to the other. Rather, to be a human being is already to be obligated to others.

De Beauvoir's, Lèvinas's, and other reflections on the other have informed a number of influential philosophical categories, including Judith Butler's treatment of gender, Jacques Derrida's articulation of "*différance*," and Julia Kristeva's theorization of "abjection."

Aaron S. Gross

See also Gay and Lesbian Theology; Orientalism; Postcolonialism; Sexuality; Women's Roles

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OTTO, RUDOLF (1869–1937)

Rudolf Otto was a German Protestant theologian and philosopher of religion active in the first third

of the 20th century. He is best known for his book *Das Heilige* (1917), translated into English as *The Idea of the Holy*. He also compared Indian religions with Christianity, translated religious texts from Sanskrit to German, founded a museum of the world's religions, and was active in both state and ecclesiastical politics. Although a systematic theologian by profession, he had his greatest impact on scholars of the comparative study of religions.

Intellectually, Otto was indebted to the theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher and the Kantian philosopher Jakob Friedrich Fries. Like Fries, he stressed the cognitive role of "feeling," an intuitive awareness of truth. According to him, the distinctive mark of religion was "the holy," a complex category involving human conceptualization but also transcending it. Insofar as the holy transcended human powers of thought, it was nonrational and accessible only to intuition. For this aspect of the holy, Otto coined the term *numinous*, and interest in his thought has centered largely on it.

As a category of understanding, the numinous has three characteristics: *mysterium*, *tremendum*, and *fascinans*. It is intuited—corporeally as well as emotively—as "wholly Other," terrifying or awe inspiring yet nonetheless attractive. Each of these characteristics has a rational counterpart: the absoluteness of divine attributes, the holy wrath of God, and divine grace. As a category of value, the numinous is intuited as possessing absolute worth, in contrast to the utter unworthiness of human beings.

According to Otto, both the numinous and the rational aspects of the holy as well as their conjunction are given a priori. That is, awareness of the holy is a universal mental capacity or predisposition merely awakened by sensory experiences. It is impossible to explain where this capacity comes from; it is only possible to clarify the category, so that on encountering it, people immediately recognize its truth. The history of religion consists of the progressive rationalization and moralization of the numinous, leading to its supreme embodiment, Jesus, and the supreme religion, Christianity.

In Otto's day, Protestant theologians actually preferred Karl Barth's emphasis not on universal mental structures but on a wholly other God who addressed human beings through His word. Otto's

successors in the comparative study of religion largely rejected his Kantian framework and adopted his thought as a variety of phenomenology: It provided a highly insightful description of religious experience. In this form, Otto's thought remained highly influential through the 1960s. It is occasionally still encountered today.

At the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century, cognitive scientists worked in the opposite direction. They rejected Otto's account of the numinous as a necessary component of religion but returned to the topic of the universal mental structures from which religion arises, seeking to explain how these structures produce religion.

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See also Eliade, Mircea; Liberal Protestantism; Schleiermacher, Friedrich; World Religions

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OTTOMAN EMPIRE

The Ottoman Empire arose in the beginning of the 14th century and ended with the abolition of the Sultanate in 1922 by the founders of modern Turkey. The establishment of the Ottoman state coincided with the collapse of the Seljukid Empire around 1300 following the Mongolian invasion of Anatolia. The Ottoman state began as a frontier principality of the Turks of Anatolia and became an empire one and a half centuries later with the conquest of Constantinople by the armies of Sultan Mehmed II. The founders, Osman and his son Orhan, and the ruling elite of the state were Muslims, and the state adopted the Seljukid Islamic traditions and cultures in the beginning and used the services of the men of religion in the Seljukid mosques, madrasas (schools), and *evqafs* (religious endowments) for the unification of the people of Anatolia around

the Ottoman state. Religious matters were carried out by the Islamic scholars (ulema) who were trained in the high cultural centers of the Seljukids. The first viziers of the state were also from among the Ottoman ulema.

Although, owing to a paucity of primary sources, there is ongoing debate among scholars about the foundation philosophy of the Ottoman Empire, most historians claim that a holy war (*gaza*) spirit moved the Ottomans to expand their domain toward the Byzantine Empire, the center of Orthodox Christianity. The *gaza*, the war for the expansion of Islam, outlined the foundations of legitimacy of the Ottoman sovereignty in the Balkans. Therefore, it was ultimately natural for the Ottomans to implement Shari'a (divinely ordained Muslim law) in their legal affairs, since the expansion of Islam was the basic ideology of the state. The Ottoman Turks identified themselves as Muslims, and their Muslimness became more powerful than in the previous Islamic empires, especially as the sword was unified with faith when the Ottoman sultans acquired the Caliphate. The Ottoman expansion toward the west provided them with the title of Turks, the sword of Islam. As the Ottoman rulers adopted the term *sultan* from the 'Abbāsids and the terms *padishah*, *shah*, and *hudavendigar* from the Persians, they established the sultan's sovereignty over the Caliphate's domain after the conquest of Egypt and the capture of Caliph Mutawakkil in 1517.

Foundations of Ottoman Social and Legal Structures

Having been influenced and shaped by the old Turkish customs and by the Islamic empires' traditions, the Ottoman worldview depended largely on Islamic principles. The Ottoman sultans were obliged to provide justice to their subjects, since, according to religious thought, the subjects were entrusted to the sultan, and the sultan, as the religious authority, was the shadow of God on earth. The authority, legitimacy, and highness of the sultan depended on his just exercise of power. Ottoman documents elaborate this relationship with the principle of the circle of justice, according to which justice can be provided by power; if the sultan is just, then the subjects are provided with

order, which prepares the ground for the subjects to produce more, and as such, the subjects attain well-being; those better-off subjects pay more taxes, taxes increase the power of the treasury, and the sultan can have a bigger army and more power. The foundation of the circle of justice was the full obedience of subjects to political authority, since this was a religious duty as well. For both the complete obedience of subjects and the justice of the sultan to be mutually provided, Ottoman society was separated into communities according to their settlements in different spaces, occupations, religious denominations, and sects.

The Ottoman political structure, its legal system, and social organization had a dual formation. On the one hand, these structures were bounded by religious law (the Shari'a), and on the other, the Ottoman sociopolitical organization was ruled by the Sultanic law and its institutions. The religious law provided rules and regulations in the civic affairs of Ottoman society, as it had done with the other political organizations in the Muslim world; the Islamic Shari'a organized social and family affairs and had inheritance and penal codes. The Ottoman legal system depended on Islamic law, based on the Qur'an, the holy book of Islam, and the Hadith, the Prophet's sayings and doings in his lifetime. The Qur'an and the Hadith are the two most important sources, implying certainty over legal issues. Another source, the resolutions and interpretations of the Prophet's colleagues and the first four Caliphs over theological, moral and ethical, private, legal, and administrative issues, provide Islamic law with additional and mostly interpretative doctrines. Finally, the legal principles and resolutions established by Islamic scholars by comparing issues against original sources and cases are also among the sources of Islamic law. Ottoman positive law depended on the sources of Islamic law. Molla Husrev Efendi, an Ottoman scholar of law, codified Islamic laws in his *Dürrer-ül Hükkam fi Şerh-i Güreer-il Ahkam* in 1472 and submitted his work to Sultan Mehmed II to be implemented together with the Sultanic law. Among the basic sources of the Ottoman Islamic law is the *Multak al-Abhur*, written by Ibrahim Halebi during the reign of Suleyman the Magnificent in the 16th century. The book provided Islamic sources for the political order of the state and its legal and organizational structure and became a

classical source for Ottoman law. *Multak*, defined in the 18th century as the *Corpus Juris Turcicum*, was the basic book of the Ottoman courts. The judges also used to use the collections of fatwas, the codes that were prepared by the legal authorities, the muftis, or by Şeyhülislam, the top official in legal matters.

Ottoman law moved from the pragmatism of the early period of its foundation to the scholasticism of its classical age. Classical Islamic law was basic in legal affairs of the private sphere, but it had limited procedures and rulings in the public law. The public law was ruled by the codes (*kanunnames*) issued by the sultan according to the circumstances. The origins of the Sultanic codes were the old Turkish laws, customs and traditions, and the legal procedures and customs of the communities under the Ottoman jurisdiction. There were three types of canons: (1) the Sultanic legal decrees issued for specific matters constituted the main body of Ottoman codes, (2) the *firman*s (legal regulations) for a certain group of people or for a specific region were used to make the second type of Sultanic codes, and (3) those laws that could have been applied to all were the third type of imperial legal regulations.

Education

Ottoman education was also organized along religious lines. The sciences were classified according to the theory of genesis in Islamic mysticism. Mysticism provided four basic steps in Islamic sciences: first, written sciences referred generally to writing, the styles of writing, and writing instruments; second, verbal sciences were composed of Arabic, Arabic grammar, phonetics, etymology, syntax, lexicology, rhetoric, literature, poems, prose, and history; intellectual studies, formed of logic and dialectics, constituted the third category of educational sciences; and the fourth category, clerical sciences, was divided into two, logic and religious studies. The two types of logic studies were theoretical rational studies and applied logic; religious studies were formed by religious logic and applied logic. Religious logical studies were the most important of all religious studies, since the Ottoman madrasas generally taught the knowledge of the Qur'an, the Hadith, and their interpretative sciences—exegesis and the analysis of hadiths,

euphemisms, Islamic law (*fiqh*), and legal principles. Applied religious studies consisted of mores, morals and ethics, forms of worship, forms of etiquette, public regularity and decorum, and Islamic lifestyles. Knowledge in the Ottoman Empire was strictly religious, and the source of knowledge was religion, since the objective of all knowledge was the knowledge of God. Ottoman scholars were expected to achieve full acculturation, which could be reached through wisdom and self-examination, the two basics of Sufism.

Nicea became the home of the first Ottoman madrasa in 1331, a school that was given to the Muslim scholar Davud of Caeseria as his center of education. Education was carried out in lower and higher level schools. Religious education formed the basic curriculum in the madrasa system. Students who started their Arabic and math basics in the first level would obtain permission to pursue their higher level degrees from certain scholars for their education in Islamic law and interpretation in the higher school levels; therefore, the scholar was more important than the school they attended. The highest two levels of madrasas established in ca. 1550 in Istanbul were for Hadith and medical sciences. The students who completed their education with permission from certain scholars would enter into the hierarchy of scholars formed by teachers, muftis, and judges. The sultan's palace mostly brought scholars to its schools from Kayseri, Aksaray, and Konya or from religious centers as far as Iran, Turkistan, Egypt, and Syria. Among those religious scholars were Alaaddin Tusi and Fahreddin, from Iran, as early as the 15th century. Anatolian scholars such as Mehmet Fenari, Ali Fenari, and Şeyh Bedreddin went to Arab, Persian, or Turkish centers of knowledge to complete their studies in Islamic law and interpretation of religious issues. Ottoman scholars generally visited the Turkish scholastic centers in central Asia, mostly Samarkand for mathematics and astronomy; some of them, like Sadeddin Taftazani and Sayyid Şerif Curcani, were already living in Turkistan under the Timurids. *Shaykhulislam* and the Anatolian and Rumeli *kazaskers* were the highest ranks in the Ottoman ulema, the officials dealing with legal and religious affairs. *Shaykhulislam* was not only the highest representative of religious law as the head of the religious scholars, but he was also the head of the Muslim community in the

empire; however, he exercised his authority in the name of the sultan. Schools, religious institutions, charity organizations, and public services were funded by the religious endowments (*evqaf*).

The Millet System

The Ottoman social organization, incorporating various religions, ethnicities, and languages, depended on the *millet* system. The millet order, like those of any other past multireligious empires in the region, was mainly based on the separation of different religious groups from each other and a legal status granted to each denominational community with specific communal rights and privileges. The members of monotheistic religions were considered *millet* (religious community; *ehl-i zimmet*) and gained legal status with an *ahidname* (permission) granting them protection within the social and political organization of the country. The Ottoman Empire also inherited its form of social organization from Islamic codes of life and adapted Islamic rules and principles of social life to its imperial system. The term *millet* (*milla*) was used to refer to religion, and the people of *milla* meant the true believers of Islam—the Muslims. The religions and religious communities of non-Muslim groups (Jews and Christians) were also recognized as *milla* in the Islamic as well as Ottoman traditions, since the term *milla* is used in the Hebrew Bible and in Aramaic texts in the sense of *word* or *utterance* and in some Christian texts as the Greek *logos*, the word of God, or science. The Qur'an also uses the term in this sense—the people who follow the divine word, the word of holy religious books. Therefore, the Ottoman tradition conceptualized non-Muslim groups as the people of *zimma*, which referred to non-Muslim groups under the protection of Islam. The religious communities protected their own respective identities and legal rights over other groups in the empire and practiced their religious, civic, economic, and social relations under the surveillance of the state.

The millet system was initiated as the social order by Sultan Mehmet II in 1454, immediately after the conquest of Istanbul by the Ottoman armies. With the expansion of the area under Ottoman rule and the establishment of the empire, various communities and many religious and

linguistic groups were unified under imperial jurisdiction. The Greek, Bulgarian, Serbian, Albanian, Vlah, Moldovan, Rutenian, Karaman Turkish, Croatian, Assyrian, and Arab Christian communities were placed under the authority of Patriarch Gennadius Scholarius as the Orthodox millet. The Armenian, Assyrian, Nestorian, Coptic, Georgian, and Abyssinian communities were placed under the Armenian millet in 1461 under the Patriarch Joachim. The exodus of the Jewish population from Spain and Portugal into the Ottoman Empire at the end of the 15th century required the empire to establish the Jewish millet under the authority of Chief Rabbi Moses Capsali. The Ashkenazi Jews and the Sephardic community, including the Balkan Romaiots and the Crimean Karaim Jews, established the Jewish millet of the Ottoman Empire. The millets were the basic administrative units within which Orthodox, Armenian, and Jewish communities carried out their administrative affairs within the state through the heads of their community organizations. This social order also provided the Ottoman communities with protection of their own culture, customs, language, and religions.

The millet system depended on religious faith, therefore it was ultimately comprehensive; it covered all the people of the same faith in the empire regardless of territorial distance. Thus, the Orthodox millet was composed of all Orthodox Christians, including the Greek, Arab, or Romanian communities. The Armenian community was divided into the Gregorian, Protestant, and Catholic churches. As such, the millet organization was simply based on religious faith, not on ethnic and/or national identity. Orthodox Greeks, Bulgarians, Arabs, and Serbians identified themselves, above all, as Christians, and Turks, Albanians, and Kurds, as Muslims. As all Christians and the Jews in the empire had religious and cultural connections to their own church or to the synagogue, all Muslims recognized the Shaykhulislam as their religious authority. But all the millet members were the political subjects of the sultan, who was the basis of the political order and had the right to tax them. Therefore, the common political identity was ultimately defined by state authority, though the base for the religious identity was the millet organization.

The religious communities were represented at the state level by the communal religious leaders at

the Patriarchates. The religious councils and local leaders were elected by their community members with the approval of the sultan. The election process gained more importance in the 19th century, when the representatives of local communities also became members of the local (municipal and provincial) assemblies. The millets had autonomous rights in their religious, cultural, and civic relations; however, all millet members were under the juridical power of the public judge (*kadi*) in matters related to public law, such as the penal code, security issues, or taxation. Sometimes in civic matters also, when the parties could not reach a compromise through their own communal leaders, the issue used to be solved by the *kadi*. The system created a unique relationship between the sultan and his subjects. The sultan was Muslim, but he was not a religious authority over his non-Muslim population, since all religious issues were dealt with by the religious leaders and religious institutions (the Patriarch and the Holy Synod) within the millet organization. The sultan, therefore, differentiated his own secular authority from the rights and duties of religious institutions and, thus, created a social order that depended on a kind of separation of powers. This separation prevented any conflict of interests among the millets. The sultan was not a religious authority for the members of the millets, but they accepted him as the lay ruler who guarded the just order, implemented the law, and even protected their interests within a Muslim empire at large.

The millet system remained as the basic foundation of the Ottoman social structure from the mid-15th century to the mid-19th century, when a new form of relationship was established between the subjects and the state by the new legislation of nationalities. The Ottoman Tanzimat (Reformation) regulations provided equality to Ottoman subjects regardless of religion, and the new legislation for each religious community was realized about a decade before the first modern constitution of the empire in 1876. The political, legal, civic, economic, and social affairs of the Ottoman communities were governed by modern laws. The Mecelle, the new civic code, and the new penal and commercial codes replaced the Islamic law in 1869. Non-Muslim subjects of the empire greatly benefited from the provisions of the new legislation for commerce, finance, and criminal issues during the

Ottoman modernization period. In the middle of the century, the non-Muslim religious establishment gained semiofficial status, the entry of non-Muslims into the Ottoman military service was recognized by a decree, and non-Muslim citizens of the empire took full advantage of serving in the palace and in the civil bureaucracy, especially in the foreign ministry, the courts, and the local administration. When the 19th century became the age of nationalisms within the Ottoman domain, the Serbian, Greek, Macedonian, Bulgarian, Romanian, Syrian, and Lebanese churches and their millets became the cradle of the development of nationalism in these communities. Islamism as a political ideology emerged in the 1870s not only to unify the Muslim communities and keep the empire intact against European political and economic expansionism but also to challenge the nationalist uprisings of Ottoman Christian subjects and to confront Russian Orthodox and Austrian Catholic influences over the Ottoman communities.

Conclusion

The Ottoman Empire was a theocratic state with Islam as its basic law, which covered all aspects of lives of the subjects from the socioreligious to individual and family affairs. Non-Muslim communities were under the protection of the Islamic law, and their status was tolerated unless their religions and lifestyles posed a threat to Islam. The change in the status of religion in the society, politics, and culture of the empire came with the modernization efforts of the Ottoman bureaucracy in the mid-19th century. The 1908 Young Turk Revolution did create a change in the identity of the Ottoman subjects from religion to citizenship; however, religion was still dominant in the political, social, and economic spheres of Ottoman society. The secularization of Turkish politics and society came with the removal of the Caliphate and religious institutions including the courts, schools, and ulema and with the adoption of secularism as one of the basic tenets of the early reform age of the Turkish republic.

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See also Islam; Islamic Modernism; Islamic State; Turkey

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OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

Our Lady of Guadalupe is one of the most revered female sacred images in Mexican Catholic tradition and culture. Her following is not limited to Mexico, however, but has transcended national boundaries throughout the Americas as well as parts of Southeast Asia. In 1935, Pope Pius XI declared her patroness of the Philippines, and in 1946, Pope Pius XII named her patroness of the Americas. Her following is largely due to the message of empowerment that is embodied in the context under which tradition tells us she appeared.

In 1521, Tenochtitlán, now known as Mexico City, fell to Hernán Cortés after Cuauhtémoc, the last Aztec ruler, surrendered. During and after the conquest, Catholicism was used to justify the physical, emotional, and spiritual enslavement of the indigenous people. The vanquished people were dehumanized and lived without hope. Popular tradition tells us that in the midst of this devastation, an event occurred that was viewed as a miracle that helped restore a dying people's dignity and desire to live.

According to the Nahuatl account, *Nican Mopohua*, in December 1531, the Virgin Mary (in the image and likeness of a *mestiza* woman) appeared to an indigenous man named Juan Diego several times on the hill of Tepeyac. The hill had been an ancient Aztec sacred site for a goddess whom people referred to as Tonantzin. Each time, she asked Juan Diego to tell Bishop Zumarraga

that she wanted a temple in her name to be built on the top of the hill. Though Juan Diego was faithful in repeatedly taking the message to the bishop, the bishop refused to believe the story until Our Lady of Guadalupe imprinted her very image on Juan Diego's *tilma* (cloak) on December 12.

Today, while many scholars have attempted to prove that the apparition never took place and/or that Juan Diego is not a historical figure, others have devoted extensive research to demonstrate that the miraculous event did take place in history. Still others (most notably Chicana feminist artists) have visually reinterpreted the image in feminist ways. Despite the scholarly debates, for her followers, she is a sacred figure that exists through the miracles they claim she has granted. Many make financial and/or physical sacrifices to travel to the Basilica de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe in Mexico City, where the *tilma* with her image is housed. Some devotees walk on their knees for miles to give thanks for a miracle granted or to fulfill a *promesa* (promise) or *manda* (a type of religious mandate).

Last year, on her feast day, her sanctuary received more than 7 million followers from all over the world. In fact, the Basilica de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe is the most visited Catholic sanctuary in Latin America and the second most visited Catholic pilgrimage site in the world after

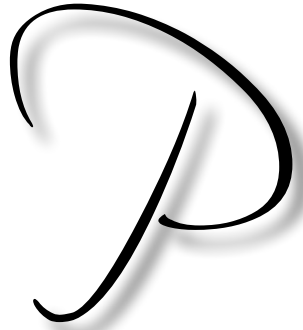
Saint Peter's Basilica in the Vatican. Her popularity has resulted in the commodification of her image, which can be found even on mouse pads, stuffed animals, and dog T-shirts. Yet to those who believe in Our Lady of Guadalupe, her image is not simply a product that can be bought and sold in the international marketplace; she is a Catholic symbol that transcends geographical borders, making her a global sacred image that embodies the survival, hope, and self-affirmation of those at the margins of society.

Socorro Castañeda-Liles

See also Goddess; Latin America; Mesoamerican Religions; Mexico City; Roman Catholicism; Saints

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PACIFIC ISLANDS/OCEANIA

The Pacific Islands region encompasses most of the island nations, territories, and states in the southern part of the Pacific Ocean. The term *Oceania* includes this region and may also refer to Australia, Indonesia, Brunei, Singapore, and the island parts of Malaysia. The terms *Oceania* and *Pacific Islands* usually do not refer to the Aleutian islands of Alaska or to the islands that are off the Pacific coast of Russia, China, and North and South America, nor do they include the island nations of Japan, Taiwan, and the Philippines.

Usually, the Pacific Islands are grouped into three main clusters that have common historical and ethnic characteristics. The largest is the Polynesian (“many islands”) triangular group that spans much of the South Pacific and includes native New Zealand, the American state of Hawai‘i, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, the Cook Islands, French Polynesia (including Tahiti), and Easter Island. The other two clusters are in the western South Pacific. One is the mountainous islands of Melanesia (“black islands”) that include Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Vanuatu, the Solomon Islands, and New Caledonia. The other is Micronesia (“small islands”), which is north of the equator and mostly flat and includes Guam, Wake Island, Palau, the Marshall Islands, Tokelau, Niue, Nauru, Kiribati, and the Federated States of Micronesia. There are some 20,000 to 30,000 islands in the Pacific Islands region, spanning thousands of miles. The population of the region (excluding

New Zealand and Hawai‘i) was around 7 million at the end of the 20th century.

The religious history of the Pacific Islands is roughly divided into pre- and post-European colonial contact. Beginning in the 16th and 17th centuries, European explorers, traders, exploiters, and settlers traversed the region and made an enduring impact on its cultural life. Perhaps the best known was the 18th-century British explorer Captain James Cook, who came to an unhappy end in the Hawai‘ian islands. In the 19th century, cargo cults emerged in some areas of Melanesia and Micronesia as a result of cultural contact. Indigenous people in the islands thought that their ritual and spiritual activity would hasten the return of godlike foreigners with abundant material blessings and visions of salvation.

By the 20th century, most of the population of the region had converted to Christianity, and what remained of the traditional religious culture of the Pacific Islands is found in some of their local lore and customs. In some cases, indigenous religion and ritual artifacts have been integrated into the practices of Christian churches. In Hawai‘i, the Congregational churches of New England missionaries were often built on the stone altars of traditional Hawai‘ian religious sites (*heiau*). In the second half of the 20th century, large-scale conversions to the Mormon faith added a further layer to the religious complexity of the region. The religious character of each island’s culture is unique, however, and must be examined in its specificity.

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See also Cook Islands; Fiji; French Polynesia; Guam; Hawai'i; Kiribati; Marshall Islands; Micronesia; New Caledonia; New Zealand; Niue; Palau; Papua New Guinea; Samoa (American and Independent State of); Solomon Islands; Tonga; Vanuatu

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PAJELANCA OF THE BRAZILIAN NORTH

Pajelanca refers to several forms of shamans among indigenous and peasant populations of the region from the northwestern to the northeastern borders of Brazil. They include healer shamans, priestly shamans, assault sorcerers, and prophets.

The first have as their main objective the healing of the sick. Sickness is widely conceived of as the detachment of "soul" elements from a person's body for whatever reason, such as a sudden fright or the appearance of an omen of death. The detached soul becomes lost in any one of the multiple layers of the cosmos, which are all full of traps, snares, and demons who take the souls as prey. The shaman thus undertakes in trance a perilous journey, which he or she has been trained to do in the many years of his or her apprenticeship. The shaman has allies scattered throughout the universe, which assist in the search. Once the soul is found, there may be a process of "payment" to regain the soul or obtain the remedy; if the payment is accepted, the shaman is authorized to perform the cure of the person, returning the soul to the sick person and extracting by suction the material

representations of the sickness (whatever these may be—a wad of gum, a bunch of hair, thorns, or pebbles).

The priestly function derives from cosmological principles that are both complementary and antithetical to the healer shamans. The training of a priest takes much longer than that of a shaman, given the scope and depth of knowledge that the priest is expected to acquire. Generally speaking, where the shamans derive their power from direct knowledge and experience of the deities and places of the cosmos, the priest's power is based on the accurate recall of canonical and esoteric knowledge, which is essential for rites of passage—that is, for the reproduction of society and the renewal of the cosmos. While the shamans are relatively more egalitarian or "democratic" in their internal organization—that is, anyone can become a shaman who accepts the years of arduous training and perilous experiences—the priests come from a specific class—the elderly men or women of the society. Traditionally, priests are organized into hierarchies and sometimes into sacred societies.

The assault sorcerers are sometimes called "dark shamans." In many cultures, the shamans who cure are the same as those who practice sorcery, like two sides of the same coin. During the shaman's apprenticeship, they learn all of the art and practice of curing first, and then, when they are at a point when they can withstand the harmful effects of assault sorcery, the master instructs them in killing and defending oneself against enemies. Where shamans practice both healing and sorcery, they are considered highly ambiguous figures. True dark shamans are distinct from healers and derive their powers from cosmological principles that are the complete opposite of the healers'.

Prophets are the most powerful of the healers and, in the northern region of Brazil, have emerged among Arawak and Tukanoan-speaking peoples to the west (borders with Colombia and Venezuela) and Carib-speaking peoples to the east (borders with the Guyanas). All prophets about whom there is written documentation have appeared in post-contact times, although oral histories have also referred to precontact prophetic movements, the dynamics of which were grounded in creation mythology and primordial conflicts. Often, the

prophets have joined indigenous cosmologies and shamanic practice with powerful symbols of Christianity. Some prophetic movements have emerged as antiwitchcraft campaigns. All have sought utopias, spatial or temporal, in which native peoples' cultures and religious traditions could be revived or in which cosmic cataclysms would eliminate sickness and death for the followers, and social harmony would be restored. It is notable how many peoples have evaluated millenarian Christianity (Pentecostalism) to resonate with these beliefs.

The same person can be a shaman, priest, and prophet at different stages of his or her career when the appeal of their messages becomes universal; the dominant themes concern the eradication of witchcraft, moral reforms internal to society, and the inversion of power relations between Whites and Indians.

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See also Brazil; Latin America; New Religions in South America; Postcolonialism

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PAKISTAN

The Islamic Republic of Pakistan, a nation born from the partition of the South Asian subcontinent by the British at the end of their colonial rule, was founded in 1948 on the idea that a nation should be carved out of South Asia to protect the region's Muslim population. Hence, it has had an

Islamic character from the beginning. It is also home to several important Sufi shrines, including the Data Ganj Baksh Shrine in Lahore, and to what was for three centuries—until another surpassed it in 1986—the world's largest mosque—Lahore's Badshahi mosque. As of 2009, Pakistan contained more than 174 million Muslim citizens, making it the second largest Muslim country in the world, after Indonesia.

Though Islam unites the country, it is separated along several distinct ethnic lines: Punjabis and Sindhis in the eastern side of the country and Baluchis and Pashtuns in the mountainous areas adjacent to Iran and Afghanistan. More than 96% of the population are Muslim; most are Sunnī, and approximately 20% are Shi'a. Hindus account for an additional 2% of the population and include many who have lived in the region before the partition of the subcontinent into India and Pakistan; Christians constitute an additional 1%. Many Pakistani Christians come from the lowest castes, known as Dalits or untouchables.

History Prior to Independence

The Pakistan region was populated by members of the Pashtun ethnic group as early as 2000 BCE, though their origins have yet to be fully documented. What is now Pakistan was the region that was for many centuries the gateway to the Indian subcontinent for invading armies, traders, and explorers from the west, including the Aryans in 1500 BCE and Alexander the Great and his Greek armies in the fourth century BCE. Islam came to the region as early as the eighth century CE through traders and *pirs*, wandering Sufi mystics, and some units of the Umayyad dynasty. The Umayyads did not achieve great success in Islamicizing the region, but the settlements that remained following their retreat slowly made progress and gained assistance from the 10th-century Turkish and Afghani conquests. From the 12th through the 16th century, the region was governed by Islamic Turko-Afghan dynasties, which imposed taxes known as *jizya* on non-Muslims and oppressed the Hindus who constituted the majority of the population.

The high point of Muslim rule in the subcontinent came with the Mughal Empire in the 16th and 17th centuries. The imperial government

allowed wandering Sufis to convert many Hindus and Buddhists to Islam while neither explicitly supporting nor prohibiting the proselytization. As the Mughal Empire declined, the British East India Company claimed substantial control over the trade routes to the subcontinent and paved the way for the British Raj—colonial rule over the entire Indian subcontinent. By the end of the Mughal Empire, a quarter of the population of the subcontinent was Muslim.

In 1893, Sir Mortimer Durand in cooperation with the Afghan Amir Abdur Rahman Khan fixed the boundary known as the Durand Line, designating the Afghani and British spheres of influence along an imaginary border running from Chitral to Baluchistan. This action would have repercussions reaching into the 21st century, as the threshold passed through the middle of traditional Pashtun lands, thereby effectively dividing a single ethnic group into two separate nations. The area was still under tribal governance under the British (who required a buffer territory to the Russian Empire more than more subjects), and the resiliency of tribal identity would prove problematic for both countries' attempts to create nationalist sentiment.

In the 19th century, a reform Muslim movement based in the Deoband seminary tried to purify Islam and rid it of indigenous and extraneous elements. The Deobandis were the spiritual ancestors of 20th-century activists of Islamic movements, including the Taliban movement in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Muslim political thought was being refined by thinkers such as Maulana Mawdudi, who advocated a kind of Islamic politics different from the secular rule promulgated by the British. New Islamic parties were created, including the Jamaat-ul-Ulama-i-Islam party. Wealthy and educated Muslim leaders established the All-India Muslim League in 1906 to provide political representation for Muslim communities in the emerging parliamentary politics. Demands were successfully made to the British for separate electorates for Muslims that would guarantee seats in the legislature. The Khilafat movement after World War I added to the conversation by repudiating Muslim loyalty to British rule and received support from the Deobandi movement and the champion of Indian independence, Mohandas Gandhi. Though the movement served only to exacerbate tensions between Hindus and Muslims,

the first steps toward an independent Pakistan had been taken.

An Independent Pakistan

Between 1937 and 1940 Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the leader of the Muslim League, set about promoting the Two Nations Theory, leading to the Lahore Resolution in 1940, which stated that the areas of Muslim majority in India should become independent and autonomous. It is important to note that while the proposed nation was a nation of Muslims, it was never intended to be an Islamic state. During World War II, the movement for Pakistan was subdued, but at the end of the war, the Muslim League boycotted the Indian Congress, which carried favor with the British, and on June 3, 1947, when the British Parliament introduced the bill for the independence of India, it successfully campaigned for the partition of the subcontinent into two new states: India and Pakistan. More than 8 million people relocated from different areas of the subcontinent—Muslims moving into Pakistan and Hindus and Sikhs moving out—creating a situation of turmoil and violence in which perhaps 1 million people were killed.

Pakistan was established as two parts: The western one consisted of the Punjab-Sind-Baluchistan region, which later became known simply as Pakistan; eastern Pakistan was in the Bengal region, which in a later war of separation in 1971 broke away from the western wing and established itself as a separate country, Bangladesh. The region of Kashmir was contested between India and Pakistan, and a war between the two countries over the disputed region in 1948 ended in a stalemate with a UN-patrolled line of demarcation between the two sides of Kashmir, one controlled by Pakistan and the other by India. Part of the problem was that the leader of the region, the Maharaja of Kashmir, was Hindu, while the majority of the population were Muslims.

Jinnah became the leader of the new nation of Pakistan. Though the country was intended for Muslims, Jinnah's vision of politics was decidedly secular. One group of opponents were members of the Jamaat-e-Islami, a political party founded by Maulana Abu'l-a'la' Mawdudi. Though it and other religious parties in Pakistan were never successful at the ballot box—they never received more

than 10% of the vote—their political influence has been significant. Mawdudi's idea that the country should become an Islamic state and accept traditional Muslim Shari'a law became the law of the land under the leadership of Zia al-Haq in 1977. His political opponent at the time was Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, father of Pakistan's later Prime Minister, Benazir Bhutto, who was toppled from power, arrested, imprisoned, and later executed by Zia's government. Zia himself died in 1988 in a mysterious plane crash.

Zia's rule was propped up by Islamic ideology, and he did much to bring Islam into political life. Zia installed members of the Jamaat-e-Islami and the Muslim League in his cabinet and declared that all Pakistani laws must conform to Islamic law. In 1979, he established Shari'a courts in the nation and even tried to implement a new financial system based on the Islamic prohibition of *riba* (interest or usury). The year of his death, Zia introduced a bill written by the Jamaat-e-Islami party, which placed Islamic law above the courts and laws of the country. Later, Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto blocked the bill in 1988, but it was passed in a revised form in 1991. Persecution of the Ahmadiyya sect also began to increase at that time. Among Zia's other legacies was Pakistan's nuclear program and the development of close ties to Islamic nations in the Middle East.

Pakistan, Afghanistan, and the Taliban

Pakistan played a notable role in the repulsion of the Soviet Union from Afghanistan in the 1980s, providing financial and military support for the mujahideen fighters in cooperation with the Reagan administration of the United States. It is estimated that approximately 40% of the mujahideen were trained in Pakistan. Later, some of the fighters who received this support joined the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), which gained control over the Swat Valley area of Pakistan in 2009.

When the United States invaded and occupied Afghanistan following the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, Pakistan, led by a military regime headed by General Pervez Musharraf, became America's ally in the "War on Terror." Funds were channeled through the Pakistani military organization to fight the remnants of the Taliban and Osama bin Laden's (d. 2011) al

Qaeda movement, which had sought refuge from Afghanistan in the mountainous regions of Pakistan. The Pakistani complicity with the American military presence also helped fuel the growth of radical Muslim groups within Pakistan, especially in Baluchistan, Waziristan, and elsewhere in Pashtun regions along the border with Afghanistan. A Pakistani Taliban emerged with a program of violence aimed at both the U.S. military and the secular Pakistan administration.

It was a Taliban militant, Baitullah Mehsud, who was thought to be behind the assassination of Benazir Bhutto as she campaigned to be elected again as Prime Minister in 2007. Her widower, Asif Ali Zardari, took her place and was elected as Prime Minister. Also in 2007, a siege against protesting Muslim students in the Red Mosque in Islamabad resulted in the death of the radical mullah of the mosque and more than a hundred others. Pakistani Muslim extremists associated with the jihadi movement, Lakshar-e-Taiba ("the army of the pure"), were also involved in clashes with the government, and individuals said to have been associated with this movement launched a brazen series of attacks in Mumbai, India, in 2008, killing 164 and wounding more than 300. In 2011, the governor of the State of Punjab, Salman Taseer, was assassinated by his own bodyguard. The assassin was said to have been influenced by jihadi ideology and persuaded that Taseer was violating Islamic principles in defending a Christian woman who was sentenced to be executed for allegedly violating Pakistan's blasphemy laws. The secret American military raid on May 2, 2011, that uncovered Osama bin Laden's hideout in Abbottabad, Pakistan, and killed the al Qaeda leader revived anti-American sentiments when it was revealed that no Pakistani officials had been consulted or notified in advance about the raid.

The political culture of Pakistan remained moderate, however, even though extremist activists in Pakistan in the first decade of the 21st century instigated a series of attacks on each other, American diplomats and journalists, and government officials. Though Pakistan is officially an Islamic republic, there is no clear consensus on what that means or to what degree religion is expected to permeate public life.

John Soboslai and Mark Juergensmeyer

See also Afghanistan; al Qaeda; India; Islamism (Political Islam); Mughal Empire; Taliban; Terrorism; War on Terror

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PALAU

Palau, an archipelago of approximately 300 volcanic and coral islands in the northern Pacific Ocean, has a religious character that has been shaped by both colonization and missionary forces, often in collusion. Heavily Christian today, Palau boasts a large number of Roman Catholic (49%) and Protestant Christian (21%) adherents as well as a significant proportion of Seventh-Day Adventists (7%). While small Jewish and Muslim communities are also present, the syncretic religion Modekngai is practiced by approximately 9% of the population (with the recognition that many reported Christians may engage in syncretic practices). Modekngai was founded in 1915 and recognizes Jesus Christ as savior while concurrently seeking to appease an ancient Palauan goddess. Centered in the city of Ibobang, in the state of Ngatbang, Modenkgei has established schools to ensure the continuation of the Palauan tradition.

Loosely part of the Spanish Pacific in the 19th century, Palau was sold to Germany in 1898 and occupied by the Japanese in 1914. Both Germany and Japan supported missionary activity to Palau, building on the base established by the Jesuits who arrived on the islands as early as the 17th

century. During the colonization period, the churches in Palau acted as a proxy for the government, administrating for the colonizing powers through religious networks in the absence of officials on the ground. After World War II, the United States took possession of Palau, which in 1947 became a United Nations Trust Territory. In 1981, Palau finally established itself as a self-governing nation.

In 2009, 13 Muslim men of Uighur descent were released from the U.S. facility at Guantanamo Bay to live in Palau. The men, originally from the region of Xianjiang, China, had been detained by the United States on suspicion of terrorism. Although the detainees were found not to be enemy combatants, many countries refused to take them in, and the United States refused to send them back to China owing to the high likelihood of their arrest and incarceration as dissidents. The men were supporters of independence movements in Xianjiang province, where approximately 9 million Uighurs live. Due to the small size of the Muslim community in Palau, there were concerns about the Uighur men's ability to adjust to their new home, but Palauan president Toribiong stressed Palau's hospitality and their alliance with the United States to quell these worries.

Freedom of religious practice generally prevails in Palau, although certain exceptions exist, mostly revolving around labor issues. In 1998, for instance, Palau's Division of Labor declined requests for work permits to Bangladeshi citizens on religious grounds. The Division of Labor justified its denial by a supposed conflict between the non-Christian customs of the Bangladeshis and the work practices and living conditions in Palau. While it has mostly been seen as an ethnic conflict rather than a religious one, religion was again used as a pretext to justify the exclusion of immigrant workers in 2001, this time aimed at Sri Lankan and Indian citizens.

John Soboslai

See also Christianity; Pacific Islands/Oceania; Postcolonialism; Syncretism

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PALESTINE

Palestine is a geographical region on the eastern Mediterranean coast. The exact dimensions of the region vary by account but geographically are typically regarded as the area containing Israel and the Palestinian territories. The region has a long, rich history, and numerous important religious sites lie within the boundaries. Throughout the region's extensive history, the desire for control of the land has been highly connected to religious sentiment. In the 20th century, Palestine has become known primarily as the contentious site of the Israeli state and the ensuing conflict over the land between Palestinians and Israelis. This current state of affairs resulted in the emergence of a unique Palestinian identity, which is markedly transnational. The majority of those people who identify themselves as Palestinians are Sunnī Muslims, with a minority component of Christians, typically Catholic. Beyond the conflict, Palestine as a region hosts important religious locations for Christians, Muslims, and Jews, as well the headquarters of the Baha'i Faith.

Early History Until the 19th Century

The name *Palestine* is a derivative of *Philistine*, from the people that migrated to that region, which was originally known as Canaan. The Kingdom of Israel was established in this area after the Jews conquered the other inhabitants of the region, including the Canaanites and the Philistines. The unified Kingdom of Israel fractured in approximately 927 BCE. At this point, it divided into a northern and southern kingdom. The northern

kingdom, Israel, was captured in 722 BCE by the Assyrians and the southern kingdom, Judah, in 586 by the Babylonians. During these periods, most of the Jewish population was forced to migrate out of the area. After the Babylonians fell to the Persian Achaemenids in 539 BCE, many of the exiled Jews from Babylon were allowed to return to the region. They were permitted to rebuild their temple, marking the start of the Second Temple period in Jewish history. There was a relative peace during this time in Palestine, until 140 BCE, when a Seleucid ruler rededicated the Temple to Zeus, triggering the Revolt of the Maccabees, which was followed by nearly another 100 years of Jewish control over the region, until the Roman conquest in 63 BCE.

Palestine became a part of the Roman Empire, though it was granted autonomous status. During the period of Roman control, there was some degree of Jewish resistance, which came to an initial climax in 70 CE, when Roman forces razed the temple in Jerusalem. A second resistance culminated during the Bar Kokhba revolts of 132 to 135 CE, which resulted in the revocation of Jewish autonomy in the region, which then became an official Roman colony known as Syria Palestina. Though the restrictions were reduced shortly thereafter and the Jews were granted increased self-government following the revolt, they were still banned from Jerusalem. As Rome became Christianized, Palestine, as the home of Jesus, became a prominent holy site to the Christian population, and under Byzantine rule, the remaining Jews in the region were subjected to further restrictions. There was a short intermission in Byzantine rule in 617 CE when the Sassanids captured Jerusalem, but the Byzantine emperor Heraclius restored imperial control of the city.

Byzantine control of Palestine was then supplanted by the invasion of Arab Muslims of the Umayyad dynasty during the 7th century. 'Abbāsīd and, later, Fatamid rule replaced the Umayyad rule of Palestine. Jerusalem also holds particular importance to Muslims as the third holiest city (after Mecca and Medina) and is also the primary holy site for both Jews and Christians. Thus, Palestine became a contentious region, fought over for religious control. European Crusaders began numerous campaigns to free the Holy Land and were successful in capturing Jerusalem in 1099. Under

the military leadership of Saladin, Muslims recaptured the city, and other than a brief period of permitted Christian governorship in the first half of the 13th century, it remained under Muslim control. For around 250 years, the Mamluks, centered in Egypt, controlled Palestine, until the start of the 16th century, when the Ottoman Empire claimed the region. The Ottoman period of rule in Palestine lasted until 1914. During this time, Palestine was assimilated into the province of Greater Syria for governing purposes. *Dhimmi* (non-Muslim minority) communities were treated moderately well under Ottoman rule. As Europe grew in power, the various empires began to take a more active interest in the Christian subjects living in Ottoman territories.

The 19th Century Onward

The Ottoman Empire officially collapsed in 1917. The years leading up to the collapse were marked by significant colonial European maneuverings in the greater region. As Ottoman power weakened, British, French, and Russian powers vied for stake in the future of the region. Eventually, the British claimed Palestine and used it as a buffer zone between the French in Lebanon and Syria and their own affairs in Egypt.

Beginning in the latter half of the 19th century, Zionist settlers began immigrating to Palestine in a series of waves (referred to as *Aliyah*, from the Hebrew, meaning “to rise”). Zionists insisted on the necessity of a Jewish state. Several locations were considered for the viability of such a Jewish state; the Zionist decision to “return to” Palestine was at least in part a historical-religious decision. Zionist Jews argued for the reestablishment of *Eretz Israel* (the historical name for “Land of Israel”) and, in doing so, brought some resolution to the problem of the Jewish Diaspora that had begun with the loss of Jerusalem in 135 CE. Though the official Ottoman policy forbade Jewish settlement in Palestine, the imperial policy was not enforced. Zionist settlers purchased large amounts of land from the existing Palestinian Arabs and began to settle and develop communities. There was some resistance to their immigration by the local populations, but for the most part, it proved to be ineffective and unorganized. The Zionist settlers organized militias to defend their interests in Palestine. The most notable of these was Hagana (“defense”), which

eventually formed the basis for a national army, the Israel Defense Force, after the achievement of statehood.

During the interwar period, British policymakers waffled on the course of action regarding Mandate Palestine. This indecisiveness can be seen in the following policy decisions: The McMahon-Husayn correspondence of 1915 to 1916 promised an Arab state including Palestine; the Sykes-Picot agreement in 1916 divided Ottoman lands between the British and French; the Balfour memorandum of 1917 encouraged the idea of a Jewish homeland in Palestine; and the White Paper of 1939 established restrictions on further Jewish immigration. Despite these mixed intentions, Israel was officially ratified and established as a national entity following World War II, sparking the 1948 to 1949 wars between the fledgling country and the surrounding Arab nations. The defeat of the Arab nations in these first two wars was a crushing blow to Pan-Arab morale and also allowed the territorial expansion of Israel. The expansion forced the dispersion of a large population of Palestinian Arabs from the region into neighboring Arab countries. The result of this was the creation of a transnational diaspora of Palestinians with national ambitions.

Some emigration from Palestine occurred prior to the establishment of Israel. These voluntary migrants were predominantly Palestinian Christians seeking to avoid Ottoman military conscription; they often emigrated to Europe or North America. Migration en masse was a reaction to the defeats of the Arabs in 1948 to 1949, which Palestinians often referred to as *al-nakba* (“the Catastrophe”). The majority of these refugees remained in the Arab world, particularly in Jordan and Lebanon. These Palestinian refugees have mostly been unwelcome in these countries, which has helped preserve and ensure a distinct Palestinian identity. The Arab nations encouraged the formation of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) to provide a secular nationalist leadership for the dispersed Palestinian population. In 1964, the PLO held its inaugural conference. However, the PLO’s nationalist goals and tactics often proved subversive to the political framework of its host countries, which resulted in general resentment and sometimes violence toward Palestinians. The majority of refugees settled in Jordan, whose policies toward Palestinians were more generous. This was in contrast to the

controversial policies that the Palestinian communities faced in southern Lebanon, as epitomized in the conflicts between the PLO and the Shi'i militia Amal in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

One of the key demands of Palestinians is the “right of return.” The identity of Palestinians has become inseparable from the region of Palestine. Though Palestinians are scattered across numerous countries around the world, they maintain a general consensus of a desire to return. There is some disjunction in the “Palestinian identity” among those living in different areas. The discourse and sentiments vary between refugee Palestinians living in neighboring countries—the West Bank and Gaza—and those with Israeli citizenship (Arab-Israelis). Though the PLO was formed as a secular nationalist organization, numerous Islamic organizations have emerged in recent years hoping to reestablish Palestine as an Islamic state. This has created a second front in the identity conflict among Palestinian nationalists, primarily represented by the dominant secular nationalist party, Fatah, and Islamic parties, most notably represented by Hamas.

The overlapping religious and national competition for control of the region has created a relatively unique situation and one that cannot be easily resolved politically. Palestine as a geographic region possesses a religious bonding that transcends national identity.

Caleb McCarthy

See also Ethnic Nationalism; Gaza; Hamas; Islamism (Political Islam); Israel; Jewish Diaspora; Ottoman Empire; Zionism

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PĀLI

Little is known about the origin of the term *pāli* (lit. a “line”) or how, in its diffusion from northern

India to south-southeastern Asia over the course of several millennia, it came to be synonymous with the language of, and texts comprising, the Theravāda canon of Buddhist scriptures. Called Māgadhī, in Buddhist literature the composite language of these texts bears witness to a lengthy and complicated development insofar as they preserve archaic linguistic features associated with several Middle Indo-Aryan vernaculars, known as Prākṛit, that appear to have come under the homogenizing influence of Sanskrit, the language of classical Indian culture. Because these dialects are from the northwestern region of India and the itinerant Buddha lived and taught in the northeast, it is not known where Pāli was originally spoken, if at all. Recent developments in Western scholarship surmise that Pāli was never an actual vernacular of India but an artificial language that flourished after the death of the Buddha (ca. fourth century BCE) as an ecclesiastical *koiné*.

The Pāli canon (Tipitaka) is the oldest and only canon of Buddhist scriptures extant in its entirety in any Indian language. Although no Pāli script was ever developed, these texts were transmitted orally by reciters (*bhānaka*) from about the fourth or third century BCE onward. Included among the Buddha's disciples or “auditors” (*śrāvaka*) were prominent monks and nuns who played a vital role in the dissemination of Pāli. Around the beginning of the Common Era, with the advent of writing on palm leaves, scribes at Aluvihāra in Sri Lanka initiated the gradual process of transliterating these texts. This was not a massive shift from an oral to a manuscript culture. Indeed, the oral tradition of chanting Pāli was never dispensed with and remains a central feature of monastic life down to the present. It did, however, facilitate a translocal expansion of Buddhist literary production that inspired new possibilities for classification, exegesis, redaction, commentary, chronicle, and narration. The order of magnitude in this shift from practice to literacy and scholarship intensified dramatically in the modern period through print, which gave rise to a new and unprecedented sense of the Pāli canon as “fixed”—that is, as an orderly, continuous, multivolume manuscript of complete texts closed off from other so-called extra canonical or noncanonical texts, including popular vernacular narratives and the commentarial literature with which it has otherwise had a long and intimate association.

While familiarity with and access to the Pāli canon remains preeminently the preserve of elites, which today includes a cosmopolitan network of scholar monks and intellectuals, the vast majority of Buddhists historically and presently have had comparatively little knowledge of or experience with the canon as such. Yet the version printed in roman characters by the Pāli Text Society of London, since 1881, as well as the version recited and settled at the Sixth Council held in Rangoon from May 1954 to May 1956, and subsequently released in 1999 as a CD-ROM edition, have accorded the Pāli canon a form and status hitherto unprecedented in the history of Buddhist cultures.

Todd LeRoy Perreira

See also Buddhist Law; Theravada Buddhism

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PANA WAVE LABORATORY

Pana Wave Laboratory (PWL) was the former research branch of a Japanese new religious movement known as Chino Shoho, or True Law. Chino Shoho was an eclectic form of spiritualism that adopted doctrines from the Abrahamic religions, self-medicating traditions of Hinduism and Buddhism, New Age concepts, theosophy, and parapsychology as well as a host of pseudoscientific conjectures about physics, environmental warfare, and space exploration. Chino Shoho's mystic leader Yuko Chino was said to possess supernatural powers of clairvoyance, frequently communicating with the deceased, extraterrestrial beings and a number of heavenly figures and gods.

In a peculiar twist, Chino began making claims of being the target of a communist guerilla conspiracy to have her assassinated through the

use of electromagnetic wave weaponry. Chino then commissioned an intellectual vanguard from her spiritual following to research the harmful effects of these electromagnetic waves. This group would come to be known as the *Pana Wave Laboratory*, and its objective would be to prolong Chino's life through the scientific analysis of electromagnetic wave warfare.

In their research, the PWL members concluded that the color white was the most effective defense against the communists' attacks, and thus, as a safety precaution, PWL members began clothing themselves from head to toe in all-white material. In addition to their appearance, members also erected a physical compound that they referred to as their research laboratory, where they would act out a popular version of scientific research.

Chino Shoho and the PWL were adamant about the dangers of globalization. In their view, Japan's history and autonomy had been compromised by the influx of liberal ideologies from the West. Their imperial heritage was waning in the face of this cultural, economic, and political encroachment. This position, however, was largely selective, as Chino Shoho and the PWL managed to adopt a variety of religious traditions that originated from beyond Japan's borders.

Engaged in this struggle to combat the communist assassination conspiracy and the threat of globalization, Chino Shoho and the PWL may be best known for their tendency to make extraordinary claims and activities, including two failed prophecies about the end of the world, an unsuccessful attempt to build a spacecraft, and, most recently, the anticipated arrival of a flying saucer that would rescue them from the ills of this planet. However, much of their activity ended when Yuko Chino died on October 25, 2006. At this point, it is unclear how the group as a whole has operated since Chino's death.

Salvador Jiménez Murguía

See also Aum Shinrikyô; Japan; New Religions; New Religions in Japan

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PANAMA

The narrowest country in Central America has more than 3 million inhabitants. Table 1 shows the main global religions present in Panama: Roman Catholicism, Protestantism, marginal Christianity, other world religions, and new religious movements.

Roman Catholicism

The Roman Catholic Church entered with Spanish colonization, establishing Darién as its first diocese on the mainland of the Americas in 1513. A shortage of priests curtailed the strength of the Church for centuries. Panama won independence from Spain as part of Colombia (1821), whose conservative dictators supported the Roman Catholic Church, whereas the political liberals were anti-clerical and annexed Church properties. With President Theodore Roosevelt's initiative, Panama

became independent from Colombia in 1903. The Panama Canal was finished in 1914, with the Canal Zone under direct U.S. control until 2000.

The Panamanian Bishops' Conference

The Bishops' Conference, founded in 1966, was a conservative body and was hardly influenced by the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965). Relations between the state and the Catholic Church were strained after the 1968 military coup and the subsequent regimes of General Torrijos (1968–1981) and General Noriega (1983–1989) but improved after the return to democracy. This happened after a U.S. invasion of Panama during which hundreds of civilians died. General Noriega surrendered to U.S. troops on January 3, 1990; he was later convicted for drug trafficking.

Catholic Charismatic Renewal (CCR)

The CCR movement arrived in Panama in 1973, stressing a personal relationship with the Holy Spirit and a strict morality. The CCR had more than 205,000 participants by 1995, representing the majority of active Catholics. The Bishops' Conference has supported the CCR since 1976 to retain membership.

Table 1 Main Global Religions in Panama: 1995 and 2000

Main Religion	1995	2000
Roman Catholics	2.05 M (77.8%)	2.21 M (77.4%)
Protestants	0.396 M (15.1%)	0.413 M (14.5%)
Jehovah's Witnesses	21,500 (0.34%)	Not available
Latter-Day Saints	26,000 (0.97%)	37,133 (1.3%)
No religion	60,760 (2.3%)	72,300 (2.5%)
Other world religions		
Buddhism	20,100 (0.8%)	21,800 (0.8%)
Judaism	3,550 (0.1%)	3,800 (0.1%)
Islam	116,000 (4.4%)	126,550 (4.4%)
Transnational new religious movements		
Spiritualists	12,500 (0.5%)	13,600 (0.5%)
Baha'i	32,000 (1.2%)	35,300 (1.2%)
Chinese religions	3,850 (0.2%)	4,200 (0.2%)
Other religions	2,440 (0.1%)	2,600 (0.1%)

Sources: Compiled by author from data in Barrett, Kurian, and Johnson (2001) and Holland (2002).

Mainstream Protestantism

After Panama's independence from Colombia in 1903, the U.S. government supported the arrival of U.S. missionaries. The Salvation Army arrived in 1904, followed by the Church of God (Anderson, Indiana), Southern Baptists, American Methodists, and Adventists in 1905; U.S. Episcopalians in 1906; and Nazarenes in 1953. They had modest success in converting the Panamanians.

Pentecostalism

Missionaries from the U.S. Foursquare Gospel arrived in 1927, followed by the Church of God (Cleveland, Ohio) in 1935, the Church of God of Prophecy (1962), the Assemblies of God (1967), and many others. Between 1970 and 1995, Pentecostals increased from 3.6% to 9.0% of the population in Panama.

Marginal Christians

The Jehovah's Witnesses arrived in 1929 and had 21,500 members by 1995. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints sent its first missionaries to Panama in 1941. Mormons claimed 41,640 members in 2006, but only about one quarter were active.

Other World Religions and Transnational Religious Movements

Other global world religions in Panama are Buddhism, Judaism, Hinduism, and Islam. All arrived with immigrants, and none proselytized beyond their own ethnic group. Since the construction of the canal attracted many immigrants, most ethnic religions have large memberships (see Table 1).

Since the 1980s, globalization influenced the arrival of transnational new religious movements in Panama. These include Baha'i, the Family, Hare Krishna, and Soka Gakkai. They have experienced moderate to greater success in membership growth.

Henri Gooren

See also Baha'i; Catholic Charismatic Renewal; Hinduism; Islam; Judaism; Latin America; Mormons; New Religions in South America; Pentecostal Movements; Protestant Buddhism; Protestant Christianity; Roman Catholicism

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PANIKKAR, RAIMON (RAIMUNDO) (1918–2010)

Raimon Panikkar was an influential scholar of comparative religion who was born in Barcelona, Spain, on November 3, 1918, the son of a Catalan Roman Catholic mother and a South Indian Hindu father. His cross-cultural and trans-religious background is matched by multiple intellectual achievements, including degrees in the humanities and natural sciences. His early studies were in chemistry at the University of Barcelona and the University of Bonn. After becoming a priest, he completed his PhD in chemistry at the University of Madrid in 1958, with a thesis on the concept of nature—*El concepto del naturaleza*. Earlier, in 1946, he earned a PhD in philosophy at Madrid and eventually a doctorate in theology from the Lateran University in Rome (1961).

In 1955, when he was 37, he first went to India, to search out his father's cultural and religious roots and to formally study Indian philosophy and religion. There, he was attached to the diocese of Varanasi, where he combined priestly duties with study and meditation. He later described his spiritual and intellectual growth during this period in India as having "left" as a Christian, "found" himself a Hindu, and "returned" a Buddhist, without having ceased to be a Christian. From 1967 to 1971, he was Visiting Professor of Comparative Religion at the Center for the Study of World Religions, Harvard University, and from 1971 until his retirement in 1987, he was Professor of

Comparative Philosophy and History of Religions at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Raimon Pannikar died at his home in Spain on August 26, 2010.

Panikkar published some 40 books and hundreds of articles in several European languages that contribute critical methodological reflections on interreligious and intrareligious dialogue, the “rules of the game” of religious encounter, and a vision of religious pluralism beyond exclusivisms, inclusivisms, and parallelism—a pluralism that does not see religions as isolated, self-sufficient wholes or parallel ways to the same goal but paths that intersect and ways of life that in some sense need one another to be complete.

Building on scholastic categories of Hindu, Buddhist, and Catholic Christian philosophy and theology in books such as *The Unknown Christ of Hinduism* (1964; 1981), *Silencio del Dios* (1970), *The Trinity and the Religious Experience of Man* (1973), *The Interreligious Dialogue* (1978), *Myth, Faith, and Hermeneutics* (1979), and *The Cosmotheandric Experience* (1993), Panikkar coined many neologisms that enrich the vocabularies of cross-cultural religious studies and comparative philosophy of religion, including *cosmotheandricism* (the interdependence of nature, human persons, and the divine); *sacred secularity* and *tempiternity*, terms that mediate eternal and temporal modes of being and experience; *radical relativity* beyond mere agnostic relativism; humane *techniculture*, as distinct from agriculture and in contrast to global “technology” and monolithic power-and-money culture; *ontonomy*, a radical mutuality and “mutual fecundation” beyond *autonomy* and *heteronomy*; and *homeomorphic equivalent*, a “geometric model” that emphasizes religions as transformations of certain topological invariants emphasizing both unity and difference, the particular and the universal. Panikkar also pursued distinctive readings of faith and belief, mythos, logos, and “experience” and of Hindu Advaita and Christian Trinity, in the *fluxus quo*, the dynamic “unfinished” process-governed fields of human religious encounter.

Steven P. Hopkins

See also Hybridization; Religious Dialogue

PANJABI

Panjabi is the language of the people of Panjab, a region that was divided into two parts and apportioned one each to India (East Panjab) and Pakistan (West Panjab) at the time of partition in 1947. The Panjabi-speaking population is, however, not confined to the political boundaries of the two Panjabs. As a matter of fact, Panjabi is a major world language, spoken by 80 million people in South Asia and other British Commonwealth countries. Furthermore, Panjabis were the first people from India to enter North America in the beginning of the 20th century as immigrants. Furthermore, Panjabi has been in use as a literary language since the 11th century. It is the language of the sacred scriptures of the Sikhs, the official language of the State of Panjab in India, and a language of Sikh and Sufi mysticism and of regional literature among Panjabi Muslims in Pakistan. In Canada, Panjabi is the fourth largest spoken language after English, French and Chinese, while in the United States, it is mostly spoken by about 0.5 million Panjabi and Sikh immigrants.

Panjabi is an Indo-Aryan language closely related to earlier forms of Hindi and Urdu, and these languages are, to some extent, mutually intelligible even today. Panjabi is usually written in a different script known as Gurmukhi (“from the mouth of the Guru”), since it was devised by the second Guru of the Sikhs, Guru Angad (1504–1552), under the supervision of Guru Nanak (1469–1539), the founder of the Sikh tradition. The original Gurmukhi script was a systematization of business shorthand (*landetakarī*), of the kind Guru Nanak doubtless used professionally as a young man. This was the script that was certainly familiar to the merchants of the Panjab. To the Panjabis, the idea of spiritual truth inscribed in their own native language must have created a sense of empowerment that had been conspicuously absent until Guru Angad popularized the Gurmukhi script among the masses. It is, however, instructive to underline the fact that the Panjabis in Pakistan use Shahmukhi (a kind of Arabic script) for writing purposes.

The Panjabi language is intimately linked with Panjabi culture. It is difficult to have access to

Panjabi customs, myths, art, literature, music, and other cultural moorings without understanding the Panjabi language. The famous Panjabi authors are Bhai Vir Singh (poetry, fiction, drama, and prose), Puran Singh (poetry and fiction), Mohan Singh (poetry), Amrita Pritam (poetry and fiction), Dhani Ram “Chatrik” (poetry), Ishwar Chander Nanda (drama), Teja Singh (literary criticism), Sant Singh Sekhon (fiction and literary criticism), and Harbhajan Singh (literary criticism). The cultural activities of folk songs, movies, and the internationally acclaimed *Bhangra* (“Panjabi folk dance”) become accessible only when one has learned at least the spoken Panjabi language. The *gurdwaras* (Sikh places of worship) in North America, the United Kingdom, East Africa, and other East Asian countries offer Panjabi language instruction at Sunday schools. Introductory courses on the Panjabi language are also offered at academic institutions such as University of Michigan (Ann Arbor), University of California (Berkeley, Santa Barbara, and Riverside), and San Jose State University.

Pashaura Singh

See also India; Sikhism

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PAPUA

Papua (also known as Dutch New Guinea, West Papua, Irian Jaya, and Irian Barat) is the Indonesian region on the western half of the massive island of New Guinea; the independent nation of Papua New Guinea makes up the eastern half. Papua’s flora and fauna are among the most diverse in the world, with interior mountains capped with equatorial glaciers. Containing the world’s second largest rainforest (next to the Amazon), Papua’s natural resources include the world’s largest gold deposit, the second largest copper deposit, and

massive amounts of natural gas, along with valuable hardwood forests, all of which are being extracted and harvested for primarily Asian and Western nations.

Papua contains roughly 250 distinct languages and many more cultures. Ethnically, Papuans are Melanesian, marked by what many Papuans self-describe as “black skin and kinky hair.” Papua was colonized in a separate act of Dutch colonization from the Dutch East Indies, after conflict between English and Dutch forces ended with the signing of the Treaty of London (1824), giving the Dutch sovereignty over Papua. Indonesia annexed Papua in 1963 following the so-called Act of Free Choice, a vote that Western and Asian newspapers affirmed immediately was illegitimate, in part because the UN representative responsible for the vote had not arrived until after much of the voting had taken place and the intense pressure that voters received at the hands of members of the Indonesian military to vote for incorporation into Indonesia. Indonesia changed the name from Dutch New Guinea to the province of *Irian Jaya* (1973) and then again named it *Papua* (2000).

Following the annexation of Papua by Indonesia, which most Papuans interpret as an act of Asian colonization, Papua has been an arena of ongoing contests between the global forces of religions, multinational extractive industries (e.g., gold, copper, and natural gas), and nation-making strategies that have left Papuans increasingly socially, culturally, and economically marginalized in their own land. The challenge for Indonesia has been to incorporate Papua, whose indigenous people are overwhelming Melanesian and Christian, into the Republic of Indonesia, a Southeast Asian nation with more Muslims than the entire Middle East. World religions have played a critical role in the social and cultural transformations that have unfolded in Papua since the mid-1960s. Western Christian missionaries, from the Dutch period onward, have tried to encourage the conversion of Papuans from their traditional religions to Christianity. Likewise, Muslim missionaries from other Indonesian islands and the Middle East have sought to convert Papuans to Islam. A vigorous government-sponsored transmigration program, seen by many as a malevolent experiment in social engineering, has moved high numbers of Muslims

from overcrowded Indonesian islands (e.g., Java) to Papua, radically changing the Papuan social, cultural, and religious landscape to one dominated by Asian Muslims, to the extent that Papuans currently make up a minority in their own land, with Papuans being roughly 48% and non-Papuans 51% of the overall population.

What is striking in Papua is the rise in the numbers of global religionists, due mostly to the transmigration of Muslim communities to the island, yet the globalization of religious pluralism is conspicuously absent. That is to say, although there has been a massive burgeoning of the presence of global religions since the 1960s, with the escalation of religionists, including Christians, Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists, and an increase in the globalization of those religions, whereby each religious group increasingly builds support and financial networks expanding from Papua to distant countries such as the United States and Saudi Arabia, such changes have failed to translate into a full globalization of religious pluralism, where religionists from various faith traditions coexist in civic harmony and peace. Papuans have sought a Pan-Papuan identity that transcends disparate tribal identifications, and Christianity has been a robust ally in formulating and articulating a Papuan identity rooted in and continuous with the Old Testament biblical narrative, where Papuans declare that they worship the “God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the Papuans.” Islam has advanced through *da’wah* (Arabic “mission”) activities even into highland Papuan villages, where Papuan Christian conversion to Islam is encouraged by the social prestige and national identification such religious change engenders.

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See also Indonesia; Papua New Guinea; Southeast Asia

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PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Papua New Guinea (PNG) occupies the eastern half of the island of New Guinea, which it shares with the Indonesian Papua. When PNG gained independence in 1975, its constitution proclaimed Christianity as the national religion, a move that connected the emerging nation to the global community of Christians and acknowledged an important shift in local worldviews. While the constitution served to highlight the historical importance of mission contact, at the beginning of the 21st century, religion in PNG is far from homogeneous. In some parts of the country, Christianity resembles overseas forms; in others, it is more aptly described as an indigenous religion, and conversion has not always involved a complete rejection of pre-Christian socioreligious practices. Coupled with the diversity of PNG cultures, this has meant that religion is often a significantly localized tradition.

With more than 800 languages and nearly as many cultural and religious traditions, PNG before independence was generally described in terms of the so-called primal religions of oral cultures, although Christian missions had been active in some areas since the late 19th century. Early anthropological studies gave primacy to religion as an organizing feature of life, highlighting complex

connections with economic and sociopolitical spheres. It was generally seen to be grounded in practical concerns. Rituals connected to ancestor cults and spirit cults ensured well-being and fertility, and the widespread use of “magic” and “sorcery” (misinterpreted terms introduced during the colonial period), which were part of the religious traditions, continues to influence the lives of many PNG people. Mission commentaries have emphasized the importance of celebration and the maintenance of abundance in pre-Christian religion. Yet all these generalizations belie the richness of local religious expression.

The variety of Christian practice in PNG has resulted as much from particular mission histories as it has from its cultural diversity. By 1890, French, British, and German missions were working in coastal and island areas. The highland regions were contacted much later, by which time American-based fundamentalist and Pentecostal/charismatic churches were spreading across the country. At first, particular missions worked in discrete, carefully selected areas, but more recently, there has been competition for church membership, even among relatively small populations.

Different Christian denominations have brought an array of influences. Even within the individual missions there were different interpretations and styles of teaching. This has meant that for some societies, the changes brought by Christianity have been dramatic, while for others, Christianity is now perceived as part of their tradition. For example, in some coastal areas, the London Missionary Society employed Polynesians as mission teachers, believing that similarities in language and culture would make the work of conversion easier. As well as a new religion, these teachers brought new forms of material culture, both Western and Polynesian, and their influence contributed to the formation of the first Independent Church in PNG, the Papua Ekalesia, in 1962, which later merged with the Methodist Church to become what is now the United Church of PNG. In other PNG societies, the tensions between Christianity and traditional religious practices are far more apparent.

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See also Christianity; Indonesia; Local Religion; Pacific Islands/Oceania; Papua; Southeast Asia

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PARAGUAY

Paraguay, a landlocked country in South America, has 6.8 million inhabitants according to the 2002 national census; the main global religions present in Paraguay are Roman Catholicism (89%), Protestantism (11.7%), marginal Christianity (1%), other world religions (>1%), and new religious movements (<1%).

Roman Catholicism

The Roman Catholic Church entered with Spanish colonization, establishing the Asunción diocese in 1547. The institutional presence of the Church, however, remained weak for centuries.

Jesuits and Franciscans

From 1609 until their expulsion in 1767, the Jesuits baptized 1 million Indians. When the Treaty of Madrid (1750) transferred ownership of the Jesuit missions from Spain to Portugal, the pope supported their closing.

The Bishops' Conference and Liberation Theology

After independence (1811), dictators kept the Roman Catholic Church under tight control, annexing its lands and directly appointing clergy and bishops.

The Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) and the Medellín Bishops' Conference (1968) strongly affected Paraguayan bishops. In 1967, Archbishop Mena Porta ended the patronage system, pulling clerical appointments back into church power. Dictator Alfredo Stroessner's cruelty made bishops sympathetic to liberation theology, which proposed an active role for the church in establishing a just society.

Pope John Paul II's 1988 visit stimulated a successful popular uprising against Stroessner (1954–1989). The current president, Fernando Lugo, is the former San Pedro bishop (1994–2005) and a liberation theologian.

The Catholic Charismatic Renewal

The Catholic Charismatic Renewal (CCR) arrived in Paraguay in the 1970s, stressing a personal relationship with the Holy Spirit and a strict morality. The CCR had 106,480 participants by 1995, representing one third of all active Catholics. The Bishops' Conference supported the CCR to retain membership.

Mainstream Protestantism

The first British missionaries—Methodist Episcopalians and Anglicans—entered Paraguay in 1886. German Lutherans arrived in 1893, followed by U.S. Seventh-Day Adventists in 1900. American Disciples of Christ and Baptists entered the country in 1916 and 1920, respectively. The Orthodox Church arrived in Paraguay with Russian and Ukrainian immigrants in 1918 and 1925. Russian Mennonites arrived in 1930, followed by Mennonites from Canada and Europe during World War II. None converted Paraguayans in great numbers.

Pentecostalism and Neo-Pentecostalism

U.S. Assemblies of God missionaries arrived in 1945, while the Church of God (Cleveland) opened its mission in 1954. Until the 1990s, Pentecostal success was limited. What was more successful was a local brand of Pentecostalism, El Pueblo de Dios (The People of God), founded in 1963. Brazilian neo-Pentecostal churches, emphasizing faith healing and prosperity, started using old cinemas in the mid-1990s as meeting places. The Universal Church of the Kingdom of God and God Is Love attracted a modest membership.

Marginal Christians

The Jehovah's Witnesses arrived in 1924 and had 11,805 members by 2002. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints opened its mission in

1950. They claimed 50,256 members by 2002, but only 9,374 self-identified as Mormons in the census. Both eagerly seek to proselytize and with some degree of success.

Other World Religions and Transnational Religious Movements

Other global world religions in Paraguay are Buddhism, Judaism, Islam, and Hinduism. All arrived with immigrants, and none proselytized beyond their own ethnic group. The Jews established their first synagogue in 1917.

Since the 1990s, globalization has led to the growth of transnational new religious movements in Paraguay. These include Baha'i, the Unification Church, Umbanda and other African Brazilian religions, Hare Krishna, and Soka Gakkai. Their membership is modest but growing.

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See also Baha'i; Catholic Charismatic Renewal; Hinduism; Judaism; Latin America; Liberation Theology; Mormons; Pentecostal Movements; Protestant Buddhism; Protestant Christianity; Roman Catholicism

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PARIS

See France

PENTECOSTAL MOVEMENTS

Pentecostal movements form a relatively recent stream of Christianity, currently comprising about

a quarter of Christians worldwide. Significantly, Pentecostal movements account for a large share in the enormous growth of Christianity in the 20th century. Pentecostal movements—also known as Pentecostalism—should be seen as a type of Christianity rather than as a denomination or a single religious movement. As such, Pentecostal religiosity takes many different forms; both insiders and outsiders use the term *charismatic Christianity* as a synonym.

In their theology, the majority of Pentecostals acknowledge the classical evangelical doctrine of repentance from sin and conversion to Jesus Christ and a view of the Bible as the fully inspired and authoritative word of God and have a strong missionary zeal. Pentecostal spirituality is also strongly affective, stressing the relationship with Jesus and/or the Father God after conversion as something that is very real. Similarly affective and distinctive for Pentecostal spirituality is the emphasis on the reality of the Holy Spirit—God the Spirit of the Christian Trinity—who gives the believers “gifts” that empower them, such as *glossolalia* (“speaking in tongues,” i.e., the utterance of an incomprehensible spiritual “language”), prophecy, and healing. Here, Pentecostals follow and reenact what Karla Poewe has called a “first century schema,” exemplified in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the disciples of Jesus Christ on Pentecost (Acts 2). The gifts of the Spirit are also called *charismata*—hence the adjective *charismatic* in *charismatic Christianity*. A central doctrine of classical Pentecostal denominations is that the gift of glossolalia is the sign that a believer is “baptized” in the Spirit. Classical Pentecostal theology similarly sees a difference between being born again and being baptized in the Spirit, the latter being a separate stage in the spiritual growth of a believer. In later Pentecostal movements, this relation is understood as less strict, and the intrinsic link between Spirit baptism and glossolalia is loosened. Distinctive for Pentecostal praxis and piety is this emphasis on experiences of the Spirit. Pentecostal believers thus see the reality of the Spirit in their lives and in the church demonstrated through the gifts of the Spirit. Characteristic for Pentecostal piety is the central role of the emotional body as a “channel” that receives and transfers the Holy Spirit. Through the emphasis on the direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit and the spiritual empowerment of believers,

Pentecostal spirituality is often highly creative and versatile, adapting to local cultural circumstances, which is one of the reasons it is an extremely viable form of Christianity worldwide.

Historical Development

Pentecostal movements have their roots in the Azusa Street Revival of Los Angeles, in 1906, led by the African American preacher William Seymour. However, this revival, albeit significant for its experiences that would define the new Pentecostal movements of the 20th century, was preceded by several streams of earlier North American revivalist evangelicalism of the Holiness movements. At the turn of the 19th century, more believers from the Holiness stream were convinced that a new visitation of the Spirit was at hand, finding evidence in experiments with glossolalia and other gifts of the Spirit. Pentecostalism stems for a large part from Anglo-Saxon revivalism, incorporating Methodist ideas of spiritual regeneration as a consequence of being “born again.” As such, Pentecostal movements fit into a pattern of revivalism and “awakenings” that has been part of American history in the past three centuries. The “awakenings” provided Pentecostalism with what can be called a revival structure, in which individual salvation, intense religious experiences, and the expectation of the dawning of a new era are central. The revival structure of Pentecostal religiosity provides an endemic charisma to the movements, which causes them to constantly reinvent and revitalize themselves.

At other points in history, and in a number of cases unrelated to Western church history but rather occurring in missionary contexts, other Christian movements saw Pentecostal-like experiences that were understood as visitations of the Spirit. Several authors have also pointed to the influence of African American spirituality in the emergence of Pentecostal religion. Walter Hollenweger, the father of contemporary Pentecostal studies, has summed up this African American influence as follows: an oral liturgy, a narrative theology and witness, a reconciliatory and participatory community, the inclusion of visions and dreams in worship, and an understanding of the relationship between body and mind revealed in healing by prayer and liturgical dance. The African

American heritage may also account for traits of social liberation that can be found in the theology and praxis of Pentecostal movements.

The Azusa Street revival indeed was successful in claiming that the church was experiencing a new Pentecost, available to all people in our time. Moreover, the revival spread rapidly, not only in North America but in other parts of the world as well: No later than 1907, the Pentecostal movement had reached the European continent. What was striking about this revival was not only the occurrence of unusual religious experiences and the unprecedented growth of the movement but also its inclusive character, giving room to interaction between people of different racial descent as well as the granting of authority to women in the revival meetings. Both racial integration and the role of women became controversial issues in Pentecostal movements, however. Early Pentecostal denominations in the United States divided along racial lines, actually creating ethnic churches. In several Pentecostal churches, women acquired leading roles, one of the most notable being Aimee Semple McPherson, founder of the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel in 1927. In general, however, Pentecostal churches have chosen to restrict leadership of women, often excluding them from teaching and church administration. More recent Pentecostal streams are more open to the leading role of women while still maintaining very outspoken gender distinctions, which are believed to be biblical.

Pentecostal Expansion

The real expansion of Pentecostal movements started after 1940, through an increase of itinerant ministries and missionary initiatives from Pentecostal denominations. A significant development in this respect is the spread of Pentecostal religiosity to the mainline churches. In 1960, the Episcopal priest Dennis Bennett of Van Nuys, California, testified to his church that he had been baptized in the Spirit and was blessed with the gift of glossolalia. Although there is evidence of similar experiences happening earlier in other places, this event is usually seen as marking the rise of what came to be known as the Charismatic Renewal, a movement that sought to incorporate Pentecostal experience within the mainline churches. Since the

1960s, the Charismatic Renewal has spread to a wide range of churches, including the Roman Catholic Church (1970). After the 1970s, different varieties of Pentecostal movements have emerged, often labeled as *neo-Pentecostalism* but in fact comprising different doctrines and practices. An important U.S.-derived form of neo-Pentecostalism was introduced in the 1980s by the Vineyard movement, which infused a middle-class, “feel-good” element into intense religious experiences. At the other end of the neo-Pentecostal spectrum, we find various movements active with a so-called prosperity-type of belief and practice. Although controversial within the Pentecostal world, prosperity Pentecostalism has become very popular throughout the world, and “health and wealth” preaching has even become a common image of Pentecostal religiosity. The most important recent development of Pentecostal movements is the fact that Pentecostalism has become the religion of the Southern Hemisphere. In particular, Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa, and East Asia have become regions where Pentecostal religiosity has become an extremely visible form of Christianity, in some cases being even the dominant form of Christendom. It is expected that this explosive growth of Pentecostal movements in the Southern Hemisphere will continue for some time. On a global scale, we see that Pentecostal religiosity spills over into different churches and denominations more and more, making the categorization of Pentecostalism as a distinct religious form less evident.

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See also Catholic Charismatic Renewal; Evangelical Movements; Latin America; Protestant Buddhism; Protestant Christianity

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PENTECOSTAL MOVEMENTS IN LATIN AMERICA

See Latin America

PEOPLES TEMPLE

The Peoples Temple was a socialist religious sect that rocketed to international prominence in 1978, when more than 900 members of its intentional community in Guyana, South America, took their own lives by drinking cyanide-laced Flavor Aid or were shot for their refusal to do so. The group was led by the charismatic self-styled prophet Jim Jones, whose lifelong battle for racial integration and social equality won him accolades from civil rights organizations but who, in the years leading up to the mass suicide, demanded increasingly authoritarian control over his followers and ratcheted up his rhetoric against what he saw as a conspiracy by a coalition of the U.S. government, the media, and a group of ex-followers to undermine his vision and destroy his movement.

Jones was born into the fractured landscape of racial and class tensions that would become his central concern. His birthplace was the racially segregated Lynn, Indiana, and while Jones attributed

the beginnings of his political and theological radicalism to his outspoken mother, he claimed that his father was a member of the Ku Klux Klan (although there are no records of his membership). Jones as a child and adolescent was drawn to the emotionalism and progressive social values of the various Pentecostal churches he attended with his mother, but he complained that the churches tended to pay more attention to a style of worship than to furthering the egalitarian sociopolitical values of the faith.

As a young man in the early 1950s, Jones began to discover his sizable talents as an evangelical faith healer. Word of these healings spread, and Jones began appearing in churches in Indiana and beyond, manifesting Pentecostal gifts of the Spirit and laying his hands on the sick to great fanfare among parishioners. Even as his reputation as a faith healer grew, however, Jones saw the practice as simply a means by which to advocate for racial integration and socialism. He required that churches in which he appeared be integrated and even asked that Black parishioners sit up front, which sometimes angered the local community or church elders. As the associate pastor of the Laurel Street Tabernacle in Indianapolis, Jones encountered strong resistance to integrating the congregation. Consequently, he left with a chunk of the membership to start his own church, Wings of Deliverance, which in 1956 he renamed the Peoples Temple.

Jones was significantly influenced by the charismatic Black preacher and self-proclaimed messiah Father M. J. Divine, whose Philadelphia Peace Mission Jones visited several times in the late 1950s. As was the case with Divine, Jones's followers began referring to him as "Father" or "Dad," and the People's Temple was increasingly organized in a strict patriarchal fashion with Jones as its messiah who would deliver the flock out of the harsh racial and class inequalities of this world and into a utopian Promised Land. In Indianapolis and afterward, Jones began to more openly replace Christian theological tropes with socialist or communist ones, such as rejecting what he called the "Sky God" of Christianity in favor of communist principles. In 1960, the People's Temple was accepted as a Disciples of Christ congregation; however, Jones continued to elevate socialism as the true ideal and to view the Bible as a "paper idol" that had supported discrimination.

In 1965, the group emigrated to Redwood Valley, California, spurred by Jones's acute fear of nuclear apocalypse (he believed that parts of California might be spared) and by the racial and political resistance they encountered in Indianapolis. In California, the Peoples Temple put into action its communitarian ethos—many of its followers living together on the land in Redwood Valley—and underwent a period of success and expansion, opening satellite churches and establishing income-producing “care homes” for kids and the elderly. After relocating headquarters to San Francisco in 1975, Jones began to mix socially with progressive luminaries and politicians, but the group's success was eventually counterbalanced by media scrutiny and by a vocal coalition of critical ex-members dubbed the “Concerned Relatives.” Numerous scholars have argued that these external pressures, along with scrutiny from the Internal Revenue Service over the group's tax practices, deepened Jones's sense of impending collision with the corrupt outside world and spurred the group's exodus to the intended Promised Land in Guyana.

The beginnings of Jonestown in Guyana involved hard work, clearing land and building infrastructure, but by some accounts, the community was generally, in the beginning at least, in good spirits and optimistic about the project of creating a utopia devoid of class and racial stratification and bigotry. However, pressure from the United States continued—and continued to be foregrounded as a concern for Jones—most significantly in the guise of the Concerned Relatives, who sought the aid of the media, courts, and politicians and portrayed Jonestown as a concentration camp that had imprisoned its members against their will.

In 1978, Congressman Leo Ryan led a fact-finding delegation to Guyana that consisted of relatives of Jonestown members and the media. Ironically, Ryan seemed mostly impressed with the community until a member botched an attempt to stab him. The delegation left hurriedly thereafter, taking with them 15 Jonestown members who wanted to leave. Jones secretly dispatched gunmen to the airstrip who opened fire and killed Ryan and four others as they attempted to board their planes. Back at the community, Jones announced that hostile forces would inevitably respond with a vicious attack and that the most valiant course of action for Jonestown members was “revolutionary

suicide.” There was some argument and resistance, but most members appear to have taken the cyanide-laced drink willingly. Jones himself died of a gunshot wound, likely self-inflicted.

Scholars of new religions, particularly of new religions and violence, continue to view the People's Temple as perhaps the paradigmatic example of violence spurred by escalating hostility between a new religion and its adversaries in the outside world (the government, ex-members, the anticult movement). Such theories of “extrinsic causation” lead to explanations of violence in which the opponents of the new religion are implicated, by virtue of their emphatic opposition, in the violent culmination. It is also worth mentioning that Jonestown remains, for anticultists and those broadly antagonistic to new religions, a paradigmatic “brainwashing cult.” While theories of “brainwashing” have systematically been rejected by U.S. scholars and courts as unscientific attacks on civil liberties, anticult movements still exert a wide-ranging influence in Europe and internationally; in this context, the specter of Jonestown aligns with other violent groups more well known in Europe, such as the Solar Temple and Aum Shinrikyô. In an increasingly diverse globalized world, Jonestown throws a long shadow and continues to influence responses to and interpretations of religious belonging and conflict within plurality.

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See also Aum Shinrikyô; Branch Davidians; Heaven's Gate; New Religions; New Religions in South America

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PERENNIAL PHILOSOPHY

The perennial philosophy, or *philosophia perennis*, may be understood as a self-consistent metaphysical

and ultimately soteriological doctrine regarding the nature of reality, which has been re-adumbrated in various formulations both historically and cross-culturally. In popular use, it has come to imply the common philosophical themes that underlie the diversity of the world's religious traditions.

The Term *Philosophia Perennis*

Historical Origin

The first historical use of the term *philosophia perennis* has been traced to the 16th-century Vatican librarian Agostino Steuco, who authored a seminal work of that title. It has been more popularly thought to originate with the celebrated philosopher of the Enlightenment, Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz, who made occasional use of the term in private correspondence.

Steuco was influenced by the Renaissance Platonists Marcilio Ficino and Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, themselves influenced by Platonic, Neoplatonic, and Hermetic philosophic currents, who made use of the closely related term *prisca philosophia* or *philosophia priscorum*—the venerable philosophy—emphasizing the continuity of the philosophic tradition from ancient quasi-mythical figures such as Hermes Trismegistus and Pythagoras through Neoplatonic philosophers such as Plotinus and Proclus. Ficino's views were also shaped by his earlier contemporary, the Byzantine Platonist Gemistus Pletho. Another earlier contemporary, the Christian cardinal Nicholas of Cusa, similarly sought to articulate a conciliation encompassing different faiths and was to bear a further, independent influence on Steuco.

Variant Uses

The fundamental intuition supported by the notion of the perennial philosophy is that of a single unified principle encompassing all things, ascertainable through a single wisdom variously known by all peoples. This precisely conforms to Steuco's understanding, in company with those who preceded him in its articulation. In its narrowest sense, it implied a conciliation between Platonism and Christian theology; more broadly conceived, it sought a vision encompassing a multitude of philosophical understandings and religious faiths.

Leibniz's engagement with the notion of the perennial philosophy was much in keeping with earlier articulations, particularly as developed in his philosophy of harmony. More recent European and American philosophers—most notably Martin Heidegger, Karl Jaspers, and Wilbur Urban—predominantly influenced by Immanuel Kant and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, used the term *perennial philosophy* to alternatively indicate certain common conclusions, widely recurrent problems, or persistent polarities within the history of Western philosophy. The term was also appropriated by neoscholastics in the early 20th century, most notably the Thomist philosopher Maurice De Wulf, to designate the common and enduring patrimony of high medieval scholasticism.

The notion of a common perennial philosophy in the context of modern Western philosophy is difficult to extensively support, simply given the divergence of philosophical positions and schools to be found therein: Little conjoins idealism and nihilism or dualism and physicalism, for example. Furthermore, whereas the original use of the term *philosophia perennis* did not divorce wisdom from piety or philosophy from theology, its use in this latter context is almost wholly constrained to the domain of philosophical ratiocination. In particular, it has no necessary bearing on the quest for the knowledge of God, which is central to the original conception of the *philosophia perennis*. The use of the term by modern neoscholastics to apply solely to St. Thomas Aquinas and his school may be seen as a narrowing of its original intent, while the appropriateness of this conception in light of the differences between medieval scholastics has been largely discredited, most notably by Étienne Gilson.

Philosophia Perennis et Universalis

Cross-Civilizational Implications

The universal intuition inherent in the perennial philosophy could only be broadly articulated in the context of the increased accessibility in the modern era of the intellectual and spiritual heritage found across civilizations. In this sense, the original expression of the *philosophia perennis* was a promise imperfectly realized, necessarily limited by a constrained knowledge of civilizations other than Christianity and Hellenism. A number of figures in the 20th century have argued for a

broader expression of the perennial philosophy that is truly cross-civilizational. The eminent Indian philosopher Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan recognized such a universal philosophy, while the brilliant English writer Aldous Huxley broadly popularized this wider notion of the perennial philosophy in his celebrated work of that title.

A school of thought that was to provide the most extensive articulation of the perennial philosophy constellated in the early 20th century around the French metaphysician René Guénon, the Anglo-Ceylonese scholar Ananda Coomaraswamy, and the German-Swiss philosopher Frithjof Schuon. Termed the *Traditionalist* or *Perennialist School*, its most significant scholarly expositor of the perennial philosophy was Coomaraswamy, considered by eminent figures such as Heinrich Zimmer and Mircea Eliade to be one of the finest scholars of the 20th century. In numerous later essays, Coomaraswamy explored various themes of the perennial philosophy, displaying a consummate mastery of Indian, Patristic, Platonic, and other sources. While his primary concern was to elucidate commonalities across multiple historical expressions of the perennial philosophy, Schuon and especially Guénon were more concerned with elucidating the doctrine of the perennial philosophy from metaphysical first principles.

Although Coomaraswamy nowhere attempted an extended systematic treatment of the perennial philosophy, such a compendium was completed under his inspiration by the American traditionalist Whitall Perry—a magisterial work that at once complements and supersedes Huxley’s earlier work. Perry’s work also displays in both commentary and organization its indebtedness to Schuon, whose “stations of wisdom”—his schema of spiritual virtues—form its architectonic structure.

Related Terms

Given the universal intuition inherent in the perennial philosophy, it should not be surprising to find closely related terms for the same conception across various civilizations. These include the Greek *prisca theologia*, *prisca sapientia*, *theosophia*, *hagia Sophia*, and *sophia perennis*; the Latin *lex aeterna*; the Arabic *din al-ḥaqq*, *ḥikmah ‘atīqah*, and *al-ḥikmat al-khālīdah*; the Persian *jāvīdān khīrad*;

the Sanskrit *ṛta* and *sanātana dharma*; the Pāli *akālika dhamma*; and the Chinese *li* and *dao*.

The Doctrine of the *Philosophia Perennis*

Origin

Although the lineaments of the perennial philosophy may be traced through comparative study of the world’s scriptures, mystics, and sages, its essential tenets may be derived from first principles. One necessarily and axiomatically begins with the metaphysical Absolute, that Ultimate Reality or Supreme Principle, indicated by terms such as the *Gottheit* or Godhead of Meister Eckhart, *Hyperousios* or Super-Essence of Gregory Palamas, *Ein Sof* or unmanifested Deity of the Zohar, the *Good* of Plato, the *One* of Plotinus, Ibn al-‘Arabī’s *al-Dhat* or Divine Essence, Śāṅkarācārya’s *Nirguṇa Brahman* or attributeless supreme Reality, the eternal Dao or Principle of Lao Tzu, and, with certain clarifications, Nāgārjuna’s *Śūnyatā* or Voidness.

The Absolute, as such, is necessarily without limitation, restriction, or determination and further is unique, all-encompassing, and an absolute totality. It is necessarily partless, as the finite and relative could have no common measure with its infinitude. Manifestation arises in consequence of its infinitude or universal possibility, yet manifestation is neither separate from nor identical to the Absolute. Ultimately, there are not two realities—the Absolute and manifestation; rather, the Absolute alone is real, and yet manifestation is the Absolute.

The Return

Man, as part of manifestation, participates in the inherently ambiguous relation between manifestation and the Absolute. Just as manifestation is not other than the Absolute, so man shares this indivision: Although man is not the Absolute, the Absolute is present in man. “There are two [selves] in man,” as Aquinas witnesses—higher and lower, principial and contingent, and real and relatively unreal. The Spirit, the trace of the Absolute within, is the Hebrew *ruah*, Arabic *ruh*, and Greek *pneuma* as well as the *daimon* or immanent genius of Socrates, Plato’s *hegemon* or leader within, the *funkelein* or divine spark of Meister Eckhart, St. Paul’s inner man, neo-Confucianism’s *liang-chih* or

inner sage, *ka* or spiritual essence of the Egyptians, and atman or Self of the Vedanta.

The Spirit is the essence and highest aspect of man; through it, man derives his entire existence, and through it also, man is not other than the Absolute. Man's realization of his identity with the Spirit is at once his perfection, his liberation, and his return to the Absolute, from which he has never been apart. This realization—the *theosis* of Hesychasm, *fanā* and *baqā* of Sufism, moksha of Vedanta, and nirvana of Buddhism—stands at once as the fulfillment and the final proof of the *philosophia perennis*.

Peter Samsel

See also Axial Age; Ecumenicalism; Global Religion; Mysticism; Unitarians; World Religions; World Theology

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can be divided into three periods: Inca, colonial, and national. Prior to the arrival of the Spanish conquistadors in the 16th century, the Inca Empire (Tawantinsuyu) spanned most of western South America. Inca religion was a state religion centered at the Temple of the Sun in Cuzco. As the Inca Empire expanded, new deities from conquered peoples were incorporated into the pantheon of gods and goddesses, while Inca religious beliefs and practices were implemented in conquered territories. The primary deity or creator god for the Inca is called Viracocha. The god's first offspring was the Sun; he created the moon, stars, earth, and human beings.

Although the Spaniards arrived in 1532, warfare against the Inca and neo-Inca empires, as well as civil war among the Spanish, delayed for roughly 40 years the spiritual conquest or Catholic conversion of the indigenous peoples of what the Spaniards called Peru. After the establishment of relative peace throughout the country in the 1570s, Catholic missionaries began to convert the indigenous population to Christianity. At first, these efforts were successful; however, by the 1600s, it became clear to church officials that many native Peruvians were not going to put aside their traditional beliefs and practices easily. In the 17th century, the Catholic Church pursued a number of anti-idolatry campaigns in an effort to destroy the indigenous religious traditions of the non-Spanish population.

The main targets of the Church were indigenous religious leaders who were considered to be direct competition to the missionary priests who desired to Christianize the natives. Although brutal and systematic, the Church and its extirpators were not completely successful in destroying the indigenous religions. Many indigenous Andean traditions are still in existence today. Sometimes these traditions are at odds with Christianity, and sometimes they are not. Throughout the colonial period, Spaniards relied on African slave labor. These slaves brought to Peru religious traditions from West Africa. Many of these traditions persist today in certain communities, though mixed with many Catholic elements.

With independence from Spain in 1821, Peru became a sovereign nation-state. The Catholic Church, staffed with Peruvian-born instead of Spanish-born clergy, maintained itself as the dominant religious institution of the territory. Although in the past half-century various Protestant

PERU

Peru, which lies on the Pacific shores of South America, has an extensive religious history that

denominations have come to play a more active role in the religious lives of individual Peruvians, Catholicism remains the preferred religion of a majority of Peru's citizens.

Robert L. Green Jr.

See also Indigenous Religion; Latin America; Roman Catholicism

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PHILIPPINES

The Republic of the Philippines contains more than 7,000 islands in the Pacific Ocean north of Indonesia. It was a Spanish colony that was ceded to the United States after the Spanish-American War in 1898 and received full independence in 1946. The population of more than 90 million people is 84% Roman Catholic, making it the largest Christian majority country in Asia. It is the third largest Catholic country in the world, after Brazil and Mexico; 9% of the population is Protestant Christian, and 5% are Muslim. Many of the Muslims are concentrated in the southern island of Mindanao, where the Moro Liberation Front has spearheaded a sometimes violent separatist movement.

Dissolution of Indigenous Culture

Originally, the main islands (Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao) were not under a central or national government before the coming of the Spaniards in

the 15th century. As individually separate territories, they existed with their own simple form of government, peaceful economic activities, and naïve systems of worship. When the Spaniards came, the Indo-Malay tradition was totally replaced by a European orientation. Society became far more patriarchal and elitist. The islands were lumped together under the new name “Philippines” (after the Spanish king, Philip II). Persons, towns, cities, streets, vessels, and schools were named after saints, priests, Spanish kings or queens, or the Holy Family. The indigenous *barangay* (unit of government ruled by a *datu* and composed of 30–100 households) was changed into the rigidity of *pueblos* (towns) ruled by autocratic friars. The Bible was a secret book exclusive to the friars. Roman Catholicism as the state religion buried in oblivion the *Bathala* (“God”), the *anito* (“spirit of dead ancestor”), and nature worship of the indigenous communities. Sacraments and fiestas became important parts of the faith. Mass conversion of the early people was done by force. Muslim leaders in Manila were converted to Christianity, except for the Muslims in Mindanao.

After the Philippines became an American colony in 1898, Protestant Christianity helped disestablish Roman Catholicism as the state religion and introduced the ideas of liberalism and secularism: religious liberty, lay ministry, justice, democracy, public education, equality, and a democratizing religious tradition, namely, Methodism. The occupation by the Japanese in World War II, on the other hand, had little religious impact in terms of the variety of religions since the Japanese control was primarily an expansion of territory and power. The Japanese imperial army did desanctify the religious traditions of the Filipinos, however, by not allowing them to practice their faith.

At the end of the 19th century, the aspirations of the Filipinos for independence from the Spanish colonizers and a desire for the Filipinization of the Catholic Church helped foment a series of revolts led by Emilio Aguinaldo and Andres Bonifacio. Gregorio Aglipay, a Catholic priest, joined the revolt and, later, at the beginning of the 20th century, founded his own religious movement—the First Filipino Catholic Church, also known as the Philippine Independent Church or the Aglipayan Church.

From the early colonization up to the Japanese period, the islands were in indescribable chaos, as

manifested by a series of evacuations of people, summary execution, revolts, the death of innocent civilians, and religious prejudices among the Christian converts, Muslims, and folk religionists.

Islamic Insurgency and Government Response

The peoples of the southern island region of Mindanao consist of two ethnoreligious groups: Christians and Muslims, setting aside other residents who have also their own systems of worship and communities. Mindanao has been claimed as the ancestral land of the Muslims in the region, where at the same time Christian settlers are in the majority. The Muslim (Moro) separatist movement has been stimulated by the creation of independent Muslim states in the adjacent areas of Indonesia and Malaysia, and in the last decades of the 20th century, it was encouraged by a rising global Islamic activism.

Confronted by the rise of student activism, Muslim insurgency, and underground movements, the government opted to use militarism to wipe out the enemies of the state. President Ferdinand Marcos declared martial law in 1972 following the rekindling of Islamic nationalism caused by the Jabidah massacre committed by his regime. This ignited bloody wars against the Muslim rebels and the proliferation of insurgent movements. Christian vigilante groups were strategically formed and heightened the prejudice of the Muslims against the Christians. Together with the armed forces of the Philippines, these vigilante groups unleashed their might against the Muslim insurgents and the New People's Army in the countryside.

From 1970 to 2000, a series of wars and terroristic activities plagued the southern island region of Mindanao. Hostilities on a grand scale was the concern especially of the Mindanaoans, who sought the cessation of conflict on the island. In 2000, President Joseph Ejercito Estrada declared an all-out war with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). Rebel camps were destroyed and military attacks in the surrounding areas left thousands of innocents dead in the battlefield.

The desire for justice and equal opportunities for Muslims propelled Muslim progressives to struggle for self-determination. This developed into efforts for autonomy led by Nur Misuari

through the establishment of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF). The goal of the MNLF is the establishment of an autonomous region with 13 provinces as stipulated in the 1976 Tripoli Agreement and the Final Peace Agreement in 1996. The autonomous region is still part of the territory and is under the sovereignty of the Philippine government. The controversies attached to some violations of the peace accord accounted for the escalation of violence in Mindanao.

Ustaz Hashim Salamat rejected the partial autonomy that the MNLF accepted in 1987. He proposed the secession of Mindanao from the national government and the establishment of an independent Islamic state. He separated from the MNLF and founded the MILF. And after the MNLF accepted partial autonomy in 1987, one of its council members, Hashim Salamat, broke away from the MNLF and founded the MILF. Salamat, an Islamic teacher (*ustaz*), proposed that Mindanao secede from the national government and establish an independent Islamic state. In 2001, the MNLF and MILF were reunited through a formal signing of a unity pact favoring the realization of the Bangsamoro (Moro nation) homeland.

The rise of the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), a third force, claimed to espouse the Muslims' quest for genuine independence and struggle for self-determination. A series of kidnappings of foreign nationals and killings and bombing in the archipelago were the major notorious activities of the group described by the MNLF and MILF as being contrary to the teachings of Islam. The ASG was viewed by some political analysts as an instrument of the military to sabotage the peace process and to intensify arms trade in the area. The military operations against ASG added to the litany of violence in Mindanao and the rest of the islands.

The implementation of the 1976 Tripoli Agreement remains controversial. The Muslims in Mindanao became violent and rebellious. Both Christians and Muslims tend to live in uncomfortable zones of antagonism and mistrust. The Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) had formulated guidelines for peace talks to realize a genuine peace process in Mindanao. Often, the peace talks failed.

In 1997, a ceasefire agreement signed between the Ramos Administration and the MILF called for the cessation of hostilities in Mindanao. After

President Estrada's all-out war with the MILF in 2000, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo countered it by declaring an all-out peace in Mindanao. A series of peace talks followed, but alleged violations by both the government and the MILF of ceasefire agreements led to another war between the GRP and MILF in 2003. However, in July 2003, the GRP and MILF signed a bilateral ceasefire, and formal peace talks were reopened. However, Muslims, Christians, and indigenous peoples suffered from the escalation of violence and hostilities caused by the war. This again intensified the prejudices of Christians, who tagged the Muslims as terrorists.

The Memorandum of Agreement for Ancestral Domain (MOA-AD), which was supposed to be signed by the GRP and MILF on August 5, 2008, in Malaysia, was rejected by the Supreme Court as being unconstitutional because of a lack of consultation to the people by the two parties involved. The MOA-AD was supposed to contain the principles for the establishment of the so-called Bangsamoro Juridical Entity. Perceived as a better formula for the solution of the Mindanao conflict without a need to secede, it aims to expand the areas for the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao by the addition of more towns and cities in North Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Lanao del Norte, Zamboanga del Sur, and Zamboanga del Norte. This was strongly opposed by the provincial governors and mayors. There was political disarray, and both Christians and Muslims in remote areas evacuated. Wars killed many civilians. The Muslims blamed the rejection of the MOA-AD on Christian politicians.

The quest for genuine peace in Mindanao has been enhanced by the establishment of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao through the Republic Act 6734 in 1989; the series of peace talks between the government and the Moro fronts and ceasefire agreements since the 1990s; the creation of zones of peace (demilitarized areas), also referred to as sanctuaries or spaces for peace, by civilian communities in the late 1990s; the conduct of interreligious dialogues through the Bishop-Ulama Forum (composed of Christian and Muslim religious leaders) since 1996; and the inclusion of peace education, Islamic studies, and Mindanao studies in the curricula at all levels. These are some of the major efforts of the government and civil

society aimed at understanding the real issues facing Muslims in Mindanao so as to enhance collaboration, unity despite diversity, and harmony among all parties. These and other future efforts, however, require all Mindanaoans and the entire Filipino community to transcend historical prejudices, religious resentment, and ethnic differences and to enter into the wider social field of acceptance and empathy.

Annabelle Roda-Dafielmoto

See also Christianity; Islamism (Political Islam); Missions and Missionaries; Postcolonialism; Southeast Asia

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PILGRIMAGE

A pilgrimage is a ritual journey to a sacred or otherwise special place. Pilgrimages are undertaken for a variety of reasons, including the search for physical or spiritual healing, as the fulfillment of a vow, as a prescribed act of religious piety, for commemoration of significant events, as the expression of national or ethnic affiliation, to memorialize the dead, and for acquiring the spiritual blessing of a particular holy figure or holy place. In addition, pilgrimages may be made to

secular or quasi-spiritual sites, as in a pilgrimage to Elvis Presley's home at Graceland, to war graves, or to Lenin's tomb. While pilgrimage may be an important part of spiritual practice within particular religions, it can be interdenominational as well. Pilgrimages enjoy a continuing and even increasing popularity in the contemporary world, ranging from localized journeys to national and international ones. Even localized pilgrimage sites may acquire national and international reputations through contemporary means of communication such as television and the Internet.

Pilgrimage as Journey

The idea of journey is central to pilgrimage, even when the journey is only metaphorical (as in the idea of life as a pilgrimage). Leaving home and traveling to a different place is the heart of a pilgrimage journey. And while the site to which a pilgrim journeys is important, and generally the focus of ritual, the journey itself is often significant as well, ritually, psychologically, and socially.

Pilgrimage is one way of entering into a relationship or connection with the spiritual world and spiritual beings. These beings are most often saints or deities who play a role within a particular religious tradition or to whom the pilgrim wishes to make a request or prayer. But pilgrimage may also be to sites of the dead, such as European war graves, or to sites where mass death or tragedy has occurred, such as the site of the 9/11 terrorist attack in New York City. Or it may be to a place where the body or relic of a holy person is entombed or that person's spirit is believed to reside.

Reasons for Pilgrimage

While a pilgrimage may be undertaken in response to life difficulties or situations of crisis, it is often engaged in voluntarily and undertaken according to the needs and desires of individuals. There are exceptions to this, however. In medieval times, for example, pilgrimage to Rome or other holy places was sometimes imposed as a penance, and pilgrimage to Mecca is one of the Five Pillars of Islam, enjoined on all devout Muslims as a journey to be made at least once in a lifetime, if possible. Drawing Muslims from around the world, it

reflects both the global spread of Islam and the diaspora of specific Muslim populations.

While the often voluntary nature of pilgrimage means that it can usually be undertaken at any time, certain days are especially attractive for pilgrimage to particular places—days that may be related to specific events associated with the pilgrimage site or with the holy figure with whom the site is connected. Thus, the central Islamic pilgrimage to Mecca occurs during the 12th month of the Islamic calendar. Veterans who participate in the Run for the Wall, a motorcycle pilgrimage to the Vietnam Veterans memorial in Washington, D.C., time their arrival for Memorial Day weekend. And Greek Orthodox pilgrimage to the shrine of the Madonna of the Annunciation (Evangelistria) on the Aegean island of Tinos is heaviest on two major holy days dedicated to Mary—the Day of the Annunciation on March 25 and the Day of the Dormition (Assumption) on August 15.

The participation in, and motivation for, pilgrimage varies widely with time, place, and religious tradition. In some cases, pilgrimage is especially appealing to the marginal, as it offers a chance for direct connection to the sacred world and sacred figures whose power can be used to address the problems and difficulties of life. In other times and places, pilgrimage has special appeal for certain ethnic groups, such as the Mexican Virgin of Guadalupe for Indians. In some religious traditions and at certain pilgrimage sites, it is women who are especially prominent, seeking support and help from divine figures such as the Virgin Mary or local Muslim saints.

Pilgrimage as Ritual

Anthropologists Victor and Edith Turner focused attention on the ritual dimensions of pilgrimage, likening it to a rite of passage during which important transformations take place. In such rituals, the participants are separated from normal life, go through a period of transition and transformation (in the case of pilgrimage, this period is the journey itself), and then return to their normal life in a new status or transformed condition. Such transformation may be in the physical or spiritual state of the pilgrim, such as being cured of illness or being in a renewed spiritual state. It may also be reflected in one's social status. Muslims who have made the

pilgrimage to Mecca, for example, acquire the status of hajj.

While the site itself may be associated with such transformations, the journey is also important. The Turners saw the journey as what they called a "liminoid" time, a period "betwixt and between," during which transformation takes place and/or receptiveness to the messages and to the transformation to come occurs. Hardship plays a role in creating such psychological and spiritual receptivity, and a hallmark of many pilgrimages is that some degree of difficulty is involved. In the past, especially, the difficulty was often simply undertaking the journey itself, as travel was hard, often dangerous, and certainly time-consuming. (Muslims from Asia and Africa, for example, might travel for months to reach Mecca.) In today's world of easier and faster transportation, the difficulty might simply be financial or a matter of finding the time for the journey. But the journey may also be deliberately made more difficult by the pilgrim. For example, while one might go directly to Santiago de Compostela, in Galicia, Spain, thousands of pilgrims every year make the journey on foot, beginning their journey in southern France. In Nepal at the Manakamana temple, although pilgrims may now take a tram to the temple at the top of the mountain, many pilgrims choose instead to make the 4- to 5-hour hike to the top. Fasting and other physical disciplines may be part of a pilgrimage journey, or one may perform arduous acts at the site itself, such as going inside a church on one's knees. Such acts represent the personal sacrifice that is often considered a necessary part of pilgrimage. In addition, as psychological studies have shown, suffering in the course of a rite of passage (such as initiation or pilgrimage) makes the status achieved thereby more valued by the participant. Even in the contemporary world, in which suffering is less glorified, such difficulties and acts of sacrifice serve to set pilgrimage apart from ordinary journeys.

While pilgrimage itself may be considered a rite of passage, as Turner and Turner suggest, it may also be associated with other rites of passage. Greek women whose prayers to the Madonna for children have been answered may bring the child to a Marian shrine for baptism. Young Soviet couples used to make pilgrimages to Lenin's tomb after their wedding. Death is another occasion for

pilgrimage, as in the case of the holy Indian city of Banaras, where many Hindus go to make their final passage into death.

Turner and Turner also emphasized what they referred to as *communitas*, the state of social equality that they saw as a characteristic of groups of people who share the liminal period in a rite of passage such as initiation or pilgrimage. During the journey, they suggested, social differences and social hierarchy are erased or suspended as participants share in this common experience. Other analysts have disagreed, however, pointing out that ethnic and other social differences among pilgrims may continue to play important roles both during pilgrimage and at pilgrimage sites. Moreover, pilgrimage sites themselves are often locations of conflict and contestation, not only among groups of pilgrims who may lay differential claims to a site but also between pilgrims and religious authorities, who may have views different from those of the pilgrims regarding a site's purposes.

Pilgrimage Sites

Pilgrimage sites can be established in a variety of ways. In some cases, the origins are lost in time, as with the holy wells of Ireland, while in others, they are associated with specific historic events. Some are associated with the lives of holy figures, as places where they have manifested or that are associated with significant events of their lives. Pilgrimage may connect with the mythology of a site, as when Christian pilgrims come from all over the world to Jerusalem during Holy Week to reenact the drama of Christ's crucifixion. Pilgrimage sites may be in places that are central to a religion, such as Rome or holy cities such as Banaras in India, but often, they are in more marginal places, away from the centers of religious and secular power.

In the Christian tradition, a number of pilgrimage sites have been established through apparitions or visions, holy figures appearing to ordinary human beings, usually humble or marginal persons such as children, shepherds, or the elderly. Marian apparitions are particularly common, and several major Catholic pilgrimage sites such as Lourdes in France and Fatima in Portugal were established in this manner. Often in such cases, the founding of these pilgrimage sites came through popular belief

and practice, with official recognition by church authorities only coming later and sometimes reluctantly, reflecting the importance of popular belief and practice in pilgrimage generally. The reputation of such sites becomes established through word of mouth and, especially in the contemporary world, through the media, including the Internet. A recent example of this is the apparition site of Medjugorje in former Yugoslavia. Sites that are not officially recognized by religious authorities may still be important to pilgrims, even when their power is officially denied or downplayed. The practice of pilgrimage itself bestows power on the site and on whatever holy being is connected with it. As Turner and Turner suggest, pilgrims often “vote with their feet.”

There may be some particular thing that is the focus at a pilgrimage site—a church, a tomb, or an icon. Or a material object may be the consequence of pilgrimage, as when a church is built at an apparition site or a memorial is erected to commemorate some other event. Sometimes, the terrain gives rise to a pilgrimage site as part of an animate landscape. In traditional Chinese spiritual practice, for example, mountains have a sacred quality and become pilgrimage destinations. And the energy vortexes of Sedona, Arizona, draw many pilgrim/tourists to the area’s red rocks to experience their energetic power. Even living people may become the object of pilgrimage, as with some holy figures in India. While pilgrimages are usually connected in some way to special physical locations, it is important to note also that some pilgrimages are wanderings, which may or may not connect with specific sites. “Peace Pilgrim,” for example, the woman who covered thousands of miles on foot for peace in the United States, had no particular destination. Her pilgrimage itself was both the reason and the message of her journey.

Pilgrimage sites may be viewed as having “catchment areas”—that is, a geographical range from which pilgrims to the site are drawn. Some pilgrimage sites, such as Irish holy wells, are localized. Other sites are global in their reach, such as Mecca, which draws Muslims from all over the world, and Lourdes, which has a similar draw for Catholics. Others sites have nationalistic associations and can also connect diaspora populations to their homelands. The site of Our Lady of Czestochowa in Poland, for example, is a powerful

symbol of Polish nationalism, drawing not only Polish pilgrims but also Poles from outside the country.

Time and Boundaries in Pilgrimage

While the movement through space and the sacred spaces formed by pilgrimage sites are obvious elements of pilgrimage, a less obvious element is time. Not only do pilgrims partake of a “liminal” time during their journey, but there is also time in the sense of history and myth associated with pilgrimage sites—a time that the pilgrim encounters and participates in during contact with the sacred site and with events that are believed to have occurred there. Past thus meets present at such sites in the objects and rituals that are part of the site, and the mundane world meets the spiritual as the pilgrim makes contact with holy figures and events. At the same time, such sites are places in which it is often believed that miraculous or powerful events may happen again. And in turn, the occurrence of such events further legitimates a pilgrimage site and adds to its power and attraction. By its very nature, a pilgrimage site thus transcends notions of boundedness, blurring or erasing the boundaries between past and present and between the material and the spiritual world. But pilgrimage sites blur boundaries in other ways as well, for although they often seem concretely located, the pilgrims who come there travel from numerous places and then disperse, carrying home with them something of the power of the sacred site, whether in the form of healing or spiritual blessing, objects that have acquired the power of the site, or images of the site or holy beings who are believed to manifest at the site.

In this sense, at pilgrimage sites, the spiritual both connects to the physical and is made manifest and inheres in material objects. This can be seen in the power of circulating images, such as the images of Our Lady of Fatima, which may travel far from her pilgrimage site, and while never being mistaken for the original, nonetheless participate in the power of the pilgrimage site from which the image is derived. A pilgrimage destination is thus a web, with the site at its center and multiple strands that connect pilgrims and the site, to each other, to other sites, to local communities, and to larger global political and social institutions and forces.

Pilgrimage and Tourism

Some analysts, rather than focusing on the ritual nature of pilgrimage, have emphasized instead pilgrimage as movement, which ties pilgrimage to travel and tourism. Pilgrimage sites may draw visitors who, rather than being motivated by spiritual goals, wish to participate in “traditional” culture or colorful events, as with the “yupeez” who come to the Andalusian pilgrimage site of El Rocio in Spain. Some who come to established pilgrimage sites may have their own spiritual agendas, as do New Age pilgrims, who make international journeys to places such as Lourdes in France and to ancient sacred places such as Stonehenge, Macchu Pichu, or the ancient Greek ruins of Eleusis. In addition, pilgrimage forms a continuum with other, less dramatic visiting of sacred places such as local churches.

There have been recent discussions regarding the differences between pilgrimage and tourism. Some have used the term *spiritual tourism* to refer to travel to religious sites for the sake of sightseeing rather than for the experience of sacred or special power. Distinctions between pilgrimage and tourism are not always easy to maintain, however. Both historically and contemporarily, pilgrimage not uncommonly involves some degree of sightseeing as well as spiritual purpose. In addition, a journeyer whose intent is not necessarily to make a pilgrimage may find that, in the end, her or his journey has actually become one. Nonetheless, it might be argued that a focus on the journey, on a purpose, and on the site or sites to be visited, and particularly with some goal of transformation, is the hallmark of pilgrimage proper.

Some analysts have also challenged the category of pilgrimage itself, pointing out that in many languages, there is no exact equivalent to the English term and that, moreover, some traditions distinguish several kinds of ritual journeys. In modern Greek, for example, the term *proskinima*, which is used to refer to pilgrimage, is also used to refer to the conventional devotional acts one performs when visiting any church. In Islam, there is a distinction between the hajj, the obligatory pilgrimage to Mecca, and *ziyara*, a journey to a religious shrine such as a saint’s tomb. Thus, to refer to certain kinds of religious activities or certain kinds of travels as “pilgrimage” may obscure their

connections to other kinds of ritual behavior, on the one hand, and may blur the significant differences between the various activities we term *pilgrimage*, on the other.

Pilgrimage and Modernity

Some see pilgrimage as premodern or antimodern, whereas others see it as exemplary of the modern or postmodern age. Clearly, pilgrimage, far from dying out in the contemporary world, enjoys a widespread and even increasing popularity, whether it takes the form of traditional religious pilgrimage, New Age pilgrimage to ancient sites, or “religious tourism,” aided and promoted by improved means of transportation and by media, such as the Internet, that disseminate knowledge about pilgrimage and pilgrimage sites. The flexibility of pilgrimage and the focus, especially in the West, on pilgrimage as a means of individual transformation as well as the ability of pilgrimage to draw together diasporas and far-flung populations of believers may make it particularly suited to a contemporary age. This flexibility is part of pilgrimage’s popular appeal and is also related to the fact that it need not be overseen by any religious authority or confined to a particular religious tradition. At the same time, while it is facilitated by the forces of modernity, pilgrimage is a counter to secularism, insofar as it posits, and promotes, the idea of a nonmaterial world that can be encountered by a journey to a special place.

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See also Death Ritual; Modernism

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PLURALISM

Through intensified flows of people, material objects, and ideas between different parts of the world, globalization has prompted the dispersion of cultural forms and created new senses of community and loyalty. In some areas, this has led to increased diversity, while in others, it has spurred processes of homogenization. Regardless, the resultant confrontations with the new, strange, or different have made pluralism—and the proper ways to respond to it—a pertinent issue. The entry provides a conceptual outline of the term *pluralism*, and it addresses the logical premises as well as the normative implications inherent in the concept. It further addresses the relationship between globalization and pluralism and gives examples of how intensified communication and migration as key features of globalization contribute to religious pluralism and the pluralization of religious traditions.

Conceptual Outline

The term *pluralism* is used in a variety of ways, depending on context and interests: Sometimes it designates a state of affairs, sometimes an ideal for a hoped-for future, and at other times, again, a feared scenario. These different uses can be classified into two main categories, described below.

Pluralism as the Existence of More Than One of a Given Kind Within a Delimited Space

The word *pluralism* here connotes plurality or diversity, and it is mainly used as a mode of description. Religious pluralism understood in this sense can be identified at different levels:

1. *Religious pluralism understood as the co-existence of more than one religious tradition within a given society:* In this sense, most societies have a certain degree of pluralism, even though such an assessment might run contrary to official representations and state policies on religion (e.g., in societies where strict mono-religiosity is promoted). Such diversity might be the result of historical processes of state formations and the drawing of boundaries, it might be the result of waves of conversion or of revivalist movements, or it might be the result of migration. Often, this will also imply a certain degree of pluralism regarding the coexistence of differing types of religious organization within a given society. Furthermore, if one wants to assess the level of pluralism from the perspective of a given state—that is, the number of publicly recognized religions—the focus will often be on organizations as many states do not recognize abstract traditions but only specific types of organizational structures and polities.

2. *Religious pluralism understood as the coexistence of different institutional or interpretational forms within a given religious tradition:* This perspective addresses the pluralism that exists within broader categories such as Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, and the like. Christianity, for example, encompasses diverse and sometimes conflicting traditions and/or structures, such as Protestantism, Pentecostal Christianity, Catholicism, and the Coptic Church, and each of these might encompass a range of different institutions, practices, and beliefs.

3. *Religious pluralism as the commitment to and/or combination of beliefs and practices from different religions at an individual level:* The existence of such diversity may be seen as part of a process where overarching dominant religious authorities collapse, leaving room for individuals to build their own religion without restrictions from certain institutions and traditions.

Pluralism as a Value or a Moral Principle That Asserts Diversity as a Positive Thing That Should Be Supported and Protected

Understood in this sense, pluralism designates the norm that people of different backgrounds and orientations can peacefully coexist within the same society. Here, the diversity is inscribed in a normative system that asserts diversity and the toleration of differences as intrinsic to “the good society”; discussions of religious pluralism can thus also be seen to intersect in different ways with discussions of, for example, multiculturalism. Religious pluralism as a value is reflected in some of the following themes:

1. *Religious pluralism as a human rights issue:* The right to religious freedom can be perceived as an intrinsic precondition for religious pluralism as it simply implies the right to differ. The positive affirmation of religious pluralism is stated in, among other places, the various human rights documents, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the European Convention of Human Rights (1950), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1976), and the Declaration on the Rights of People Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious or Linguistic Minorities (1992). These documents are the foundation of different kinds of monitoring activities, as for example, the annual *Report on Religious Freedom*, issued by the U.S. Department of State or the work of the United Nations (UN) special rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief. They also form the basis for the work of a range of human rights and minority rights nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) such as Minority Rights Group International or the International Association of Religious Freedom. The Buddhist organization Soka Gakkai may also be mentioned here as it has an NGO consulting status at the UN on issues of religious freedom and diversity.

2. *Religious pluralism as inscribed in state legislations:* Many states have the right to freedom of religion and, thus, a formal recognition of religious pluralism inscribed in their constitution. Such legal frameworks for recognition can appear both as individual freedom rights (to belief, to practice, or to apostasy) and as the recognition of various religious organizations, often related to

certain privileges such as tax exemption, marriage license, birth registration, or even citizenship.

3. *Religious pluralism as linked to interfaith dialogue and ecumenical work:* Religious pluralism here implies the assumption that one religion is not the sole and exclusive source of truth and that some level of truth and value exists in other religions too. Therefore, diversity in religious expressions should be respected. Often, interfaith and ecumenical work is Christian based; it evolves around notions of peace, tolerance, and understanding in a global perspective, and it focuses on dialogue between “world religions.” It might be expressed both through specific organizations such as the Institute of Interfaith Dialogue, IFCO (InterFaith Cultural Organization), or the World Council of Churches and through broader international political projects such as the ASEM (the Asian-European Meeting), which has the promotion of religious pluralism as one of its objectives.

Pluralism as a Way of Observing the World

In one perspective, these two categories of pluralism can be seen as representing a split between a descriptive approach that simply presents the fact of diversity and a normative approach that supports this diversity as a good and valuable thing. There is, however, also some shared logical premises underlying both kinds, since the notion of pluralism can be seen to imply the simultaneousness of (1) *difference* that distinguished the many instances (for example Buddhism/Islam/Christianity/Hinduism), (2) *identity* that asserts that they are of a certain kind (here religion), and (3) a *shared space* that frames the coexistence as exactly that—*coexistence* (e.g., a state, a community, or a country). To illustrate, the term *pluralism* would seldom be used to describe the fact that most people in Japan claim adherence to Shinto while most people in the United States occasionally eat burgers, as this implies neither the identity of instances (Shinto and burgers) or a shared space in which they take place (Japan and the United States). The term can more readily be applied to the fact that, according to a 2008 estimate, roughly 100 million people in Japan identify themselves as practicing Shinto while maybe 90 million people claim adherence to Buddhism—numbers that suggest (1) the existence of different religious traditions within the same

society and (2) that many people in Japan feel an affiliation with more than one religion (the total population of Japan is roughly 128 million).

In this example, the shared space is the Japanese state, but in another perspective, people living in the United States and Japan might very well be perceived of as part of a shared transnational or global space in which various instances can be identified as coexisting. An example of this could be the Soka Gakkai International, which has its base in Japan and branches in 190 countries, among other places in California. As a communicative space shared by its members, the Soka Gakkai and its concept of “world citizen” frames different kinds of pluralism among its members—for example, national and ethnic pluralism.

Pluralism can thus be perceived of as a certain mode of organizing the world that implies the “bringing together” of phenomena as being of the same kind, and since this “bringing together” is always performed by someone who asserts the premises of identity, this is where the more subtle normative implications of the concept can be seen. To align oneself with others as being of the same kind is thus a much used strategy for obtaining recognition and access to power, as when private Muslim universities in The Netherlands currently seek to adapt to institutional structures of the formal European model for higher education (the Bologna-model bachelor’s, master’s, PhD) in order to become publicly recognized educational institutions. Oppositely, being of the same kind may rigidly be refused, as when Hindu nationalists reject the notion of Hinduism as one religion among others alongside Buddhism, Sikhism, and Jainism and instead promote the notion of *Hindutva* (Hindu-ness) and *Hindu rashtra* (Hindu polity or Hindu nation) as an overarching category for them all. So inscribing different phenomena as instances in a structure of pluralism is by no means a neutral effort but can be seen as part of negotiations of influence.

Globalization and Pluralism

An important characteristic of globalization in relation to pluralism is that it implies an intensified flow of people, objects, money, and knowledge, and these flows bring into contact elements that were previously relatively isolated. Through this,

globalization has facilitated the creation of new shared spaces and new senses of loyalties and community that frame new kinds of pluralism. One of the shared spaces frequently used to frame the assessment of religious pluralism (as also indicated in the examples of pluralism above) is a country or a state, often the nation-state, understood as the demarcation of a geographical territory under a distinct juridical-political control. But a crucial feature of globalization is that it challenges this framework as the most natural one, and this contributes to different kinds of religious pluralism.

The Creation of Transnational Communities

The sense of national belonging has traditionally been communicated through a number of avenues such as the school system, national broadcast media, and various state institutions, but because of the increasing importance of international mass media, transregional satellite media, and not the least the Internet, other communities that cut across previously dominant boundaries have been empowered. Such transnational communities have of course also existed previously, for instance, in relation to various religious diasporas (such as the Baha’is, Tibetan Buddhists, Jews, and Copts), some of which have developed group identities based on the geographical dispersion. But the speed, accessibility, and not the least the visual/spatial character of the new media have increased their potential to create new imagined communities. Such imaginaries might constitute the world as a single place, which is seen in the outlook and scope of many religions—especially those with missionary activities—but they can also be of more limited reach.

An example of the latter could be the growing use of transnational Islamic websites such as www.islamonline.net, www.zaytunacollege.org (website for Zaytuna College), www.islamicacademy.org (website for the Islamic Academy), or www.islamweb.net by Muslims living in Europe and North America. The websites themselves represent a pluralization of the media landscape that provides news, background knowledge, counseling, chat forums, and the like according to people’s differentiated lifestyles, but the sites also represent new means of creating religious community by framing a certain Muslim identity for the users that is not

necessarily related to the national context in which they live. As such, the sites contribute to a pluralization of possible religious identities in countries where belonging to the national community and to the majority religion (Christianity) have often been intertwined. The sites also contribute to a pluralization of religious authority and ways of interpreting religious texts, especially among the younger generation, because they challenge the authority of the local imams, the parents, and the institutions of teaching in Muslim majority countries.

The Pluralization and Relativization of State-Societies and Majority Religions

Even though globalization produces transnational and global identifications, the states still work as a pertinent framework for the ways in which different religions can exist: The state often provides the legal framework for religious organization, and many societies are still dominated by one majority religion. However, globalization has, to some extent, challenged this state of affairs and increased the occasions of meeting “the Other”: the new, the strange, or the unknown. Such meetings hold the potential for relativization: They foreground the particularity of one’s own worldview and challenge in this way what has previously been conceived as natural.

One way of responding to this relativization is to embrace diversity by incorporating the strange or different into known structures. This can be seen in much state legislation on the recognition of religions where deviant religious practices and organizations are incorporated into the state as publicly recognized phenomena, whereby the official or public category of religion is pluralized. A general tendency, which is seen in several Asian countries such as Japan, Indonesia, China, and India and in most European countries, is that it is easier to obtain recognition if the religious agents in the case are seen as adherents of a world religion (Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Judaism, or Hinduism). The state might also itself create religious organizations with the specific purpose of serving as a recognized cooperation partner, as has been the case with several Muslim organizations in Europe, such as CFCM (Conseil Française de Culte Musulman) in France and CMO (Contactorgaan Moslems en de Overheid) in The

Netherlands. These are mainly top-down examples of incorporation, but incorporation may also be a bottom-up strategy, as has been the case with parts of the rapidly growing neo-Pentecostal movement in Brazil. Here, churches such as Brasil para Cristo, Nova Vidam, or the IURD (Igreja Universal do Reine de Deus)—themselves representatives of the pluralization of the Protestant tradition by their various combinations of Protestant, Catholic, and Umbanda elements—have sought political influence and recognition through the establishment of organized churches, news media, and tapping into existing political networks to become allies of the state alongside the Catholic Church.

Another way of responding to relativization is to reject the identification and incorporation implied in the process of pluralization and insist either on the radical difference of “the Other” or the supremacy of one religion over all others. This might be expressed in political projects promoting a mono-religious community, such as the Bharatiya Janata Party in India, the Shi’i party in Iran, the Zionist movements in Israel, and the many nationalist parties emerging in Europe, of which many promote a Christian-Protestant heritage as central to their respective national identities. It can also be expressed in claims of separation of different groups pointing in the direction of parallel societies within the same state. Examples include the growing legal pluralism in England, where the Arbitration Act (1996) has opened the door for religious conciliation boards such as the Jewish Beth Din and, recently, the Muslim Shari’a Councils to rule in matters of civil law.

Translation of the Concept of Religion

A crucial feature of globalization is that it enforces various kinds of translations. Translation literally means “to carry across” or “to carry over,” and in a broad sense it refers to the processes whereby meaning, people, concepts, and material objects are moved across time and space, from one context to another. One of the translations that have been enforced by globalization is the translation of the term *religion* itself, which has created a pluralization of the concept. The concept of religion has grown out of a western European, more specifically ancient Roman, context and has

undergone drastic semantic changes over time. The term *religion* has moved from designating a certain kind of sincerity in ritual observance into a Christian context, applied over the centuries to the proper ways in which humans could relate to divine reality. After the Reformation, this notion was gradually supplanted by a conceptualization of religion as a distinct domain of human life—a proposition that expresses itself in different, mutually identifiable and comparable “religions.” The construction of the modern concept of religion is intrinsically related to the establishment of sovereign nation-states in 18th- and 19th-century Europe, but the categories of “religion” and “religions” have spread to many parts of the world, often as an element in the adaptation to Western standards of state building with certain legislative structures on, for example, civil rights. For example, in 1889, Japan adopted a written state constitution, which entailed the freedom of religion. As a translation of the English word *religion*, the Buddhist term *shukyo* was chosen—a term that mainly carried connotations of beliefs and teaching and that was most readily applied to Christianity and Buddhism, while its application to Shinto has been more problematic. The translation of the category to various parts of the world both represent a pluralization of the use of the category (what can be counted as religion) and an expansion of the shared space in which the term is considered meaningful. The export of the concept thus has as long a history as missionary work and European colonialism, but globalization has speeded up the process of making religion a widely used framework for social organization, claim making, and the interpretation of conflicts.

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See also Human Rights; Religion and State; Religious Dialogue; Religious Freedom; Religious Nationalism; Secularization; Transnational

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POLAND

Poland is a postcommunist country in eastern-central Europe (population 38.2 million in 2002) and has been a member state of the European Union since 2004. It is well known as a strongly Catholic country and together with Ireland forms the “Catholic Fortress” in a mostly unchurched Europe. According to the latest accessible data on church membership from 2005 (based mainly on the number of baptisms), 89% of Poles were Catholics, 1.3% belonged to the Orthodox Church, and less than 1% were Protestant (one half of the latter being members of traditional Protestant denominations and the other half, Jehovah’s Witnesses). The number of Poles who declare themselves as nonreligious is well under 10% and is certainly one of the lowest in Europe.

Catholicism is deeply rooted in modern Polish history. In the late 18th century, Poland was divided between neighboring Prussia (Germany), Russia, and Austria. The country thus effectively ceased to exist and was reestablished only in 1918, after World War I. During that period, Catholicism was the main source of national identity as the invaders were Protestant (Germans) and Orthodox (Russians). A similar situation arose again in the 20th century in the face of the atheist Russian communists; so successive Polish governments usually had to maintain a gentler stance on religion than other communist rulers. The Catholic identity of Poles was greatly strengthened by the 1978 election of Karol Wojtyła (1920–2005) as Pope John

Paul II, the first non-Italian pope since 1523. The Polish pope highlighted the Church's anticommunist position, supported the Solidarity movement, and is believed to have greatly contributed to the fall of communism in Eastern Europe.

The Catholic Church entered the free, postcommunist era with enormous social credit, but its influence was subsequently challenged as democratic parliaments began passing many pro-Church bills that were not received favorably by the population (including many Catholics); the most obvious example of this is the strong antiabortion law that was introduced. According to a 1999 poll, 53% of Poles felt that the Church's political influence had grown too large. The ultra-Catholic *Radio Maryja* was established in 1991, dividing society over the issues of abortion, tolerance of homosexuality, and attitudes toward Jews. It initially broadcast with the Catholic Church's approval but later lost much of that support. Another controversy occurred during the European Union (EU) accession process, when a portion of the clergy adopted a strong anti-European position, fearing the effects of secularization on Poland as a member of the liberal EU.

The position of the Catholic Church in Polish society has nonetheless remained strong, and Poland is even a major "exporter" of Catholic priests to other parts of Europe.

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See also European Union; Politics and Religion; Roman Catholicism

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of a potentially nuclear Iran, and the conflict between Hindus and Muslims in India, involve an interplay between politics and religion that one cannot afford to ignore. Politics have been a central aspect of most religions in the past and, despite predictions to the contrary, continue to be so today. The precise form of this interplay varies across states as well as across religious traditions.

Secularization Theory

Until the 1980s, a widespread assumption in the social sciences was that the influence of religion would gradually decline as societies became modernized (i.e., became industrialized, acquired a capitalist economy, and democratic institutions). According to this assumption, which is often referred to as "secularization theory," the decline of religious influence would first be observed at the societal level (various spheres of social life, such as the state, the economy, etc., would become autonomous from religious institutions) and then gradually spread to people's consciousness as well; that is, people would stop believing in the dogmas of their religions.

History did not confirm these predictions. A significant decline in people's religiosity has so far been confirmed only in some countries of western Europe. The United States, one of the most industrialized and democratic countries in the world, is still fervently religious, and the rest of the world continues to be as religious as it always was. Religious *political* influence does not seem to decline either. In the 2000 U.S. presidential elections, both George W. Bush and Al Gore appealed to their religious faith as a strong component of their political philosophy. In some parts of the world, it even seems that religion is more political today than it was in the 1960s or 1970s. The Iranian Revolution of 1979 brought Islam into the heart of Iran's political life. The Palestinian authorities, which used to rely almost exclusively on secular political principles, have been increasingly using Islamic symbolism and rhetoric in the past 15 years.

Most social scientists have thus either abandoned or seriously amended the traditional "secularization theory." But they have different explanations for its failure. Some argue that religions have always been political and will continue to be so. Others interpret the politicization of religion in modernity

POLITICS AND RELIGION

Some of the most important global issues of today's world, such as Islamic terrorism, the threat

as a reaction against modernity—that is, an attempt to revert to the past. Finally, some see in modern political religion the expression of other, nonreligious, forces such as nationalism, ethnicity, or class. Each of these approaches certainly captures part of the phenomenon. Only by taking them together can we hope to adequately understand it.

Definitions and History

Religion

One of the difficulties that we have in understanding the interplay between religion and politics comes from the ambiguity of the very terms that we use. For instance, the notion of “religion” is Western and may not be applicable in non-Western contexts. We typically associate it with some belief in transcendence (whether one God or many), an organized church, and a set of rituals. Some of these elements would not apply to Hinduism. Buddhism doesn’t even have gods, and neither does Confucianism. A famous theorist of religion, Émile Durkheim, suggested that we view religion primarily as a sacralization of the values and beliefs of a given community—a sort of social cement—with the existence of gods being only secondary. While this definition certainly captures an important aspect of religion, it has the disadvantage of being too broad, since it would include every set of social values that may be held as sacred, including human rights, Marxism, or nationalism. In practice, we have no choice but to work with a loose definition and to use the word *religion* to refer to what commonly passes for religion, while at the same time acknowledging that this conceptual vagueness adds to our difficulties.

Politics

The notion of politics is, in a sense, easier to define. From the Ancient Greek word *polis*, it originally refers to what is common to the whole city—therefore, what is *public*, as opposed to what is private. For Plato, the political was the sphere of the common good, which, Plato thought, could be objectively defined. Today, we still use the term *political* to refer to what concerns the collectivity as a whole, but we express serious doubts as to the very possibility of a common good and tend to

conceive of the political arena as a space of conflict and negotiation of particular interests.

In modern times, the primary space of politics is the state. Even though globalization has somehow challenged its absolute supremacy during the past decades, it is in the state that political power is mostly concentrated. When we speak of “political” questions, we often mean questions that have to do with the state, and the interplay between religion and politics is typically reflected in the relationship between religion(s) and the state.

The Interplay

Traditionally, religion and politics could hardly be distinguished. The French historian Fustel de Coulanges has shown that even in ancient Greece, which we tend to think of as the model of our modern, secular democracies, there was a religious dimension that permeated political life. In Judaism, the Ten Commandments regulate both people’s relation with God and their political life. And Muhammad, the religious prophet of Islam, was both a religious and a political leader.

Christianity is no exception to that rule. Despite Jesus’ instruction to “render unto Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God,” which implies a sharp distinction between the political and the religious realms, the Christian church had a constant involvement in political affairs throughout the Middle Ages. In some cases, it is difficult to distinguish conflicts over dogma from political conflicts. Such was the case of the Holy Crusades of the 11th century. The religious reason given by the Holy See was the necessity to capture the Holy Lands that had fallen to the Muslims, but its political purpose was to send the most violent and troublesome groups out of Europe and thus to establish peace and security inside Western Christendom.

Religion has historically served the function of legitimation of political authorities. This could either mean that the heads of state were seen as divine, as in the case of the Hellenistic emperors, or that they derived their authority by the will of God, as in the case of the French kings of the 17th century. Sometimes, this legitimation came late in history. Such was the case in Japan; the emperor and his family were not considered to be divine until the Meiji period (1868).

Types of Differentiation and the Modern State

If modernity has not seen a disappearance of religion, it has seen a *differentiation* between the functions of the state and religious institutions. The paradigmatic case in this regard is France. The French Revolution was established on the ideas of popular sovereignty, as opposed to the Divine Right of kings. The law of 1905 separated the French state from the churches. In practice, this meant that religious symbols would be banned from schools, universities, and political assemblies; it also meant that religious discourse would be absent from political debates. The radicalism of this separation in France can be explained by the fact that the Roman Catholic Church had for a long time refused to accept the legitimacy of the French Republic and systematically supported the Old Regime. This conflict was also, in a sense, a continuation of century-old tensions between the Roman Catholic Church and the French state.

The French model, which is often referred to as “secularism,” had many imitators. In Turkey, even though the state was not officially separated from the religious establishment, political parties appealing to religion were banned in the 1920s. Some communist states, such as the Soviet Union or Albania, have even established state atheism.

Both secularism and state atheism are highly contested today. The collapse of the Soviet Union saw a remarkable resurgence of religious practice in the 1990s. An Islamist party has governed Turkey since 2002. Even in France, the banning of public expressions of religion is contested by a number of second-generation Muslim immigrants who do not understand why their daughters would not be allowed to go to their schools or universities wearing their Muslim scarves.

More often than not, some accommodation is found between the state and religion(s), on the basis of state neutrality rather than “secularity.” The United States is an example of such accommodations. The state is supposed to be religiously neutral, but religions are allowed in the public sphere. Sometimes religions participate in the public debates through political parties. This is the case in Germany, where the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) has been a central component in the country’s political life since World War II. In such systems, religious practice is often recognized as a

right. In the United States, religions also benefit from tax exemptions.

The principle of *state neutrality* has its own difficulties. First, because of the conceptual vagueness of the term, it is difficult to decide which associations should have the status of a religion and which ones should not. Scientology is officially recognized as a religion, but many critics claim that it should rather be treated as a sect. Second, some argue that by supporting all religions and exempting them from taxation, the state is implicitly discriminating against atheists—unless, of course, it decides to treat atheism as a religion too. Third, sometimes the laws of the state may contradict the demands of some people’s religions. In this case, religious groups often claim some kind of special treatment, in the name of their religious rights. In India, following a 1985 trial for alimony, divorce cases were removed from Indian civil law; they are judged according to the principles of religious law, which is different for each religion. Many object that such differential treatments undermine the very principle of equality before the law.

Finally, there are states that have official religions. Such is, for instance, the case of Greece. The Greek constitution, written in 1974, states that the Greek Orthodoxy is the “prevailing” religion in the country; priests are paid by the state and depend on the “ministry of education and cults,” and the government officially intervenes in the election of archbishops. Until the 1980s, civil marriage did not exist, and marriage between a Greek Orthodox individual and a member of another religion was not recognized by the state. This absence of separation between church and state often happens when a religion is clearly majoritarian (in Greece, more than 95% of the population are Greek Orthodox) and expresses the identity between the nation and its religion.

This identity between nation and religion needs careful study as it can mean two very different things and is thus linked to two very different types of phenomena. In the first type, which Mark Juergensmeyer refers to as “religious nationalism,” religion forms the basis of the life of the nation. This is the case in Iran, where the Islamic Revolution established a regime of theocracy, where the political powers are ultimately dependent on the religious ones and where the Islamic Shari’a is the official jurisdiction of the state. Such regimes are

anti-Western, when, in the national imaginary, the West is perceived as synonymous with secularism. In the second type, which one may call *ethnic religion*, the community perceives its religion as an ethnic characteristic and thus uses it for self-differentiation but does not allow religion to influence its political agenda. As many observed at the time, the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s were fought mostly by atheists and agnostics; the religions they claimed to be fighting for were understood by them as nothing more than ethnic attributes. Needless to say, most of them were quite unaware of their precise dogmas as well as of the condemnation of their war by their respective religious authorities. Ethnic religion is thus a camouflaged expression of ultranationalism; it is a major source of ethnic conflict in the modern world.

In practice, however, most instances of identification between a religion and an ethnic group will involve some mix of both these types. This is the case in India, where the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP; Indian People's Party), which since 1998 has been a part of governmental coalitions, sees Hinduism as the basis of Indian national identity—at the expense of other religious cultures and especially Muslims, who represent 20% of the country's population. The conflicts between Hindus and Muslims led to the death of 2,000 people in 1992, when the Hindus decided to destroy an old mosque (the Babri Masjid) because it had allegedly been built on the birthplace of a Hindu god. In such cases, it is difficult to distinguish the religious from the ethnic dimension of the conflict.

Religions and Pluralism

Most religions are old and have grown in a traditional environment. They have had ambivalent views toward modernity in general and especially toward the notion of pluralism, which is often associated with modernity. It has often been suggested that some religions may be, by their very nature, more fit to modernity than others. It has also been claimed that some political settings may be more conducive to violence and others to democratic dialogue.

Samuel Huntington has suggested that Western Christianity may be more suitable to modernity than other religious traditions. According to this view, elements such as democracy, free market, or

pluralism are fundamentally Western values—that is, values that have grown out of the history of the Western world. Western religions have been part of this process. But these values may, according to the author, be profoundly incompatible with the values of other regions—and religions—of the world. To try to impose them there is, according to this view, both unpractical and arrogant. While this argument certainly captures some truth, one should never forget how difficult the implementation of democratic values has been in the West as well. For instance, it took the Catholic Church more than two centuries to adapt to modern democracy. Even as late as the 1970s, it supported many dictatorial regimes in Chile and Spain. And yet the Catholic Church has also been one of the main actors that guided the democratization of communist Poland in the 1980s. Other important factors are the profound malleability of religions as well as the discrepancies that often exist between religious dogmas and their political instrumentalization. The Catholic Church has been associated with both liberation theology, which speaks for social justice using many elements from Marxism, and the Opus Dei, an organization that has been associated with right-wing authoritarianism and social conservatism. Buddhism, a religion that advocates spirituality and indifference toward politics, has been used as the basis of national identity in countries such as Cambodia, Sri Lanka, and Thailand.

The political behavior of religions differs according to their own structure. The Catholic Church, for instance, is highly centralized. The official doctrine is determined by the Holy See and spreads down to the smallest parish. This contrasts with other Christian churches, Protestant but also Orthodox, that lack this hierarchical structure, as well as with Islam. In the latter case, administrative decentralization as well as the multiplicity of interpretations of faith have allowed for the emergence of multiple forms of Islamic movements, including the type of fundamentalism of al Qaeda. The centralization of the Catholic Church has so far prevented extremist or fundamentalist groups from emerging and has often been used to explain the success of its adaptation to modernity. On the other hand, it may also be argued that the sort of polymorphism that exists in decentralized religions makes them more compatible with modern democratic pluralism.

Finally, as noted earlier, religions are often old and have long histories. These matter too. The conflict between Israelis and Palestinians has very much to do with the fact that Jerusalem is central to the history of both Islam and Judaism.

The world as it is shows no sign that religion is going to play a less important role in politics in the years to come. One way or other, most states have to take into account the fact that religion influences people's political choices. The secularism of the 19th century, which tried to ban religion from public life altogether, does not seem very successful—or democratic. On the other hand, bringing religions (by nature, absolute) to participate in the democratic discussion, which involves negotiation and compromise, may prove very difficult too, especially in multireligious societies. Facing this challenge may be one of the central tasks of modern democracies.

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See also Islamism (Political Islam); Religion and State; Religious Nationalism; Secularization

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POLYTHEISM

At its root, the term *polytheism* (from the Greek *poly*, meaning “plural,” and *theos*, meaning “god”) not only acknowledges a plurality of gods but in its current usage implies the worship of a plurality of gods. The complexity of meanings in the term invites an interrogation of our understanding of what *god* refers to as well as the characteristics of divine and human plurality involved.

The dominant ethos in the Abrahamic religions and corresponding cultures asserts a monotheism that has sometimes been deployed as a means of distinguishing it from polytheism. In this dynamic, it is not unusual to find a tension between divergent traditions and allegations of superiority of the preferred option.

In the Hebrew scriptures, references to plurality in association with divinity are not unknown. For instance, one of the Hebrew terms used to refer to the one true God is *elohim*, wherein *el* is “lord” and the suffix *im* denotes plurality. In some Christian denominations, the one true God is addressed as a Trinity of persons. In these traditions, mention of plurality is not understood to detract from the professed monotheism. For what may be more political than theological reasons, sometimes these same traditions have difficulty acknowledging that other traditions may have similar usages and denounce any reference to plurality in traditions different from their own. In some Hindu Advaita traditions, the ultimate reality is not that which is termed *god* but that which is beyond the differentiated plurality in which one encounters gods. The counterallegation by polytheists has been that monotheist traditions

cannot succeed in maintaining monotheism while retaining an internal plurality.

In practice then, polytheism has multiple meanings rather than one understanding common to all. In a functional sense, the perception of polytheism may not require a belief in a plurality of divinities, and a functional polytheism may or may not correspond to an actual belief in a plurality of divinities. A functional plurality can be present where each allegedly distinct divinity is understood as a means of relating to the divine for particular circumstances and reasons. In some respects, a functional polytheism may be expressed as a belief in a multiplicity of avatars, all of which originate from a common, ultimately monotheistic understanding of divinity. A single divinity appearing in multiple incarnations and being worshipped through those incarnations may or may not be perceived as polytheism and may be more accurately described as *polyentheism*.

Polytheism in the sense of the Greek pantheon of gods may also be encountered in more contemporary contexts with different names for divinities. In a secular world, devotion to higher powers may not be expressed as polytheism but could manifest common characteristics. In this sense, polytheism may be more prevalent in practice and may not be as alien or primitive as some may think.

Appreciation for the forces unleashed by geological events has been seen in recent catastrophes such as Hurricane Katrina, the earthquake and tsunami in Japan, and the earthquake in Haiti, where the human capacity to “subdue nature” has been relatively insignificant in the face of such events. For some in the environmental movement, there is a renewed appreciation for the directive or influential role that the earth or Gaia may have over human actions. Understood as a singular divine being, the earth or the cosmos may be encountered in the phenomena of the environment. In this appreciation of phenomena, polytheism may present itself as an economic plurality of powers or may be contextualized by cosmic unity. The issue in such a discussion, as with references to divinity generally, necessarily includes a consideration of the position of human beings.

Where human beings consider themselves as the supreme beings in existence, they may be understood as occupying the role of divinities. To the extent that such beings are a plurality, they may be

described as members of a pantheon, and their subordinates may worship one or more of several such divinities. The concept of human as divine is seen in the emperor of Rome, who considered himself a god to be worshipped by Romans. The emperor of Rome was not the only one with those views. Worshipers who seek to please the gods are also not a feature of distant history, and not all who demand worship title themselves as God. In this respect, the operative function of divinity may not require or possess the title of god for effectiveness.

Where a polytheist may recognize a plurality of divinities in a context of unevenly distributed power, each would have hierarchical value. In the Greek pantheon, for instance, Zeus may be described as having a superior position among the gods. The dominant cultural discourses can have a similarly distinguishable valuation between them in socially acceptable polytheism. In European and American contexts for instance, where Christian monotheism was replaced by secularism and scientific views as the dominant discourses, polytheism has been widely viewed as inferior and primitive. Conversely, where nature-based religious beliefs are valued, monotheism would be considered heretical and deficient in the face of obvious variety.

The capacity to anthropomorphize divinity is not the exclusive domain of either monotheism or polytheism. The counterpart to this capacity in secularism and scientific valuations is the converse allegation of absolutized objectivity as distinguished from subjectivity. In practice, these forms may coexist in social groups. Contemporary usage of the terms *monotheism* and *polytheism* has been seen as having political connotations. However, as seen in contemporary Ukrainian pagan spirituality, these allegedly anachronistic and antagonistic categories have been found to operate in negotiating present identities in debate with dissimilar visions of the future.

In a religiously pluralist social and political contemporary world, the concept of polytheism presents a means for some to assert greater tolerance of diversity. This tolerance is described against the discourses of monotheism as well as the sole authority of science and technology. Analyses of science fiction entertainment shows such as *Battlestar Galactica* have been used as a forum to investigate the competition between monotheistic Cyclons and polytheistic humans.

It is possible that the view of polytheism as more tolerant of diversity is actually more of a rejection of a certain understanding of monotheistic intolerance. Tolerance of diversity need not be the sole prerogative of any one view of divinity. For instance, the monotheist Hebrew scriptures include a command that forbids the believer to have other gods before the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This command could be the basis for intolerance as well as for tolerance. The implication of the command is that a plurality of gods is acknowledged and that a choice exists. While it clearly represents a preference for one God, there is no meaning to the command without the possibility of and tolerance for the worship of other gods. Similar preferences in tolerance can be asserted in favor of scientific objectivity as well as polytheism, where believers can demonstrate similar intolerance for views other than one's own.

Contemporary views of ancient Greek thought need not be restricted to a view of polytheism as pantheon. A deeper understanding of Greek philosophical traditions can provide a more intellectual approach to contemporary discourses about polytheism. Neoplatonic theology related to statements by Proclus in his *Cratylus* commentary has been used for its polycentric features to develop a foundation for a polytheistic philosophy of religion.

A functional polytheism has also been considered valuable in psychological analyses. The psychological perception of the self as multiple and at the same time unified and continuous has been held to have equal psychological significance. The clinical appreciation of the multiplicity and unity of the self has sought a common ground from which persons may operate while attending to states of self and divine multiplicity.

Pluralist contexts or more properly contexts of more even distribution of power between diverse views in contemporary society have permitted a wider discussion of divinity and humanity. Along with a new appreciation for environmental realities, there is a resurgence of pagan religions, some of which draw on premodern traditions. In doing so, they provide contemporary alternative understandings of polytheism and self-identity. The availability of opportunities to express divergent views has enabled practitioners of traditions in Druidry, Ásatrú (old Norse for "belief in the gods"), and Wicca, among others, to develop self-identity from

reflection on the traditions they draw on as well as intellectual and behavioral experiences.

The development of identity at the intersection of received tradition and achieved understanding has contributed to the continuing practice of all religious and secular traditions. With current global developments, emergent understandings seek a variety of paths, some of which are exclusive and others inclusive of polytheism as it is now understood.

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See also God; Goddess; Pluralism

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POPULAR RELIGION

Popular religion refers to a general, global, and omnipresent cultural and social aspect of religiosity. The notion has a somewhat ambiguous character since it designates (a) traditional forms of religiosity of the "common" people, also known as "folk" religion, and (b) mass cultural and (c) contemporary forms of late-modern or postmodern

religiosity, both in churches as well as among lay persons. Since in both cases the popularity of religiosity is defined in relation to “popular culture,” the apparent ambiguity can be explained by the historical transformation and global interspersions of popular culture.

“Folk” Religion

Popular religion includes forms of beliefs, actions, and material objects adapted, transformed, or created by lay people and sometimes seen as survival of more traditional customs. Examples of such forms in Western contexts include traditional cults, such as the veneration of saints and thanksgiving; marginal beliefs, such as water spirits or astrology; marginal practices, such as water divining or magical healing rituals; and material culture, for example, healing waters, religious decoration in private rooms, or advent wreaths.

The reason for the marginality, and often dismissal of popular religion is that it differs from and presupposes the official religion of religious experts, be they priests, preachers, prophets, or monks. “Official” religion refers to those forms of religion represented by religious experts legitimated by political, economic, cultural, and other societal institutions. Popular religion can be taken to designate the heterodox elements of religious beliefs, actions, and objects, whereas the “official” religion of religious experts and organizations constitutes the orthodox pole of the religious field.

Despite its marginality, popular religion ranges from private or individual rites, such as private spells and charms, to religious mass phenomena, such as pilgrimages, popular religious feasts, and global ceremonies such as St. Nicholas Day or Christmas. Popular religion varies with the social groups and their culture. Thus, different social classes (e.g., peasants and the petite bourgeoisie), regions, language areas, ethnicities, races, and communities (e.g., rural or urban) are linked to different types of popular religion.

Mass Culture

As popular religion depends on the societal form of popular culture, it is also subject to its historical changes. Particularly, the rise of mass communication, the dissemination of mass culture, and the

widening relevance of market mechanisms had serious effects on popular culture in general and contributed to the development of a modern popular religion with its specific religious goods and services. At the beginning of the 19th century, industrialization led to the mass production of religious material culture (such as *l'art Saint-Sulpice*, the industrial mass production of Catholic devotional objects) and to the increasing use of mass media for the transmission of religious goods and services. The increased use of means of mass communication (books, newspapers, radio, and television) required new forms and genres of communication, which have been diffused globally. To the degree that the modern popular culture became a “mass culture,” popular religion developed its own modern forms. While the electronic mass media (radio and television) led to the creation of an “electronic church” with its concomitant media formats (Bible shows), marginal contents (e.g., as Spiritism, astrology, and witchcraft) also became “reinvented” traditions distributed widely by television, radio, newspapers, and so on.

Late-Modern or Postmodern Religiosity

The recent change from mass media to interactive media of digital communication affects popular religion. Interactive means of digital communication weaken the control of large religious organizations over the means, infrastructure, and role of mass communication and enforce the active role of the believers, who turn into communicators. Thus, the knowledge about religious forms of actions, beliefs, symbols, and events is accessible to everyone and globally. As a consequence, the rituals, cults, and beliefs of popular religion are increasingly syncretistic and “glocalized” internationally, for example, Halloween rituals, yoga practice, and belief in reincarnation. Since the means of communication are highly individualized, popular religion tends toward topics of strong relevance to subjective issues, such as personal health, spirituality, and well-being. Still, despite this tendency to individualism (angel cults and individual pilgrimages), popular culture also includes collective (individually selected) forms such as musical genres, visual imageries, and large spiritual events such as papal visits and lectures by prominent gurus.

The loss of control over the means of religious communication by “official” religious organizations and the enforced possibilities of lay people to actively adapt, search, and syncretistically vary religious knowledge result in the increased transgression of the boundaries between popular culture and “official religion”: First, religion itself is influenced by and draws on the forms, formats, and genres of popular culture (e.g., popular events, popular music, comics, and so on). Second, popular culture adapts forms of religious communication (e.g., the material culture of “Gothic” music, forms of pop idol veneration, or sports fan culture). Third, popular religion itself contributes to the dissemination of topics that are marked as religious in the collective memory, such as the popularity of near-death experience testimonies or the new *ars moriendi* rituals in Europe, which, despite their roots in Christian culture, are almost exclusively communicated in popular culture. The transgression of the boundaries characterizing popular religion results, on the one hand, in the extension of religion into less demarcated forms (such as the spiritual) and, on the other hand, to enforced forms of “boundary work” by the official actors in the religious field reclaiming fundamental notions of religion. Sociologically, the recent changes in popular religion reflect the transformation from preindustrial and industrial society to a knowledge society based on information technologies with its specific forms of work and communication, its new class formation, and its new forms of control and self-control.

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See also Bricolage; Emergent Religion; Faith Tourism; Hybridization

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PORTUGAL

Located at the westernmost point of southern Europe, Portugal has a long history of cultural and religious pluralism. When King Afonso Henriques proclaimed independence from Castille in the 12th century, Christianity, Islam, and Judaism already coexisted within Portuguese territory. However, this threefold religious society was not to last. In the following centuries, Muslim communities were gradually absorbed into Christianity or fled to North Africa. The Jewish population grew in size and political and economical status until the last decade of the 15th century, when it was confronted with the choice between forced conversion to Catholicism or expulsion. By 1496, as in Spain 4 years earlier, the policy had been fully implemented. The establishment of the Inquisition in 1536 and the regularization of relationships between the Portuguese Crown and the Vatican ensured that Portugal remained a strictly Catholic country for nearly 400 years.

The liberal revolution of 1820 inaugurated the establishment of several Protestant denominations in Portugal. In 1926, however, a military coup initiated a 48-year dictatorship that reestablished a privileged relationship between the state and the Catholic Church, one that was openly prejudicial toward minority religions, forcing some of them, such as Jehovah’s Witnesses and Kardecian Spiritualism, to go underground.

The democratic revolution of 1974 that led to the independence of most Portuguese colonies brought in the right of religious association and freedom of religious choice and initiated a series of migratory flows that would dramatically change the country’s religious landscape. The end of the Portuguese overseas empire led to the influx of more than 500,000 Portuguese from the former colonies during the 1970s. In terms of religious impact, this led to the foundation of the first Muslim community in Portuguese territory since the late Middle Ages. Mainly composed of former residents of Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau, this

community grew with subsequent waves of immigration from Portuguese-speaking African countries. Today, there are an estimated 50,000 Muslims in Portugal with 35 places of worship. The late 1980s saw the implantation of Brazilian (and Brazilian-inspired) neo-Pentecostal churches. Igreja Universal do Reino de Deus, a Brazilian church that targeted Portugal at the early stage of its transnational expansion, and Igreja Maná, founded by an ex-Portuguese emigrant in South Africa, entered Portuguese society with an openly proselyte approach and were received with hostility from virtually every quadrant, especially from the media. Ten years later, a second mass influx of immigrants led to a very different mutation in the Portuguese religious structure. From the late 1990s onward, Portugal has received hundreds of thousands of immigrants, totaling 400,000 by 2002. The most significant qualitative change of this immigration wave was the sudden influx of Ukrainians and other eastern European nationals. Within a few years, Ukrainians became the largest immigrant community in Portuguese territory, and as a consequence, Orthodox Christianity suddenly became the second largest religious faith in Portugal.

Portuguese society is still predominantly Roman Catholic (93%, according to the 2001 Census) but also, due to immigration flows in the last three decades, considerably multireligious. Given the lack of contact with religious diversity during the last 500 years, it is perhaps surprising that, except for the neo-Pentecostal churches in the late 1980s, these new religious faiths are well tolerated by mainstream society.

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See also European Union; Roman Catholicism

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POSTCOLONIAL THEOLOGY

Postcolonial theology is an umbrella term for the study of the relationship between empires and theologies that have erased specific peoples' histories, identities, and agency. Postcolonial theology assumes that there has been a colonial theology. All global religions have had a role in this colonial construction and/or postcolonial decolonizing project as either enablers or silent spectators. Postcolonial theology's recent meteoric disciplinary rise conceals the evolving character of a multidecade endeavor grounded in indigenous, anticolonialist struggles. The lack of definition of postcolonial theology in many reference works may mislead readers new to this field to assume that the field itself is new. This entry takes into account the dating of postcolonial theology as a means to reveal its complex origins, the stakes for its critical analytical task, and its emergence into decolonizing theologies.

Dating of Postcolonial Theology

Recognition of anticolonialist struggles would locate postcolonial theology with indigenous, colonized peoples in preindependence periods. Anticolonialist struggles and emerging theologians writing in India and Africa, First Nations peoples in Canada, and Aboriginal peoples in Australia have not often found their way into the postcolonial theologies (see Joy, 2008, pp. 11–60). Western scholars write the majority of postcolonial theologies, perpetuating a Western bias as to what defines postcolonial theology. Postcolonial theology has been dated as concurrent with postcolonial theory, as an outgrowth of postcolonial biblical studies, and as a brand new phenomenon produced by postcolonial theologians writing in North America after 2000. Each such dating of postcolonial theology brings with it a host of interpretative challenges.

A strong association between postcolonial theology and secular theories has produced religious-secular suspicions postponing broader engagement by the theological community. As an outgrowth of postcolonial biblical studies, postcolonial theology has inherited a methodological framework sometimes perceived to be at odds with theological needs and thus in need of revision. When perceived as a new field of study, postcolonial theology often

has been associated with Western liberal theologies that privilege narrow categories of inclusion. These three ways of approaching postcolonial theology demonstrate that it perpetuates sequential and historical evolution. The missing piece is the contribution of anticolonialist struggles and the way in which these writings questioned categories of unity and order. Canonical and epistemological understandings of unity have provided the basis of Christian theology. If the fundamental categories of Christian theologies questioned by the anticolonialist struggles remain outside the purview of Western theologians, then postcolonial theology will not be heard in the cadence of anticolonialist struggles.

Scholars must be careful, therefore, not to create a false binary division between indigenous, anticolonialist struggles and Western-based postcolonial theologies. Anticolonialist struggles, postcolonial theories, postcolonial biblical criticism, and contemporary postcolonial theology written in North America are all important dimensions of postcolonial theology. These four dimensions do not singularly define postcolonial theology. The anticolonial struggles must be recovered to restore authenticity from these earlier origins of postcolonial theologies. Without this integration step, indigenous voices and experiences continue to be sanitized out of postcolonial theologies.

The Critical Analytical Task

By properly dating the origins of postcolonial theology with the writings of anticolonialist struggles, it becomes clear that this is not a new field of study but rather one that is just beginning to enter the West's consciousness. Postcolonial theology will remain in its infancy until anticolonialist struggles are integrated and engaged by Western theologians in ways that decenter the predominance of Western theologians. It is necessary to bring together postcolonial theology as a comprehensive and integrated work of postcolonial theory, postcolonial biblical interpretations, anticolonialist struggles, postindependence theologians in former colonies, and new emerging indigenous theologians so that, together, it will be possible to critically question the once historical and canonical fundamentals of Christian theologies that enabled colonialism.

Decolonizing Theologies

Postcolonial theology is on the cusp of dramatic change. The Internet offers free-use technologies that potentially bridge separated peoples and cultures who were previously the filtered-out powerless without a voice. Through, for example, the Postcolonial Theology Network group on Facebook, more people around the world have access to each other's alternative memories. Technologies intersect with theologies complementing texts but with virtual speed of correction that produces a multivariant theology shaped by different histories and historical lenses. Postcolonial theology as an engagement of difference is a methodological conduit that remakes colonial theologies.

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See also Postcolonialism

Further Readings

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POSTCOLONIALISM

Postcolonialism refers to the social order or culture of a colonized society after the end of colonialism, when the former colonizers have left or have granted independence and sovereignty to the native society. A postcolonial order bears the legacies of both the colonial and the precolonial structures, and because modernity was often introduced with colonialism, postcolonialism must also deal with survival in a globalized modernity. Whether the precolonial order was a small-scale society with flexible shamanistic traditions or a long-standing monarchical order with powerful religious institutions and organized clergy, such as in India, China, or the Middle East, will have a bearing on the particular ways in which it accommodates or repels the religious or secular impositions of the colonizers. Also shaping the postcolonial religious terrain are issues such as the manner in which the colonization process took place (military conquest,

economic domination, cultural imperialism, or missionization) and the particular discourses and strategies through which the nationalist independence struggle was mounted and achieved. A further factor is the presence of neocolonial interests, which may pressure postcolonial orders to accept the Western path to modernity and trigger the deployment of religion as an anticolonial movement. Most of the literature on colonialism and postcolonialism focuses on modern European and American colonialism, and there are fewer studies of modern Japanese, Soviet, Chinese, or other colonialisms.

Colonial and Postcolonial Knowledge

Since the European Enlightenment, Western knowledge has played a key role in both colonialism and postcolonialism, alongside military and economic domination. Edward Said has analyzed a European American colonial discourse and knowledge system he called *Orientalism*. Originating in 18th-century European travel accounts, literary imaginings, and academic scholarship of the Middle East, this discourse positioned the Orient in a binary structure of knowledge vis-à-vis the modern West, whereby the West was always assigned the favored and superior position in the binary: rational/emotional; materialist/spiritualist; scientific/superstitious; advanced/backward; active/passive; mature/childlike; male/female; egalitarian/hierarchical or despotic; dynamic/unchanging; and so forth. Through *Orientalism*, the West was able to define itself, shore up its sense of superiority and self-confidence, and see itself as assuming the “White Man’s Burden” of “liberating” and converting the rest of the world. When *Orientalism* was adopted by people from the Orient, they often reduced their sense of cultural self-worth, which hampered their imaginations of what their native religious traditions could offer to postcolonial modernity.

The anthropologist Johannes Fabian has critiqued the construction of time in Western depictions of the Other, calling it a “denial of coevalness.” The Other is denied historicity; it is represented as frozen in the past. Even though every society in the modern world has been undergoing great social transformation, importing new cultures and technologies that mix with, displace, or enrich traditional religious life, the denial of

coevalness ignores these deeply ingrained habits and suspends these societies as being outside the modern present.

Another powerful discourse of knowledge and power in colonial and postcolonial eras was *social evolutionism*. Nineteenth-century European American social evolutionism taught that societies evolved through a “survival of the fittest” in a linear path to “progress” through stages of development. It was thought that the modern West, with its science and technology and superior social institutions, was more evolved and advanced, while weaker societies would fall by the wayside or be absorbed by the strong. Typical of such thinking was that of the German evolutionary biologist Ernst Haeckel, who in 1905 outlined an evolutionary history of religions in which the lowest stage of “savages” (“the Veddahs of Ceylon, Andaman Islanders, Bushmen, Australian negroes, Hottentots,” etc.) worshipped “fetishes” and the next stage of “barbarians” who possessed agriculture and cattle had progressed to “animism,” worshipping gods in the forms of men and animals and holding notions of the immortal soul. Finally, with the “highest stage of civilization,” religion evolves with the subordination of all the gods to a chief god, found in the achievement of “monotheism,” the Reformation, and then modern science. Both Christian and secular Westerners subscribed to social evolutionism in the 19th and early 20th centuries, with many believing that Protestantism was the highest form of religious development and that science was the most advanced human attainment. These evolutionary discourses spread quickly to the colonies, justifying European colonization but also gaining currency among many native elites and nationalists.

The inheritor of social evolutionism’s mandate of authority in the mid-20th century was a new discourse known as *modernization theory*. Its major exponent was Walt W. Rostow, of the liberal school of economics, who propounded a five-stage theory of modernization (1960) as a guide for developing nations:

1. Traditional society—prescientific in the belief that procurement of goods is facilitated by gods or spirits
2. Preconditions to takeoff—secular education and establishment of banks, currency, and an entrepreneurial class

3. Takeoff—a society driven more by economic processes than by traditional culture, no longer oriented toward subsistence but toward comparative advantage in the international market
4. The drive to maturity—diversification of economic production and reduction of poverty
5. The age of high mass consumption

Modernization theory was especially influential among national elites in postcolonial societies, persuading them that economic development can only be accomplished by subsuming “traditional” religious orientations.

Christian Missionizing and the Globalization of Christianity

Christianity today claims the largest number of religious followers, ranging between 1.5 and 2 billion people around the globe. Global Christianity’s recent 400-year history is intricately tied up with the history of Western colonialism, beginning with the Spanish and Portuguese conquering of Central and South America in the 16th century, when missions were established to convert the natives. Today, Latin American nations continue to have the highest proportion of Christians—87% to 100% of these nations’ population. Christianity has also been making rapid inroads in Africa, where about 50% of the population today are Christians. Except for the Coptic and Orthodox Churches in Egypt and Ethiopia, whose histories trace back to the first centuries CE, Christianity in sub-Saharan, eastern, and southern Africa dates to modern European colonialism and its missions and, more recently, to African evangelization. In Asia, Christianity’s dominance in the Philippines (92% of the nation) is due to Spanish colonialism, and South Korea’s large Christian population (30% of the nation) derives from Korean Christianity’s alliance with anticolonial forces against the Japanese occupation of 1910 to 1945. What is significant today is the clear demographic shift of Christianity from an increasingly secularized Europe, Canada, and Australia to the developing world of Latin America and Africa, where there is also a growing trend of evangelical Protestantism making inroads into Catholicism and mainline Protestantism.

Noting that colonization does not rely merely on military, economic, or political domination, the anthropologists Jean and John Comaroff introduced the phrase “colonization of consciousness” in their social history of Protestant missionizing in colonial South Africa. They show how 19th-century Protestant missionaries colonized the Tswana people through the introduction of Western “civilization” in the prosaic rhythms of everyday life. The missionaries instilled shame in nakedness and introduced a Western dress code, modern medicine and sanitation, the virtues of agricultural cultivation and labor, a currency and market system, and European architectural and housing principles, and they replaced a communitarian ethos with a dual sense of individualized personhood and obedient ethnic subject of a sovereign British order. These reconfigurations of how to be human and “civilized” were crucial in both the expansion of Christianity as well as European colonialism.

As Christianity was introduced around the world, a big issue it encountered was how much it was willing to accommodate indigenous religious life. In China, an ancient civilization that was never fully colonized by the West, Christianity met with an early setback, known as the “Rites Controversy” of the 18th century. Due to their scientific and astronomical knowledge, and their willingness to accommodate Chinese gentry-official lifestyles, Catholic Jesuit missionaries had gained high positions at the imperial Chinese court. However, rival religious orders such as the Dominicans and Franciscans were horrified at the Jesuits’ accommodation of “idolatrous and heathen” Chinese rituals to honor Confucius and local ancestors. The Jesuits argued that Confucianism was not a religion but a philosophy and that ancestor and Confucian rituals were civil, not religious, in nature and thus could be accommodated by Catholicism. From the Vatican, Pope Clement XI issued a papal bull in 1715 condemning the Chinese rites as “heathen” and prohibiting Chinese Catholic converts from participating in Confucian ceremonies and ancestral rites. The Kangxi Emperor of China took offense and banned further Christian missionizing in China. Even though the mid-19th century later saw increased Christian evangelism, aided by a weaker Chinese imperial government, Christianity did not make great inroads into China, and its missionaries had to cease operations

with the Chinese Communist Revolution of 1949. Had Pope Clement been more accommodating of ancestor worship, Christianity might have gained an early foothold in China.

In North, Central, and South America and Australia, the demographic catastrophe suffered by indigenous populations meant that the question of accommodation was seldom an issue. So much of the native populations were wiped out by the European diseases for which they had no immunity and by massacres that the dominant population has been European and Christian, with virtually no accommodation to indigenous cultures until the late 20th century. In the United States, Canada, and Australia, many indigenous children were forcibly taken away from their parents and brought up in White families or residential schools run by churches, with the intention of "saving" them from their "backward" religions and assimilating them into White society. At these schools, they were clothed in Western dress, taught Christian values, and often beaten for speaking their native languages or practicing their native rituals. Only recently have the governments of Canada and Australia issued formal apologies for these practices, which some have called "cultural genocide."

Although most Latin American countries had won their independence from Spain and Portugal by 1825, their populations were primarily mestizo and deeply Catholic, and the concentration of wealth and power was in the hands of a tiny landed elite, caudillos (local military strongmen), oligarchical families, and military dictatorships, with indigenous peoples living in impoverished marginal rural areas as peasants. Often, these arrangements had the implicit acquiescence or support of the Catholic Church of each country. It was not until the mid-20th century that some priests and theologians in Latin America rallied to a movement known as liberation theology, which combines ancient Christian teachings on helping the poor with Marxist critiques of capitalism and class society as a sin against God. Liberation theologians not only wrote theological treatises but also took direct social action, championing the poor in the urban slums and indigenous rural areas of Latin America, helping them fight for social justice and human rights. This movement has met with mixed response from Vatican authorities:

Liberation theologians have been barred from several Catholic bishop conferences, and both Pope John Paul II and Cardinal Ratzinger (now Pope Benedict XVI) have rejected most of their tenets, saying that talk of revolution and criticism of private property were incompatible with Church catechism. Although Liberation theologians have been committed to the socioeconomic plight of indigenous people, they have mainly been interested in accommodating Marxism, and not indigenous religions, within Christianity.

The accommodation of a native religious ethos and local social concerns within Christianity has better chances when Christian priests and leaders are natives themselves and enjoy autonomy from European church leaders. The Comaroffs show how in South Africa, as White mission churches increasingly had to rely on native interpreters and assistants and as Black independent churches increased, Christianity in Africa entered a new phase of hybridity that was responsive to African cultural sensitivities and concerns for rebuilding communities, winning national independence, and constructing Pan-African linkages. Whereas European missionaries feared racial miscegenation and the dilution of Christianity with "heathen" practices, in independent African churches, the image of the supreme divinity became more merciful, less threatening, and more life-affirming. Whereas British Protestantism inherited from the Reformation a "modernist ideal of a self-contained, self-controlled, self-willed Christian subject" (Comaroff & Comaroff, 1997, p. 87), South African Christian converts developed a more dynamic and corporeal sense of divinity and were open to spirit possession by ancestors. Whereas White Protestants focused on individual prayer and the sanctity of words (the Scriptures and endless sermons), which left most Africans indifferent, African Christians resisted the Reformation belittling of ritual and bodily inspiration and developed their own forms of religiosity in music, dance, rousing oratory, and energetic rituals such as initiation of youths.

Indeed, the receptivity to corporeal expressions of religiosity may help explain why Pentecostal/charismatic Christianity is the most dynamic and rapidly growing Christianity in the Third World, where two thirds of their 523 million global followers currently reside. Pentecostal Christians

belong to the evangelical branch of Protestantism that emphasizes conversion and personally choosing the faith. The Pentecostal movement was founded by the African American preacher William Seymour in Los Angeles in 1906 and has since spread to Africa, Latin America, and Asia. Central to Pentecostal teachings are the ecstatic and physical experiences of receiving the Holy Spirit: speaking in tongues, faith healing, spirit possession, prophesying, dance, and so forth. Charismatic Christianity refers to those who also believe in the ecstatic corporeal reception of the Holy Spirit but do not join Pentecostal churches, instead remaining in mainline Protestant or Catholic churches. Although Pentecostalism attacks indigenous religions, it also tends to keep the social memory of them alive. Pentecostal churches are highly localized institutions with little administration by Western churches, and their leadership is usually drawn from local constituencies, most of which are poor. Thus, Pentecostalism has begun to break away from the older colonial structures of Christianity.

Secularization, Nation-State Formation, and Religious Nationalism

Most anticolonial struggles were led by nationalists who received some form of Western-style education, so that in the process of nation building after independence, many of these leaders looked to Western models of economic and military development that involved processes of secularization: in public education, in the discouragement of large and extravagant public religious rituals, in new limits placed on the power of traditional religious institutions and clergy, in bringing women out of the domestic sphere, and in the drafting of new constitutions and legal systems that encroached on the terrain ruled by religious or customary law in the past. Of course, those former colonies or semi-colonies, such as China, Cuba, Vietnam, and Ethiopia, that underwent communist revolutions looked to Soviet rather than Western models of development; however, in these cases, secularization was much more systematic, involving expropriation of land and property held by religious institutions, the banning of public rituals, the closure of temples and monasteries, and the forced return of clergy to lay life.

Examples of how nationalist elites from the colonies absorbed Western social evolutionism and modernization theory and went on to implement them in postcolonial state policies or social reforms can be found in modern China, Turkey, and Iran. In China, nationalistic educated elites attacked and dismantled Confucian values and institutions, and their scientism also disparaged the popular religion of the common people in the iconoclastic May Fourth movement of the 1920s. First the Guomindang Party and then the Chinese Communist Party, with its Marxist and Stalinist social evolutionism, embarked on the path of radical state secularization and persecutions of traditional Chinese religious practices and organizations.

In a comparative study, Prasenjit Duara seeks to explain the contrast between modern India's continued religiosity and critiques of modernity, on the one hand, and modern China's systematic secularization and relative absence of critiques of modernity, on the other. Whereas the religio-political terrain in precolonial India was structured so that the religious domain encompassed and subsumed the political power of kingship, in late imperial China, the political domain of universal emperorship encompassed the religious, in that it was the ritual center and apex of both the celestial and earthly polities and served as the pivot around which local ritual communities revolved. Thus, when the Chinese imperial order collapsed in 1911 and the political pivot of sacred emperor that undergirded religious communities was abandoned, the new Chinese elite easily switched to a new secular political order, now released from its entanglements in the religious, cosmological, and ritual domains. Since China, in contrast to India, never experienced full colonial occupation and administration, Chinese elites did not feel their language, culture, and religions to be directly threatened by the West, but as modernizers or revolutionaries, they embraced Western linear historical narratives to radically overthrow their religions. For occupied India, however, traditional culture and religion were felt to be imperiled by foreigners, and adherence to them was often taken as an anticolonial act.

Under Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, Turkey in the 1920s and 1930s suddenly became a secular society that abolished the Islamic courts and the Ottoman Empire's sultanate, which had served as

the religio-political leadership of global Sunnī Islam; banned the male head dress (fez) and discouraged women from wearing veils (hijab); and replaced many Islamic madrasas, or religious schools, with a secular state public education system. Similarly, modern Iran under the Pahlavi Dynasty (1925–1979) of father and son (Reza Shah and Mohammad Reza Shah) embarked on a path of state secularization: Islamic shrines were violated, women were made to go out in public without a veil or chador, religious rituals were curtailed, and public places (including schools, universities, and hospitals) were forced to allow the mixing of the sexes. Although the two Shahs' modernization drives did rapidly develop the national economy, the economic polarization of cosmopolitan elites and middle class, on the one hand, and a vast impoverished mass of urban and rural poor, on the other, and their attempts to diminish the social influence of Islam and improve the position of women too quickly meant that these drives were widely regarded as anti-Islamic. The second Shah's autocracy and secret police, his ready accommodation of Anglo-American neo-colonial interests, and his promotion of Western values and the pre-Islamic Persian civilization all paved the way for the backlash: the Islamic Revolution of 1979 that overthrew the Shah.

The Iranian Revolution marked the shift to a new questioning of the secularization thesis. Linked to modernization theory, the secularization thesis held that as societies of the world became more developed, industrialized, urbanized, and educated, the role of religion would naturally decline or retreat into its own specialized or privatized realm. The consensus now is that, except for western Europe, Canada, and Australia, the secularization thesis is not persuasive in any other part of the world.

Underscoring the problems of the secularization thesis is the prominence of *religious nationalism* or politically engaged religiosity in so many postcolonial contexts. According to Bruce Lincoln, modern nation-states, especially postcolonial ones, possess a structural tension between the nation—the “unitary collective identity” of a people—and the state—“the governmental apparatus that manages the political affairs” of the country (2006, p. 62). In the history of nationalism in the modern West, religiosity did not play a big role in the construction of

nationhood, but ethnic markers such as common “blood,” “soil,” “language,” and “history” served to culturally unify the population against an adversary. The modern Western state was forged out of Enlightenment principles of rationality and a fear of the destructive religious wars that had raged across Europe in the 17th century. Thus, the Western model of the nation-state that was exported to the colonies was a secular one, where the state was seen as an adjudicator of religious conflict and a modernizing force against the Dark Ages and wars of religion.

A common problem that this model of secular nation-state encountered in the postcolonies was that, apart from communist nations, native religions were often an important medium for strengthening the collective identity of emerging new nations and differentiating them from their colonizers. Precolonial religious culture has often helped galvanize anticolonial struggles, and it serves as a mode of national integration across regional, class, and ethnic divides after independence. Even the secular Congress Party, which led the Indian independence struggles, relied on the saintly figure of Mahatma Gandhi, who spoke and enacted the Hindu religious language and inspiration of the common people to great effect. Sometimes, the integration of indigenous religion with modern nationalism can be highly coordinated, as in modern Japan, when Buddhism was persecuted and Shintoism was transformed from a localized community religion into a highly state-centralized system of national shrines and the sacred figure of the emperor. Since many new non-Western nations did not experience the traumas of religious wars but the trauma of colonization, they often did not share the Western Enlightenment value of secularism. As Bruce Lincoln notes, where postcolonial national elites aligned themselves with Western secular modernization, they are often seen by the common people and the religious clergy as betraying the nation to Western values and continued Western colonial interests. This describes the recent examples of populist Islamism in Iran, Egypt, Indonesia, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Turkey, and American-occupied Iraq that have risen up against secular-leaning states supported by the West. Indeed, Saba Mahmood shows how secularization can directly serve Western neocolonialism, such as in the Middle East today, where

Western interest in its oil reserves has led to American state campaigns to reform and secularize Islam, so as to curb the religious passions of these anticolonial movements.

In postcolonial contexts with a plurality of religious traditions, there is often competition for the religious identity of the nation or resentments among minority religious groups who may try to secede, resulting in civil strife or war. South Asia has seen many clashes of postcolonial religious nationalisms: Hindus versus Muslims in India and Pakistan; Hindus versus Sikhs and Jains in India; and Tamil Hindus versus Sinhalese Buddhists in Sri Lanka. In India, the Congress Party inherited the British secular model of the state and has tried to mediate between different religious constituencies. Growing resentments in the 1980s that the secular state was not serving the religious majority propelled a popular movement to link national identity or Indianness with the Hindu religion, known as *Hindutva*, which also produced the Bharatiya Janata Party. These religious-nationalist energies were unleashed in the dramatic destruction by a Hindu mob of the Babri Masjid Muslim mosque in Ayodhya in 1994. This 16th-century mosque had been built on the site of a Hindu temple marking the birthplace of the Hindu god Rama, and the mob that demolished the mosque wished to erect a new temple to Rama. The resulting religious violence claimed thousands of lives, mostly Indian Muslims, and foreshadowed later religious retaliations. It would seem that the postcolonial situation of many new nation-states exhibits this tension between a religious national identity and a state focused on secular modernization.

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See also Politics and Religion; Secularization

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POSTMODERNISM

Postmodernism may be one of the most cryptic and confusing perspectives in history to have grown out of the modern era. The distinction between terms associated with postmodernism demonstrates this complexity. The term *postmodernity* often describes a period of time that succeeds—or even shadows—modernity, while *postmodernism* may denote a distinct cultural tenor running through art, literature, and other forms of popular culture. Where the former implies a break with modernity, the latter indicates an outgrowth of different and perhaps novel forms of distinguishable cultural activities and products. In contrast, *postmodernization* is a reference to movements associated with either postmodernity and/or postmodernism. In short, there are no clear or precise explanations as to what the conceptualization of postmodern and its derivatives actually constitute; yet this lack of clarity is indicative of the type of challenges to objectivity and absolutism found within postmodern

themes. What is certain is that the Information Age has provided a stage for which social institutions within an era of globalization can be interpreted through postmodernism.

Modernism Versus Postmodernism

The distinction between modernism and postmodernism can be most readily viewed through their characteristic differences. In its most general meaning, the term *modernism* refers to a period in which principles extending from the European Enlightenment gave rise to systems of logical thought and rationalism. These principles were said to have provided hope for a better future and a variety of ideological means for attaining those ends. However, history has shown that modernity proved to be fraught with foibles and shortcomings.

Conversely, postmodernism emerged as a reaction to modernism by challenging, above all, universal perceptions pertaining to the functions of a social world. Where modernism relied on a search for truth and knowledge, postmodernism dealt more with the futility of truth and a perceived misconception that knowledge must perform a useful function. In addition, modernism brought about a sense of optimism that was informed by the growth in industry and progress; postmodernism possesses a pessimistic tone and is more attuned to concerns about an abundance of information.

Within the context of modernism, classifications were extrapolated in an attempt to manage and make sense of the social world at large. One of the most pronounced characteristics of the postmodern condition is the fragmentation of institutions that arose from modernity. Where postmodernity implies a break with modernity, the fragmentation of the latter becomes the infoscape for the former. That is, fragmented institutionalized material found within the postmodern condition allows for only faint interaction with truncated images that reflect an incomplete version of their original form.

This fragmentation can also be applied to one's image of self. Where identity was once the instrument for defining oneself and one's sociological classifications, those categories have now been blurred and fragmented within the postmodern condition. One way of resuscitating these divisions is by borrowing from mass media, the one institution

that still holds—albeit artificially constructed—reality as its model. Mass media, through the mechanism of consumption, offers a series of spectacular and limitless audiovisual and literary materials to choose from.

Another distinctive feature of postmodernism that highlights the break with modernism is the critique of grand narratives. These grand narratives refer to large value-laden explanations of the workings of the world and are largely the basis for which modernity has gained legitimacy. Grand narratives among modernity included Marxism as a way of explaining social inequality and providing a solution through class struggle, psychoanalysis as an enterprise of mental liberation through excavating repressed psychosexual feelings and events, structural-functionalism as an analysis of social institutions and their necessities within society at large, and feminism as criticism of a historical system of patriarchy and the subordination of females in general. However, some critics have argued that postmodernism has also posed yet another grand narrative and thus fails to distinguish itself from modernism based on such tenuous criteria.

Pioneers of Postmodernism

Although the term *postmodernism* may have been used previously, some scholars of postmodernism contend that one of the first known uses came from the Spanish literary critic Federico de Onís, who used *postmodernismo* in a critical description of modernity. However, any single definition of postmodernism falls short of capturing the trajectory of development that such a term embodies. Individuals who have interacted with the postmodern discourse have, perhaps inadvertently, crafted metalanguages—or paradigmatic modes of interpreting. At least two of these metalanguages—structuralism and deconstructionism—are considered to be the foundation on which the concepts of postmodernism have been built. In addition to these metalanguages, theoreticians from a variety of fields have, perhaps even unknowingly, contributed to the ideas of postmodernism, including Friedrich Nietzsche, Richard Rorty, Roland Barthes, Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, Jean Baudrillard, Jean-François Lyotard, and Fredric Jameson.

Structuralism and Deconstructionism (Poststructuralism)

Much of the theoretical concentration on meaning during the 20th century dealt with the expression of ideas rather than the mental functions that went into creating such ideas. As some of the most advanced thinkers of that period were focusing on the structures of language, linguistics played a major role in the development of postmodernism. On the way, a mid-20th century sociolinguistic idea known as structuralism emerged as an interpretation of meaning based on language. Beginning first and foremost with a revival of the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure's (1857–1913) work on the structure of language, structuralists began to focus on languages void of their historical meanings. With some variation, structuralists argue that language is a social construction and the rules that govern its expression—found within literary texts—serve to provide meaning for otherwise meaningless experiences. Through the Saussurian model of a system of signs, structuralists suggested that much of this interpretation was based on the relativity of this linguistic/literary production of meaning.

Deconstructionists, by contrast, have rejected this notion of linguistic relativity. Though many of the same individuals who developed structuralism later became deconstructionists (e.g., Barthes, Foucault, and Derrida), they still advanced their interpretations by locating a multiplicity of realities that emerged from audiences themselves. That is, rather than affirming that linguistic structures held definite similarities across cultural boundaries, they opted to regard language as an entity open to interpretation.

Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche

Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche (1844–1900) is considered a vital forerunner of postmodernism. His cynicism toward the legitimacy of truth and knowledge culminated in one of his most popularly cited phrases, *Gott ist tot* (“God is dead”), where Nietzsche expressed a transformation toward a world no longer invested in God as an adjudicating entity of one's purpose and morality. As man is capable of manipulation and deception, Nietzsche cautioned that regarding man as the adjudicating source of purpose and morality would

require that one go beyond the common weaknesses that religion serves to ameliorate. Nietzsche's solution—however cynical—was to cultivate the *Übermensch*, or the superman inside oneself. Straying away from traditional institutions and reorganizing one's life around personal potentials are among Nietzsche's thematic contributions to postmodernism.

Richard Rorty

The ideas of Richard Rorty (1931–2007) and postmodernism revolve around challenges to the concept of truth. Bound to the subjective notions of the mind and knowledge, truth is constructed through supposed logical explanations within analytical philosophy. Rorty suggests that interpretation and the continuation of conversation through discourse serve to resolve epistemological problems of truth. In this way, Rorty maintains the tone of scrutiny toward objectivity found within postmodernism.

Roland Barthes

Roland Barthes (1915–1980) advanced the ideas of structuralism through a semiological analysis of material culture. For Barthes, culture too was susceptible to coding and decoding in the same way in which language could be analyzed through codes and its structural continuity. In a series of essays compiled in his 1957 book *Mythologies*, Barthes draws on the decoding of culture by demonstrating the production of modern mythologies. In a particularly well-cited chapter titled “The World of Wrestling,” Barthes argues that choreographed wrestling poses a modern myth that reaffirms the morality and values of the audience. Given this, culture is invested with structural codes intended to convey meaning. In a deconstructionist fashion, Barthes' 1967 essay “Death of the Author” illustrates an absence of writers' command of meaning and the multiplicity of interpretation. Barthes' insight is considered paramount to critical mood within postmodernism.

Michel Foucault

Michel Foucault (1926–1984) is one of the more widely recognized contributors to postmodernism. Much of his work revolves around the

interplay of language and power. Focusing on language, Foucault examines the pretexts of knowledge as institutionalized agents of control—a concept he termed *epistemes*. These epistemes operate through a system of inclusion and exclusion, whereby certain categories of exclusion (e.g., madness) serve to establish and legitimize certain discourses of a given society. For Foucault, language ties into this legitimizing process, whereby assigning terms and explanations to beliefs or practices is actually a form of instituting power and control.

Overall, Foucault's ideas expose the presuppositions of modernity and thus offer more insight into the contentious world of postmodernism.

Jacques Derrida

The origins of deconstruction are often attributed to the work of Jacques Derrida (1930–2004). Derrida indignantly challenged the pretense of Western reasoning by arguing that it was a project of arbitrarily constructing correctness yet devoid of any real basis. Despite other uses of the term, Derrida described this pretense as *logocentrism*, where reason was presumed to yield certainty. Effectively arguing that all forms of such reasoning throughout history had been conceived through teleologically establishing the legitimacy of a reasoning project, Derrida contested the certainty of these structures of knowledge through locating assumptions that undergird so-called factual claims.

Jean Baudrillard

Jean Baudrillard (1929–2007) is considered one of the major contributors, if not the originator, of postmodern “hyperreality.” Focusing on the abundance of images in the 20th and early 21st centuries, Baudrillard argues that reality has been compromised by a process of simulation, where the representation of images has replaced the reality of the images themselves. According to Baudrillard, before arriving at the point by which an image is replaced by its own representation, it first moves through the following four stages: (1) the image is viewed as a reflection of reality, (2) the image obscures reality, (3) the image marks the missing qualities of reality, and, finally, (4) the image no longer resembles its original form or reality and has

transformed into a simulacrum. Baudrillard uses the term *simulacrum* to describe a reproduction of items that no longer retain their original referent. As the Information Age is in part characterized by a bombardment of images through a multitude of technological mediums, the distinction between what is real and what is not is blurred.

In one of his more famous accounts found within his 1995 book *Simulacra and Simulation*, Baudrillard challenges the image of Disneyland as an entertainment park and has instead argued that it is, in fact, reality. According to Baudrillard, Disneyland is a hyperreal setting that is viewed as more real than the reality of the American cities that surround it. That is, the artificial setting that provides a fantasyland of an ideal city in the United States has surpassed the reality of an actual city. For Baudrillard, examples such as these within postmodernism have blurred the fine line between reality and hyperreality.

Jean-François Lyotard

Jean-François Lyotard (1924–1998) contributed extensively to the development of postmodernism. In his widely cited works, he emphasizes the state or quality of operating within what he called the “postmodern condition”—a condition that Lyotard defined as the “incredulity toward metanarratives” or grand narratives. Lyotard criticized these grand narratives as discourse that justifies logic, rational interpretation, and the application of science, which are inaccurate methods of assessing reality. For Lyotard, these grand narratives have a legitimizing quality that preserves the domination of the ruling class. Lyotard resolves the threat of dominating grand narratives by suggesting that the creation of smaller narratives cultivates a multitude of structures that cannot be consumed or evaluated by a larger one.

Fredric Jameson

Fredric Jameson (b. 1934) is considered both a critic of and contributor to postmodernism. In his 1991 book titled *Postmodernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, Jameson argues that features attributed to the description of postmodernism are actually indications of a condition associated with late capitalism. Within this view,

Jameson has commented on the fluidity of the individual image, where a feature of homogeneity ironically emerges through “pastiche.” In much of its postmodern references, this concept of pastiche refers to an artistic, literary, or social imitation that, in Jameson’s interpretation, fails to deliver any real political or effective message. The fragmenting of modern institutions within the postmodern condition is accompanied by the presence of pastiche, which, in a unique fashion, provides agency to the actors that subscribe to a hodgepodge of items from popular culture.

Postmodernism, Religion, and Popular Culture

Ideas emerging from the intersection of postmodernism and religion concentrate on issues of fragmentation, authenticity, and expression. Although one of the main currents running through postmodernism is the decentering of knowledge based on the authority of religious precepts, this does not preclude the existence of religion within a postmodern condition. Instead, religion might be said to have transitioned, transformed, or adapted to the new condition while adhering to certain references from the religious traditions of modernity.

Fragmentation

Issues of fragmentation within instances of religion and postmodernism refer to the phenomenon of piecing together portions of religious beliefs and practices from larger faith-based traditions and compiling them into a different form of religious doctrine. Bearing a resemblance to the process of *bricolage*, some sociologists of religion have introduced the concept of the “religious marketplace” perspective, where spiritual seekers metaphorically shop for religion, or its parts, creating an often eclectic version of the original tradition.

New religious movements during the 20th century demonstrated this marketplace phenomenon. The tenets and actions of the *Ordre du Temple Solaire*, or Order of the Solar Temple, exhibited a mixed assortment of fragmentation. Among this fragmentation were Christian historical referents and textual concepts such as an association with the late-medieval Knights Templar crusaders, fraternity-based liturgical practices that drew

connection to rituals from Masonic ceremonies, and New Age/eschatological belief systems, including hyperreal notions of the second coming of Christ and “rapture” through immolation, resulting in multiple instances of murder-suicides in 1994, 1995, and 1997.

Authenticity

The concept of authenticity emerging at the crux between postmodernism and religion refers to an exploration of meaning in relation to religious material. In this area of study, the works of Walter Benjamin have been cited extensively for his concern with visual art and its autonomy within a period where technology became capable of manufacturing infinite copies of originals. In his 1936 essay “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction,” Benjamin suggests that authentic qualities of a given artistic item lose their aura when produced in mass.

In addition to Benjamin’s writings, the notion of authenticity also draws on concepts from hyperreality, whereby the imaginary has merged with reality and replaced the authentic with fakes. Crises of authenticity within postmodernism may also be seen with regard to apparitions of religious images. Cases include the profile of a pope-like figure on a pancake, a glistening outline of the Virgin Mary on a window, the face of Jesus Christ on a mandolin, the name “Allah” found on the scales of a fish, or even an image of Satan atop a turtle’s shell. These apparitions contribute to the dilemma of what is authentic or fake in relation to institutions of modernity and postmodernity.

Expression

Postmodern expressions of religion are most visible through popular culture. As consumer culture and the use of technological mediums of communication assume a greater presence in daily lives, popular culture garners an increasing amount of influence over reality. An instance of postmodern expression of religion within popular culture emerged in 2008, when a Christian group launched an Internet website that began marketing a notification service for those taken to meet Jesus Christ during the Rapture. The title of the website, “youvebeenleftbehind.com,” offers e-mail

notifications 6 days after the Rapture to inform one's chosen recipients of his or her whereabouts. Such use of technology demonstrates the innovation of fusing religious doctrines and postmodern innovations to express one's commitment to faith.

Postmodernism and Globalization

Perhaps through the proliferation of the information society, postmodernism has also facilitated a global consciousness in contrast to the former nationalistically centered worldview. As postmodernism explores ideas beyond the Enlightenment project of modernism, it also nurtures a sense of exploring beyond oneself. Rather than viewing one's group as part of an ambiguously defined nation, a localization of identity occurs that promotes thinking of one's self as part of a larger whole. The sociologist Roland Robertson has used the term *glocalization* in his description of this increasingly conscientious interconnectedness of the local and the global worlds. Though this view does not assume global harmony free from conflict, it does suggest recognition of an ever-growing diversification of the world, notions of autonomy, and a consideration of historical and cultural differences.

Salvador Jiménez Murguía

See also Consumer Culture; Foucault, Michel; Material Culture; Modernism; Popular Religion

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PRABHUPADA, BHAKTIVEDANTA (1896–1977)

His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada was the founder and spiritual preceptor of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON, popularly known as the “Hare Krishnas”). Author or translator of more than 60 volumes of Vedic texts, including the *Isopanishad*, the *Bhagavad Gita*, the *Bhagavata Purana* (*Srimad Bhagavatam*), and a host of other sacred literature, he performed the impossible by transplanting India's sacred Gaudiya Vaishnava tradition onto Western soil.

Born Abhay Charan De, in Calcutta (now Kolkata), West Bengal, Prabhupada studied at the Scottish Churches College, which was administered by the British and functioned under the auspices of Christian missionaries. Still, his parents raised him as an orthodox Vaishnava—a devotee of “the Supreme Personality of Godhead”—and he claimed that there was never a time in his life when he forgot Krishna.

He married young to a beautiful woman named Radharani, who bore him several children. For some time, he served as a responsible family man and owned a small pharmaceutical business, which did quite well.

On a fateful day in 1922, however, he met the great Vaishnava saint, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur, and this rekindled something deep within. As a result of this meeting, he eventually decided to devote his life to propagating the mission of “Krishna consciousness in the English language,” which is what his teacher instructed him to do on their first meeting. He took initiation from Bhaktisiddhanta in 1933.

He later took *sannyasa* (a vow of renunciation) in 1959, and with this latter initiation, he became determined to travel to the Western world—to fulfill his guru's order of spreading Krishna consciousness in English. After several failed attempts, at the advanced age of 69, he finally arranged a passage West on a ship known as the *Jaladuta*—“messenger of the sea”—which was more prophetic than anyone at the time could possibly know.

He suffered a series of heart attacks on that month-long arduous journey, but he finally arrived at Boston and then New York Harbor. He then

traveled to Butler, Pennsylvania, where several Indian contacts were waiting to host him during his initial stay in the Western world.

Testing the waters in Pennsylvania, lecturing, communicating with Americans for the first time, and working on his translations, he left for New York City after 1 month. Spending a hard winter in New York finally bore fruit as he incorporated the ISKCON in 1966, with numerous hippies and celebrities coming to his aid. With the burgeoning hippie movement and “flower power” in full swing, the time was right for Krishna consciousness in the West, and young spiritual seekers flocked to Prabhupada’s movement.

After his initial temple was established in New York, another one was started in San Francisco, California. From there, Prabhupada traveled throughout America with his disciples, popularizing the movement through street chanting, book distribution (*sankirtan*), and public speeches. Prabhupada was relentless, eventually traveling the globe—opening centers, lecturing, translating, and training students—with the energy of a man half his age.

In the 12 years from his arrival in New York until his final days, he

- circled the globe 14 times on lecture tours that took him to six continents;
- introduced Vedic gurukul (children’s education) to a Western audience;
- directed the founding of the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, which claims to be the world’s largest publisher of ancient and classical Vaishnava religious texts;
- founded the religious farm community New Vrindavan in West Virginia;
- authored 60 books on Vedantic philosophy, religion, literature, and culture, which are now available in numerous languages; and
- watched ISKCON grow into a confederation of more than 100 schools, temples, institutes, farm communities, and ashrams.

Prabhupada left this world on November 14, 1977, but his disciples carry on his mission to the present day.

Steven J. Rosen

See also Hare Krishna (International Society for Krishna Consciousness); Hinduism; India

PRAMUKH SWAMI (B. 1921)

Pramukh Swami (Narayanswarupdas Swami) is the leader of the Bochasanwasi Akshar Purushottam Sanstha (BAPS) subgroup of Swaminarayan Hinduism. He is revered as the chief devotee of Swaminarayan in a lineage that goes back to Gunatitanand Swami, a companion of Swaminarayan in early 19th-century Gujarat. Pramukh Swami was born on December 7, 1921, to Motibhai and Diwaliben Patel in Chansad, Gujarat, India. BAPS Swaminarayan temples celebrate his birthday with elaborate ceremonies each year. He took full initiation as a sadhu in 1940 and soon became manager of the temple at Sarangpur and then, in 1947, private secretary to Shastri Maharaj, who had founded BAPS as a reform movement in 1908. Narayanswarupdas Swami was appointed president of BAPS in 1950 by his predecessor, Yogiji Maharaj, and people called him *Pramukh* Swami, which means “President Swami.”

According to BAPS theology, the chief devotee of Swaminarayan in every period is the *Akshar*, the abode of *Purushottam*, the highest manifestation of the divine. Pramukh Swami assumed spiritual leadership of BAPS at the death of Yogiji Maharaj in 1971. Followers believe that he is the perfect devotee who follows all the sadhu disciplines perfectly. Hence, the more humble, world renouncing, and self-effacing he is, the more reverence and devotion followers bestow on him. Images of him and his predecessors are objects of worship in BAPS temples. He is the guru for BAPS followers, who accept his teachings as divinely inspired, and they seek his counsel when making decisions about marriage, employment, business, and family. His decisions are final regarding all BAPS institutional matters.

BAPS has grown dramatically under Pramukh Swami’s leadership. He has personally dedicated 713 temples and initiated more than 700 men as sadhus. In 1981, he established a Sadhu Training Center at Sarangpur, Gujarat, where, prior to initiation, young men go through a 4-year curriculum that includes Hindu and Swaminarayan scriptures and philosophy, devotional music, public speaking in three languages, Sanskrit, priestly skills, and world religions. Pramukh Swami then assigns each sadhu to tasks in the institution.

Followers meet in more than 3,300 BAPS centers in India and abroad, especially where Gujarati migrants have settled in East Africa, the United Kingdom, and the United States. He dedicated Akshardham in New Delhi in 2006 as the largest Hindu temple complex in the world. Other BAPS temples of marble and sandstone in London, Toronto, Chicago, Houston, and Atlanta attract large numbers of worshippers and tourists. Pramukh Swami has been active in hosting large international cultural and religious festivals, including the centenary celebration in Ahmedabad in December 2007. The growing size and wealth of BAPS supports eight hospitals and clinics and more than 30 educational institutions.

BAPS has gained a reputation as one of the wealthiest and fastest growing Hindu groups. It has been a leader of the neo-Hindu reform movement emerging from the colonial period and has become a strong transnational movement among Gujarati Hindus in India, East Africa, Britain, and North America.

Raymond Brady Williams

See also Hare Krishna (International Society for Krishna Consciousness); Hinduism; Swaminarayan Movement

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PRAYER BEADS

Prayer beads are looped strands of wood, stone, berries, or glass beads that are used for chanting or recitation of prayers, hymns, or meditations. Practically, they allow the devotee to keep count of the repetition of prayer without losing focus on the prayer itself. Often prayer beads are held as sacred, and the number of beads relates to a tradition's theology: Muslim prayer beads—*misbaha*—for example, have 99 beads representing the 99 names of God.

Although the use of beads for religious practice is believed to have its earliest roots in India, the

practice is global, and humanity has invariably tended toward iteration of prayers in repetition. Mainstream orthopraxy in Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism uses prayer beads, as do many new religious movements. On the Indian subcontinent, prayer beads, or *japa mala*, typically have 108 beads and are used by Sikhs, Jains, Buddhists, and Hindus. For some, the base is mathematical—for example, the product of self powers of 1, 2, and 3 equals 108 ($1 \times 4 \times 27$); for others, it might relate to ideas such as Krishna's 108 consorts or the 108 Hindu Upanishads or all of the above; and for still others, chanting on prayer beads is not simply a method of keeping a spiritual score, it is the core practice of faith. The Gaudiya Vaishnava tradition is especially telling in its orientation toward *mantra yoga* and the use of prayer beads for meditation. The Gaudiyas craft their beads out of the sacred *tulasi* ("holy basil"). After reciting a round of 108 prayers, the practitioner arrives at the "Godhead" bead, which separates the smallest bead from the largest and is not supposed to be crossed; this is the marking point for a completed round of prayer, to start the next in the opposite direction.

This tradition shows reverence for the beads that is noteworthy: They are never placed on the floor, taken into the bathroom, or touched by the feet. If any such events occur, a devotee will touch the bag to the head to indicate penitence and respect for the sacred beads. Moreover, the beads themselves are characterized as living and requiring food, which takes the form of prayer. When a devotee has not chanted on the beads for a substantive time, the beads are said to be "fasting." In the early Gaudiya tradition, initiates would strive to complete 64 rounds of *japa mala* a day, which amounts to about 8 hours of meditation. However, the number can be altered, as in ISKCON (International Society for Krishna Consciousness), which cut the number to 16 rounds as the movement spread to the Americas and Europe.

Although using prayer beads is seen as a generally acceptable practice, there is also resistance. In Christianity, Catholics, Anglicans, and even Lutherans have rich traditions with rosaries. Yet this practice is not acceptable to Baptists or Presbyterians, who shun their use and, like the

Wahabbis do in Islam, even proactively encourage others to do the same.

SpearIt

See also Baha'i; Hare Krishna (International Society for Krishna Consciousness); Hindu Orthopraxy; Hinduism; Islam; Roman Catholicism; Vaishnavism

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PRISON RELIGION

Prison religion refers to the faith and religiosity embedded in the experience of incarceration. For some prisoners, religious narratives seem to speak directly to their existential predicament, and so stories such as that of the Exodus in the Bible can occupy a special space in a believer's worldview. For others, the practice of religion in prison may be for less devout reasons or may even be something of a con game, a temporary or transitory appropriation, used for protection, perks, or simply to get out of the cell or to socialize. Sincere converts and practitioners have been distinguished primarily according to whether they continue practicing after release; some abandon religion, while others keep the faith.

Religion in prison, despite its contemporary prominence, is an understudied topic, which seems even stranger given the long and intermingled history of prisons and religious narrative. Although the Hindu deity Krishna was born in prison and Jesus Christ suffered imprisonment by Roman authorities, the modern prison or penitentiary was conceived in the United States

by 18th-century Quakers as a corrective period of solitude for a sinner to pay penitence for his crimes and to reconcile with God. Today's prisons, in contrast, are governed by secular principles and suffer from overcrowding, racial schism, and violence. Accordingly, prisons have been hotbeds of legal action, including battles for religious rights that have raged all the way to the Supreme Court.

Since the early days of the penitentiary, the legend of the born-again Christian has poured through prison walls: A man goes to prison, is broken to the core, and resurrects himself with the power of Christ. Over the past 50 years, however, led by the likes of Malcolm X, the Christian legend is being rivaled by converts to Islam. As his case and countless others show, religion is a force that is perhaps better at reforming than prisons themselves.

Despite the reformatory influences of religion, as dens of social and political vengeance, prisons have tended to serve as havens for radical religious thought, whatever the tradition. A telling example is Sayyid Qutb, who is often cited as one of the chief ideological architects of al Qaeda and whose fundamentalist ideals were cemented in books written during his 10-year incarceration in Egypt. Such works have had a tremendous impact on contemporary global politics, and their continued influence is surely to be the subject of further study, especially as American-style supermax prisons continue to be expanded and exported throughout the globe.

SpearIt

See also Qutb, Sayyid; Religion and State; Religious Freedom; Sacred Places

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PROPHECY

The term *prophecy* is rooted in the 12th-century French term *prophécie*, which was derived from the Latin *proficio* (“advance”) and the Greek *prophetia* (“what is written or spoken by a prophet”). Prophecy refers to the disclosure of concealed knowledge of the most crucial kind: the will and intentions of a transcendent power, for whom a prophet is authorized to speak. A prophet’s message involves an image of community that is of divine origin, and it generally brings the prophet into confrontation with cultural elements that contradict this image. Thus, prophecy generally has political and social ramifications. Prophets traditionally emerge from contexts of social crisis, and their messages promise to transform society through a revitalization of relationships with covert sources of power.

Globalization has posed distinct challenges with respect to prophecy. Globalization often refers to what economists view as the integration of national economies that began in the late 20th century, resulting from the international circulation of capital, technology, and people. Modern globalization, however, can be traced to the 15th-century voyages of discovery that laid the foundations for European colonialism, through which the flow of wealth, technology, and human beings brought most of the world into a matrix of political, cultural, and economic relationships. Through this globalizing enterprise, large numbers of people would ultimately be subjected to displacement, genocide, and other forms of domination. Within this particular context of social crisis, prophecy has been a common occurrence.

Among the most fascinating instances of prophecy in recent years are Melanesian cargo cults that emerged at the time of contact with Europeans in the late 19th century. They continue to the present day. These movements have developed around individuals with prophetic insight into the meaning of Western commodities. They invoke preexisting frameworks of social organization and exchange, motifs of recreation and rebirth, and mythological expectations of ancestral return to interpret the significance of Europeans, the imbalanced distribution of wealth, and the lack of reciprocity in the contact situation. Prophets promote

collective labor (e.g., building of airstrips, warehouses, or radio towers) and rites of purification and transformation (destruction of livestock or gardens, altered sexual practices, or spirit possession) to secure the arrival of cargo (commodities), which colonials are perceived to have misappropriated from Melanesian ancestors. The issues cargo cults confront as well as the religious meanings they ascribe to contact and a market economy are, in many respects, emblematic of prophecy in a global context. Cargo prophets proclaim a message of redemption from domination that is framed in relation to commodities, human reproduction, the need for reciprocity, and new relationships with sacred power. While prophecy is traditionally associated with situations of crisis, prophecy in a global world is marked by these kinds of conspicuously modern features. A brief overview of three prophets here will serve to highlight these features: Dona Beatrice Kimpa Vita, Antônio Conselheiro, and Louis Riel.

From the time of contact with the Portuguese in 1482 until the late 19th century, the Kingdom of Kongo in west-central Africa was racked by wars involving rival kings and Dutch and Portuguese colonials. Refugees and captives created by these conflicts fueled a lucrative slave trade involving the Dutch, Portuguese, English, and French. Dona Beatriz Kimpa Vita emerged as a prophet in this turbulent context. In 1704, a 20-year-old Kimpa Vita experienced visions through which she came to believe herself possessed by St. Anthony and destined to die every Friday, travel to heaven, and return with God’s directives each Monday. She began a peaceful crusade for the unification of the Kongo, the expulsion of Europeans and an end to colonial ventures, and the abolition of slavery. Denouncing traditional African and European religious practices, she instituted an indigenous Catholicism in which Mary, Jesus, and the saints were Kongolese. Her Antonian movement attracted thousands of peasants who followed her to São Salvador (present-day M’banza-Kongo) to restore the city as the Kongolese capital, which they believed to be the true site of Bethlehem. The movement was censured by Catholic and civil authorities, and Kimpa Vita was convicted of heresy in 1706. Although she and her child (believed to have been divinely conceived) were burned at the stake under the Kongolese King Pedro IV, the Antonian

movement ultimately provided Pedro with a foundation for uniting the Kingdom of Kongo.

Kimpa Vita's persecution is not unique among modern prophets. In 1888, by order of the Emperor Pedro II, slavery was abolished in Brazil. Millions of former slaves joined an underclass of impoverished indigenous and Mestizo peoples, while the disruption in agriculture resulted in thousands of farmers losing their land. The situation led to the overthrow of the monarchy by elites, and it provided the setting for the emergence of Antônio Conselheiro (born Vicente Mendes Maciel) as a prophet and messiah among the poor. In the 1870s and 1880s, Conselheiro traveled throughout northeastern Brazil preaching against slavery, restoring churches and cemeteries, and building dams in poverty-stricken communities. In 1893, fueled by a mystical vision of the end of the world and a prophetic message of a coming millennium in which the poor would become wealthy, Conselheiro established the community of Canudos. Thousands of landless peasants, destitute indigenous and Mestizo peoples, and former slaves joined him there in a life of austerity, reformed Catholicism, physical labor, and strict sexual regulation. At its height, 35,000 people lived there together, awaiting "Santo Antônio's" millennium of prosperity for the dispossessed. Regarded as hostile toward the church and the new republic, the community was destroyed by government forces in 1897. Conselheiro never raised a weapon during the confrontation. Rather, he prayed and fasted until he died (of malnutrition and dysentery).

A contemporary of Conselheiro, Louis Riel, led a Métis (peoples of European Aboriginal ancestry) resistance against Canadian expansionist forces in Rupert's Land (now Manitoba) in 1869. While the resistance was successful in many respects, Riel was forced into exile for a number of years. During this period, he began to experience visions in which the Holy Spirit anointed him a prophet and directed him to lead the Métis of the District of Lorne (present-day Saskatchewan) in creating a multinational state of new indigenous ethnicities (e.g., German Indian), each located on unalienable land, and a New World Catholic Church. During the period, the territory's Métis and native peoples were suffering deprivation and were being forced from their land, and settlers were struggling under severe trade restrictions. Riel was asked to lead a

multilateral resistance, but when formal negotiations broke down in 1885, the Métis found themselves alone and confronting federal military forces. They were summarily defeated. During their final confrontation, an unarmed Riel led women in reciting the rosary while his colleagues who were fighting pleaded with him to perform a miracle, which did not happen. He was convicted of treason and hanged by the government.

There are significant commonalities among these prophetic movements that reflect issues and practices that figure overtly in cargo movements. In each case, social, political, and economic marginalization directly resulted from cultural contact. Long-standing relationships with place were disrupted through economic expansion, dispossession, or enslavement. Bodies became sites of transformation, not only in the emergence of Métis and Mestizo peoples in Canada and Brazil but through possession (Kimpa Vita's experience of St. Anthony), sexual restrictions (Conselheiro), human reproduction (Kimpa Vita's divine child), physical labor (Canudos), and other efforts to create new communities that redefined traditional religious (Catholic) structures and subverted dominant political orders. Like prophecy more broadly, these movements were enmeshed in situations of crisis, but they related expressly to crises particular to a global modernity: disequilibriums of power resulting in widespread alienation from wealth and land; the unavoidable defining presence of commodities and especially the commoditization of human beings (slavery) and land; and individual and social transformation. In this context, prophecy has served to reestablish relationships with ultimate sources of power that address the lack of reciprocity underlying the situation of crisis. In so doing, it has given rise to new discourses and new forms of collective action that redefine the person and society while acknowledging a locus of authority that exceeds that of dominant forces. Prophecy points to the disruption of global contact situations, the need for reciprocity, and the religious significance of commodities and wealth. It also reveals strategies for affirming the integrity of community within a global world.

Jennifer Reid

See also Brazil; Canada; Cargo Cults

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PROTESTANT BUDDHISM

Protestant Buddhism refers to a certain genre of Buddhist beliefs and practices that developed in the mid- to late 19th century, particularly in Sri Lanka (Ceylon), among middle- and upper-class urban Buddhist laity as a result of contact with European and American Protestant missionaries, colonial officers, and Orientalists. The term *Protestant Buddhism* was first coined by the Sri Lanka historian/anthropologist Gananath Obeyesekere in 1970 as constituting a theoretical ideal type, and it represents an early form of global religion in two senses: On the one hand, the historical phenomenon that Obeyesekere describes, the collaborations and contestations between Theravada Buddhists and Western Protestants, constitutes one significant 19th-century type of transregional religious encounter. On the other hand, the theoretical category that Obeyesekere creates represents an important early attempt to theorize global influences on religion. Since Obeyesekere's coining, the phrase *Protestant Buddhism* has increasingly been scrutinized by scholars who question the appropriateness of the term because it gives Protestants and Protestantism too much agency in the development of modern Buddhism and neglects important reform and revival movements within Buddhism itself.

In coining the term, Obeyesekere saw *Protestant Buddhism* as the result of two processes: cultural

borrowing and cultural protest. In terms of borrowing, *Protestant Buddhism* described certain new forms of Buddhism in Sri Lanka, which resulted from the mingling of traditional Buddhist practices and beliefs with those of European and American Protestant colonists and missionaries. Under the heading of Protestant Buddhism, Obeyesekere grouped a number of borrowings from Victorian British Protestant colonial officers and other English-speaking Christians such as Henry Steel Olcott, the American cofounder of the Theosophical Society. These features included a stress on certain moral ideals, including sexual morality, monogamy, temperance, hard work, economic independence; the adaptation of certain organizational forms from Christianity, such as the Young Men's Buddhist Association, Buddhist chaplains in armies and hospitals, Sunday Schools, and missionary organizations; and the development and reformation of certain ritual and textual forms, including the elimination of astrology and deity worship from religious practices, a more socially engaged role for Buddhist monks, a more religiously engaged role for lay men and women, an emphasis on the authority and centrality of Pāli texts, and the creation of new liturgical texts such as the *Buddhist Catechism* (authored by Olcott) and the *Daily Code for the Laity* (authored by Anagarika Dharmapala). In terms of protest, Obeyesekere points out that *Protestant Buddhism* not only refers to the fact that new Buddhist features derived from Protestantism, but it also referred to the fact that many of these new religious forms were part of a *protest* against Christianity. Thus, the Buddhists adopted some of the rhetorical and organizational features of Christian missionaries to fend off missionary challenges. They developed their own Buddhist printing presses to counter missionary pamphleteering, their own schools to counter proselytizing missionary schools, and even their own missionary organizations to compete with Christian missionaries, such as the Society for the Propagation of Buddhism (a direct appropriation of/protest against the missionary Society for the Propagation of the Gospel).

In the years after 1970, Obeyesekere's category of Protestant Buddhism has been used by a number of other scholars, mainly to describe changes to Sri Lankan Buddhism in the late 19th and 20th centuries. Historians of Buddhism, including Kitsiri

Malalgoda, George Bond, and Richard Gombrich, have built on and further nuanced this category. Malalgoda describes the 19th- and 20th-century history of monastic schisms, which contributed to the development of Protestant Buddhism. Bond outlines the way in which Protestant Buddhist idioms, cultivated in turn-of-the-century Sri Lanka, fed into the mid-20th-century Buddhist “revival,” in particular into engaged Buddhism and lay meditation movements. In a collaborative volume with Obeyesekere, *Buddhism Transformed*, Gombrich traces the trajectory of Protestant Buddhism in modern, urban Sri Lankan religiosity. In addition to these works, a number of studies have focused on major historical events, organizations, and personages that have influenced the encounter between Buddhism and Christianity and, thus, shaped the development of Protestant Buddhism. A significant study by Richard Fox Young and G. P. V. Somaratna, *Vain Debates*, examines the missionary-monk debates on the southwest coast of Sri Lanka during the mid- and late 1800s. Similarly, stand-out studies have been written on influential figures in the development of Buddhism in Sri Lanka during the 19th century, particularly Henry Steel Olcott, T. W. Rhys-Davids, and Anagarika Dharmapala.

Although Obeyesekere coined the term *Protestant Buddhism* with reference to Sri Lanka, it is important to note that many of the characteristics of 19th-century Buddhism, which he attributes to missionary and colonial influence, are actually visible in areas that had not been colonized, such as 19th-century Thailand (Siam) and 18th-century (pre-British) Kandy, Sri Lanka. In Thailand, between 1851 and 1910, King Mongkut (Rama IV) and his successor King Chulalongkorn (Rama V) enacted very similar reforms to Buddhism as was seen in Sri Lanka during the same period. They developed new lay and monastic Buddhist organizations, reformed Buddhist rituals purged of “superstitious” practices, asserted the centrality and authority of Pāli texts, and wrote new Buddhist liturgical and educational texts. However, unlike in Sri Lanka, there was no colonial authority in place in Siam during this time. While there was certainly a great deal of European influence in the Siamese court, changes to Buddhism in Thailand cannot be attributed primarily to a borrowing from or reaction to Protestantism.

Similarly, in the late 18th century, one sees dramatic revisions of Buddhist practices, texts, and organizations in the development of a new monastic fraternity in the Kandyan kingdom of Sri Lanka, the Siam Nikaya. In her study of the Siam Nikaya, Anne Blackburn argues that certain features that Obeyesekere attributes to Protestant Buddhism in Colombo in the late 19th century were actually present in monastic reform movements in Kandy 100 years earlier. In particular, a new emphasis on the authority and centrality of Pāli for Buddhist practice and new types of Buddhist liturgy and preaching can be traced to the work of the founder of the Siam Nikaya, Valivita Saramkara. Blackburn draws from the work of Charles Hallisey to critically revise Obeyesekere’s concept of Protestant Buddhism. In this revised vision, 19th-century Buddhists are seen as having a type of relationship to Western civil servants, missionaries, and scholars that is different from what Obeyesekere described. Rather than a relationship of cultural borrowing where Sri Lankans adopt Protestant mores, Blackburn and Hallisey describe a situation of “intercultural mimesis” in which European American scholars, missionaries, and administrators favored and developed certain characteristics of Buddhism that were already present in the tradition itself. That is, in their understandings of Buddhism, European Americans simply mimicked and amplified certain strands of thinking within Buddhism itself. In turn, these visions were institutionalized and authorized in influential 19th-century Sri Lankan organizations that were funded by European Americans, such as the Pāli Text Society and Buddhist Theosophical Society.

Regardless of its label or its origins, the cluster of attributes that Obeyesekere identified in late 19th-century Buddhism have come to characterize Buddhism in many countries. In particular, one might say that many Buddhist converts in America and Europe understand the faith in terms that cohere closely with Obeyesekere’s and others’ descriptions of 19th-century Protestant Buddhism—as a sober, contemplative, moral tradition centered around a well-defined canon of Pāli texts, consisting of simple, austere ritual practice, including meditation, which lay men and women can engage in with or without monks. Thus, the characteristics grouped under the rubric of

Protestant Buddhism are not only important for interpreting Buddhism's encounter with the West in turn-of-the-century Asia, but they also remain influential, even dominant, qualities foregrounded in popular conceptions of Buddhism in modern non-Asian societies around the globe.

Benjamin Schonthal

See also Sri Lanka; Thailand

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PROTESTANT CHRISTIANITY

Protestant Christianity is an umbrella term for a broad range of Christian churches and movements that are neither Catholic nor Orthodox, most of which have their origin in the Reformation, a 16th-century western European reaction against Roman Catholicism. Although there are wide variations in structure and doctrine, their beliefs are typically characterized by an emphasis on grace as the means of salvation, scripture as the source of authority, and an expanded role for laity. Having spread from western Europe to all continents, Protestantism is now second only to Catholicism as the dominant strain of Christianity in the world.

Origins

Although it had earlier roots, the Reformation is traditionally said to have begun in 1517, when Martin Luther, a German priest and professor of theology, issued his 95 Theses against perceived abuses within the Roman Catholic Church, such as the sale of indulgences. Luther soon began to formulate key doctrines, such as salvation by faith alone and the sufficiency of scripture as the source of Christian authority, and strongly criticized Catholic notions of sacramental priestly authority. By the time Luther was formally excommunicated from the Catholic Church in 1521, a wide variety of other reform movements, labeled "Protestant" by the Vatican, were springing up in western Europe. John Calvin wrote the *Institutes of the Christian Religion* in 1536, espousing the absolute sovereignty of God, who offers salvation only to a predestined elect of a totally depraved humanity. His theological ideas and reforms of church structure became normative for a wide range of Calvinist or Reformed Churches. Anglicanism arose at this time in the context of the English monarch's break with Rome, retaining many of the trappings of Catholicism but gradually gaining a more Protestant character. The radical Anabaptists saw church as a free association and held to doctrines such as absolute pacifism; they suffered severe persecution as a result from their fellow Christians.

These various groups dissenting from the Roman Catholic Church formed churches of their

own, leading to the present-day diversity of Protestant denominations. Most early Protestants accepted close ties between church and state. But to some of the more radical reformers, such as the Anabaptists and some English Puritans, the Christian church was not a matter of coercion by a secular authority or a clerical hierarchy but a voluntary association of believers responsible to God alone. Based on this principle, the English Nonconformist Free Churches broke from Anglicanism, spawning major Protestant movements such as Congregationalists, Baptists, and Methodists and their innumerable subdivisions. The trend toward sectarianism eventually spawned marginal groups, not generally considered Protestant but arising in a Protestant framework, such as Unitarians, Mormons, and Christian Scientists.

Protestantism in the Western World

Protestantism was initially confined largely to northern Europe and later North America; it was a North Atlantic phenomenon until the 19th century. Early Protestantism (leaving aside the initial reformist wave) was less interested in spreading the faith through missionaries than seeking the support of political leaders and gaining an established status. The geographical expansion of Protestantism began with English colonization in the New World. The American colonies became a haven for nonconformist groups such as the Puritans, and denominations and sects proliferated following American independence, aided by the constitutional prohibition on religious establishment. Immigration added to the diversity of Protestantism in America, adding Anglicans, Calvinists, and Lutherans to the mix; this trend continues with the arrival of Asian and African Protestants as well as Latin American Pentecostals. Major trends in the 20th century include the ecumenical movement, which has reduced the importance of denominations, and the divide between liberals and evangelicals, which has become more salient than other divisions. Protestant Christianity has had a great deal of influence on American politics throughout American history, having both conservative and progressive impulses, and today, a strong Religious Right contends with a less recognized but still active Religious Left. In North America, Protestants of all kinds represent around

a third of the population—a less dominant position than was previously the case; evangelical groups have held their ground, but the more liberal mainline denominations have declined in recent decades. In its original homeland in western Europe, although it is still the state religion in some places, secularism has greatly diminished the influence of Protestantism.

Missionary Expansion of Protestantism

Since the 19th century, missionaries have spread Protestantism around the globe, with varying rates of success. From 142 million in 1900, it has been estimated that Protestant Christians grew in numbers to 821 million by 2000. With the new wave of European colonialism subjugating much of the world to European (particularly British) control, new missionary fields opened up. Missionaries had varying degrees of attachment to colonial powers; Americans grew more and more prominent in the missionary movement, and the most successful evangelical efforts were often conducted by the early waves of local converts. The prime focus of early missionary efforts was Asia, in particular the countries of India and China. Facing competition from previously established religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam, they won relatively few converts. By 2000, Protestants numbered at most 5% of the population in India (appealing especially to the lower castes), 1% in Japan, and 6% in China (all of these estimates appear to be rather overoptimistic). However, missionaries have had more success in the Philippines and Korea (where Protestantism increased from a handful of adherents in 1900 to 35.7% of the population by 2000), both of which have been receptive to American influence.

As Africa was divided between the colonial powers, so it was divided into missionary spheres of influence, with Protestant missionaries having more influence in British and German colonies than in those areas ruled by Catholic France. Africa was not the most popular destination for missionaries, but they won success through their support of educational institutions and mobilization of Africans who did much of the work of spreading the faith. Today, African Independent Churches, blending Protestant and indigenous

elements, have a great deal of influence, although they are often considered to be inappropriately syncretistic by conservative theologians. The original Protestant denominations established by missionaries also thrive and in some cases outnumber their Western parent denominations. This is particularly true of the Anglican communion, in which African provinces have exerted increasing influence in debates over debt relief and homosexuality. Protestants (including the Anglicans) number 150 million in Africa as of 2003, and the related African Independent Churches command 86 million adherents.

Protestantism in Oceania has followed a similar course to that in Africa, with colonialism encouraging the spread of Protestantism and Protestantism also spreading via European immigration. During the wave of missionary expansion, there was some desire to evangelize Latin America as well, but resistance from some quarters to missionary efforts in a Christian (albeit Catholic) land meant that missionary efforts were limited. In Latin America, the greatest success of Protestantism was among liberals opposed to the power of the Catholic Church, but when such political concerns faded, so did traditional Protestantism in favor of Pentecostalism.

Protestantism has played a role in destroying local cultures, particularly as this involves traditional religious practices. For this reason, and because of the often close relations between missionaries and imperial governments, Protestantism in the Global South is often derided as a tool of colonialism. However, its local manifestations have developed local stamps as Christianity has sought to define itself in terms relevant to Asian and African cultures, leading in some cases to new religious movements. In Africa, Protestant Christians have often been at the forefront of anticolonial and antiapartheid movements.

Pentecostalism

Pentecostalism, defined by the idea of charismatic gifts of the Spirit (speaking in tongues, prophecy, healing, etc.), is among the fastest growing movements within Protestantism. American in origin, it is traditionally dated to the 1906 Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles, after which a wide variety of new churches began to be founded. The related

charismatic movement has had success working within traditional denominations to encourage reception of the “gifts of the spirit.” From a global perspective, it has had particular success in Africa and Latin America. Within Latin America, it has had particular success among the poor and marginalized, women, and those disaffected by the dominant cultural Catholicism. Pentecostals in Latin America by far outnumber traditional Protestants, with as much as 47% of the population in Brazil being affiliated with the movement. Pentecostals and charismatics in Africa number as many as 147 million. In Africa, the movement appeals to the aspiring middle classes with its affirmation of prosperity and prestigious links to American missionary efforts. Pentecostalism’s spread in Africa (and to some extent elsewhere) is often said to reflect the growing influence of the American Religious Right. Others see in the movement a more grassroots, indigenous character; the African Independent Churches may contain Pentecostal elements as well.

William Dewey

See also Christianity; Ecumenicalism; Evangelical Movements; Fundamentalism; Liberal Protestantism; Missions and Missionaries; Native North American Religion; Pentecostal Movements; World Council of Churches

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PUBLIC AND PRIVATE RELIGION

The classic dichotomy between public and private religion is at the heart of numerous attempts to analyze and locate religion, even if often only one element is included in the analysis, such as exploring public religion-state relations or analyzing the links between private religion and altruism. Modern societies are committed to the increasing independence of social systems (societal differentiation), one example of which is the privatization of religion, or religious individualism. For instance, the majority of the American baby boomers are religiously privatized. The overall societal differentiation is gained and maintained by the public-private distinction. This dichotomy is, however, rooted in the traditional way of looking at social relations and institutions (domestic life vs. the public and third sectors) and has been challenged.

Still, this dichotomy is also useful today, particularly in empirical survey research (e.g., in trying to detect and measure interconnections between the parts of religiosity and various phenomena, acts, and attitudes). Public religion then refers to expressions of religious faith or behavior in the public sphere, and what is important is that the agent of such expressions may be individuals, communities, or public institutions. Private religiosity then refers to all individual-level private expressions of religious faith and behavior, such as prayer or the importance of religion or God in an individual's life. Various other elements of individual-level religiosity (such as attendance at religious services) are, however, examples of public religiosity. Overall, expressions of individual-level religiosity and the general question of why people become religious have been analyzed from various perspectives, including deprivatization theory, socialization theory, rational choice theory, and the theory of the search for meaning and belonging.

Many classic studies (and a few even today) took it for granted that religion would be doomed to (above-noted) privatization and away from public life. However, since the late 1970s, religion has increasingly appeared in the public sphere in various contexts in Latin America, Asia, the Middle East, North Africa, and Europe. The first prominent scholars to analyze this process have been

Robert N. Bellah and José Casanova in particular, arguing that religion is indeed still a force for collective action and togetherness as well as political mobilization. Bellah has scrutinized the question of civil religion: religious factors existing and functioning independently of churches and states. Casanova modifies the public-private dichotomy by focusing on the mediating category of civil society. He has analyzed the role of the Catholic Church in different democratization processes, showing that the Church and Catholic groups that have previously resisted democratization have become positive and even proactive in the processes of democratization. Thus, the role of religion does not imply privatization but a modern public religion. Indeed, our time is witnessing a rise in both the public and the political roles of religion. Casanova focuses on the deprivatization of religion, through which religions refuse to adopt a detached and privatized role previously assumed to be a consequence of modernization (secularization).

Casanova argues that deprivatization of religion may take place in three ways. First, religions have begun to defend the traditional lifeworld against modern processes, which disrupt things such as the patriarchal family model. Religion enters the public sphere and raises public discussion on these issues. Second, religions enter the public sphere to question the action of states and markets. Religions can use their position to remind societies and individuals of the need to subordinate such institutions to the common good and to regulate them to become more responsive to human needs. Third, religious traditions may maintain the principle of the common good against the claims that reduce it to an aggregated sum of individual rational choices. Religions can bring issues of private morality into the public sphere and force societies to confront the task of reconstructing their own normative foundations. Various scholars have used Casanova's perspective to explore national cases. Broader trends are obvious too; religion in Europe has been unexpectedly prominent during the last two decades in public debates and actions over welfare and in combating social problems. Another example is that religious organizations in the United States are involved in care in very substantial ways, through both informal partnership and their own programs. Indeed, and as noted by Casanova in a 2001 article, even though organized religion in the

United States is very different in its history and composition from that in Europe, it has similar public functions in society.

There may be various public religions at three levels of a society (with examples from Casanova's 1994 study):

1. State (e.g., the Spanish Catholic Church)
2. Political society (e.g., the Catholic churches in Brazil)
3. Civil society, including both civil religion (e.g., Protestantism in the 19th-century United States) and the public interventions of religious groups (e.g., pastoral letters by Catholic bishops)

Privileged monopoly churches, not only Christian ones, can also relocate from the state and political society to civil society since the levels are not static.

Notwithstanding the usefulness of the public-private dichotomy, various social- and individual-level phenomena indicate its blurriness. Social institutions are becoming increasingly porous, particularly in late modernity, and their boundaries less rigid. For instance, although individuals have been seen increasingly as independent free agents (individualism) during recent decades, complex social and societal factors are central to individual lives and to their happiness. Moreover, autobiographical stories always mix individual narratives and collectively constituted public stories and are built on both. Various religious phenomena also illustrate the interrelatedness of public and private in individual lives, as shown by increasing spirituality, various modes of popular and alternative religions, and the links between religion and health (both in individual experiences and, increasingly, in public health care). As discussed by Grace Davie, the notion of vicarious religiosity, typical in Europe, also indicates the blurriness between private and public religiosity: Churches take care of religious matters on behalf of the population and are respected and trusted for it by individuals. Religion may then be a form of collective public cultural memory, even if people are passive in public and/or private participation in religious activities.

Explorations of the blurry intersection between public and private religiosity would aid us in

understanding and transcending this dichotomy. As noted by Linda Woodhead, the old paradigm in the sociological study of religion focused on public, and privatized, religion, while the more recent paradigm focused on private religiosity; the emerging paradigm sees religion as multilocalized. Further studies on the subtle complex line between public and private in the understanding and practice of religion are called for.

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See also Politics and Religion; Popular Religion; Religion and State; Religious Identity; Spiritualism; United States of America

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PUERTO RICO

The Caribbean island of Puerto Rico is an example of a territory that has been greatly influenced by numerous distinctive cultures. Since the Age of Discovery, the island has been an object of the imperial ambitions of great world powers, which has caused its colonization and an inflow of vast numbers of diverse groups of people. These circumstances have converted Puerto Rico into a multicultural and interconfessional place where various customs, traditions, and beliefs coexist. This feature is reinforced by the processes of globalization, which favor the diffusion of cultural elements and religious syncretism.

An unincorporated territory of the United States, Puerto Rico is a predominantly Catholic region. Roman Catholicism was instilled into the majority of the Puerto Rican population during Spanish rule over the island from the 15th to the end of the 19th century. When the United States took control of Puerto Rico in 1898, Protestant churches were gradually introduced. Today, about two thirds of Puerto Ricans remain adherents of Roman Catholicism, and more than one fourth are Protestants. Puerto Rican Christians have not only adopted incoming denominations but have also established their own churches (such as the Mita Congregation, founded in 1940 and since having spread to numerous Latin American countries, the United States, Canada, and Spain) and religious traditions (e.g., Clamor a Diós, originated by Jorge Raschke and held annually in San Juan). Apart from Christianity (proclaimed by 97% of the population), several other religions are practiced in Puerto Rico. Some traditional African religions brought by slaves centuries ago still prevail. The

most popular are Santería, rooted in Yoruba beliefs (found in the towns of Loiza and Carolina) and Mayombe Palo, deriving from Congo basin tribes (found in the city of Guayama). Indigenous Taíno beliefs were also rediscovered toward the end of the 20th century. Moreover, the island hosts minor groups of adherents to non-Christian world religions, such as Muslims (predominantly in Ponce, Vega Alta, and Río Piedras), Tibetan Buddhists, and representatives of major movements within Judaism (Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox).

This crossing of traditions is by no means a recent phenomenon but began with the arrival of European settlers in America. Nevertheless, the clash of cultures is facilitated and accelerated in the era of the “global village.” Globalization has influenced the Puerto Rican religious scene by encouraging a revival of indigenous traditions, the import of rival world religions, and the spread of new denominations and churches. Nevertheless, Puerto Rico in contemporary times serves not only as a receptive field for external influences but also as the source of new systems of belief and cultural elements. In the era of globalization, Puerto Rico is assuming a far more active role in the cultural distribution chain than it has been assigned in the past.

Marta Mlodzianowska

See also Caribbean; Islam in Latin America; Latin America; Multiculturalism; Native Latin American Religion; New Religions in South America; Syncretism

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PURE LAND BUDDHISM

Pure Land Buddhism, sometimes also called Shin Buddhism, is one of the most popular forms of

Buddhism throughout East and Southeast Asia. The beliefs and practices of the Pure Land tradition focus primarily on the person of Amida Buddha (originally venerated in India by the Sanskrit name Amitabha) and the Pure Land he created to refresh those who struggle to attain nirvana. Originally an outgrowth of the Mahayana tradition, Pure Land has achieved varying levels of independence as a tradition across Southeast Asia, most notably in Japan, where it is both an independent Buddhist tradition and the nation's most popular one. By evaluating the simplicity of Pure Land's devotional practices and the inclusiveness of its soteriology, one can better understand this tradition's far-reaching popularity.

According to Pure Land origin narratives, Amitabha, in the form of a monk named Dharmakara, made a series of vows to help end the suffering of all beings. Because of his compassion, Dharmakara succeeded in creating the Land of Bliss, or *Sukhavati*. Recognizing that attaining nirvana had become difficult in times of war and unrest, Dharmakara intended his Land of Bliss to become a place where seekers could take respite after death and from where nirvana would be attainable. When the sutras containing the stories of Amitabha's exploits and his Land of Bliss reached Han China in the first century CE, the Sanskrit *Sukhavati* became translated as "The Pure Land."

Though some scholars believe Pure Land ideas and texts arrived in China as early as 150 CE, the tradition failed to develop formally until a monk named Hui-yuan formed a Pure Land monastery atop Mount Lushan in 402. For his efforts to establish the tradition, later masters of the Pure

Land tradition named Hui-yuan Pure Land Buddhism's first patriarch. Hui-yuan's efforts to preserve Pure Land practices and teachings were systematized in the 7th century CE by Shantao and other monks. In the 12th century, Hōnen took Pure Land to Japan and established it as an independent tradition there. Shinran, one of his students, later founded Jōdo Shinshū, or "the True Pure Land School."

Across South Asia, many practitioners are drawn to Pure Land because of the simplicity of its practice: Though various groups add additional practices, most groups focus on the recitation of the *nembutsu*, spoken as "Namu-amida-butsu," or "I take refuge in Amida." This recitation offers the practitioner an opportunity to clear her mind. Before gaining the mass appeal it currently enjoys, this simplicity and openness prompted people at society's fringes to devote themselves to Amitabha as many other Buddhist traditions deny salvation to all but certain groups of individuals.

Adam Ware

See also China; Japan; Mahayana Buddhism

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QATAR

Qatar is a peninsular Gulf state bordering the eastern side of Saudi Arabia. Since the lifting of the British protectorate in 1971, it has functioned as an independent constitutional monarchy governed by the Al-Thani family. The majority of Qatari residents are actually noncitizens, both Arab and non-Arab foreigners, nearly 20% of whom are Shi'i Muslims, mostly from Iran. Virtually all native Qataris, however, are Sunnī Muslims, as are slightly more than three quarters of the total population. Wahhabi ideology permeates the Sunnīs' religious outlooks in Qatar, and the largest religious minorities consist of Hindus, Christians, and Buddhists, predominantly from South and Southeast Asia, and Baha'is from Iran.

Despite Qatar's geographic situation in the heart of one of the most conservative regions in the world and its reliance on Islamic law (Shari'a) to shape government policy, its emir, Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani, has instituted various liberal reforms, such as giving women the right to vote and creating and enforcing a constitution designed to cultivate pluralism and social justice. Doha, the capital, is home to Al Jazeera, the 24-hour international broadcasting corporation founded by the Emir, known internationally for its diverse array of news and talk shows that air controversial political, social, and religious issues, and that provides a voice for otherwise unrepresented points of view.

In 2008, the Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue officially opened as a locus for

advocacy of understanding among faiths, the promotion of religious values in approaching humanitarian issues, and authoritative education and training for spreading the culture of dialogue. The center hosts annual conferences for interfaith dialogue, publishes a scientific periodical journal, and provides other programming such as youth camps and cultural field trips.

Additionally, in 2008, Qatar inaugurated its first contemporary public space for Christian worship, the 2,700-seat St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church, or the Church of Our Lady of the Rosary, built on land donated by the Emir. Despite the Qatari government's gesture of promoting religious pluralism, it required architects to omit a cross, steeple, and bell tower from the building's exterior design but allowed crucifixes and paintings depicting biblical scenes inside. Qatar also planned to construct several other buildings to house services for Anglican, Coptic, and Greek Orthodox Christians and various Indian communities, leaving Saudi Arabia as the only Gulf country that does not permit the construction of non-Islamic houses of worship. Although Christians have historically worshipped in Muslim lands without such restrictions, Qatar's building regulations reflect the influence of modern ideologies rather than traditional Islamic practices.

Qatar also distinguishes itself from the neighboring kingdom by allowing Wahhabi ideology to influence its public displays of religion in a tangibly more relaxed manner. Unlike in Saudi Arabia, Qatari women are allowed to drive and vote, and foreign women are not expected to don

a full-length black gown when traveling in the country.

The global social network and grassroots activist organization the Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow hosted its 2009 international conference in Doha and invited 300 young leaders from around the world to debate critical issues such as violent extremism and effective media engagement and to compose “An Open Letter to the World Leaders of Today From the Muslim Leaders of Tomorrow,” a compilation of policy recommendations proposing solutions to contemporary challenges facing Muslims around the globe.

Emily Pollokoff

See also Arabic; Middle East; Wahhabis

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QIGONG

Qigong (lit. “breathpractice”) refers to a Chinese system of body cultivation that involves the circulation of somatic energy (qi) by means of breathing techniques, mental concentration, and set sequences of movements. Practitioners expect it to strengthen the body, heal diseases, lift the mind to higher levels of awareness, and possibly even produce extraordinary abilities and powers. Though it is a part of traditional Chinese practices, it became popular in the last decade of the 20th century through the Falun Gong religious organization, which was banned by the government. Qigong was systematized in the 1940s as a cost-effective approach to medical care and health

maintenance in communist-controlled areas of northern China; after the establishment of the People’s Republic of China in 1949, the propagation of qigong became part of a government program to modernize traditional Chinese medicine and integrate it into the public health care system. Qigong is thus a recent invention, but it is based on traditional callisthenic, martial, and meditation practices. While these were taught and cultivated in religious (especially Daoist) milieus, qigong was designed as a more “scientific” version of these traditional systems, devoid of their many “superstitious” elements.

During the 1950s and early 1960s, qigong was researched and taught only at selected medical centers. As China was heading toward the Cultural Revolution in 1965, these centers were closed down, and the practice of qigong was banned as a remnant of the old culture that needed to be swept away. However, some individuals continued their practice privately, as did practitioners of the various traditional body cultivation systems from which qigong was derived. Already in the early 1970s, qigong had resurfaced as a grassroots phenomenon being practiced and taught in public parks. With the end of the Cultural Revolution in 1976 and the beginning of the reform period in 1978, official interest in the practice of qigong revived. A confluence of official patronage, scientific study, and popular demand led to the “qigong craze” of the 1980s and 1990s. Numerous masters emerged and gathered a following for their own qigong systems, which were increasingly enriched with religious content. Resacralized qigong thus became the basis for what were in effect new religious movements that filled the vacuum of social disorientation created by the Communist Party’s loss of ideological credibility. A well-known example of this trend was the Falun Gong (lit. “practice of the dharma wheel”) movement, which was banned by the authorities in 1999 as an “evil cult.” While the practice of qigong itself was not prohibited, the Chinese government has since then severely restricted the ability of qigong groups to achieve the mass mobilization potential that they had demonstrated in the 1990s, though banned groups such as the Falun Gong continue to operate outside the People’s Republic of China. Qigong itself has proven to be a successful export product and is nowadays

taught in many places worldwide both as a health and as a spiritual regimen, not unlike the global spread of Indian yoga practices.

Philip Clart

See also China; Cultural Revolution (China); Falun Gong

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QUEER THEORY

Queer theory was coined in the early 1990s to name a growing body of scholarship that analyzed the experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people and theorized the power dynamics that situated those identities as abnormal in relationship to heterosexuality, marriage, and procreation. This literature has emphasized that sex, gender, and sexuality are historically and culturally defined. Its approach is to “queer” or to destabilize the presumed naturalness of heterosexuality and conventional gender performance. In doing so, queer theorists have challenged both conservatives’ claim that heterosexuality is the only natural expression of human sexuality and mainstream LGBT activists’ counterassertion that sexual orientation and gender identity are inborn.

As scholars have taken up these insights in the study of global religion, they have conveyed that, to quote Elizabeth Stuart, “religion is a queer thing.” Religion scholars have shown, first of all, that all mainstream faith traditions include LGBT practitioners, many of whom have claimed those traditions in the face of condemnation. There is now a robust literature on the ways in which queer people of faith negotiate the intersection of religious affiliation and gender and sexual identity.

These studies have shown, in contrast to queer theory’s emphasis on cultural definition, that many queer people of faith claim LGBT identities as inborn—even divinely created—to counter the condemnation of homosexuality and gender variance. Queer studies of religion have also shown that “religion is a queer thing” by demonstrating the historical and cultural complexity of religion in its relationships to sex, gender, and sexuality. While many religious beliefs and practices buttress normative formations of marriage and family, religious traditions have also subverted conventional roles and have authorized alternative practices of sexuality and kinship. For example, even as Christianity has predominantly censored nonmarital sexuality, it has also given religious sanction to forms of same-sex kinship within monastic traditions. Various forms of Christian-influenced new religious movements, including Oneida Perfectionism and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, have also sanctioned nonmarital or nonmonogamous sexual practices. Adding to these complex dynamics in Western faiths, studies of non-Western cultural practices further complicate the picture of religion in its relationships to sex, gender, and sexuality. Work on Hinduism in contemporary India, for example, has considered the tradition of the *hijra*, and investigations of precontact Native American cultures have documented the role of the *berdache*, or “two-spirit” figure. Both of these figures seem to challenge binary models of sex and gender by offering a ritual role for a “third sex” (though this topic has been heavily debated). Understood broadly, these and other investigations have “queered” the study of religion by showing its complex place in the power dynamics around sex, gender, and sexuality.

Heather Rachelle White

See also Gay and Lesbian Theology; Sexuality

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QUM

Qum (pronounced as “ghom” and rarely as its Arabic form “qumm”) is a city located 150 kilometers south of Tehran and the second most important religious center in Iran, enshrining the tomb of Fāṭima, the sister of the eighth Shi’ite Imam, ‘Alī al-Riḍā (d. 202 AH/817 CE), and containing a number of important seminaries connected with prominent Shi’ite scholars. The city, which has grown from a small provincial town to the capital of the central province, is home to a number of ethnic and linguistic groups that continue to settle in its traditional and religiously vibrant setting. Although the natural environment is in general unfavorable in terms of weather, water, and vegetation, with the introduction of modern techniques of agriculture and water drawing and distribution, Qum enjoys a constant flow of pilgrims and students from all over Iran and around the world.

Historically, Qum has been known for its strong undercurrent of religious sentiments. Even before their conversion to Islam, the people of the city were known for their rebelliousness and resistance to unjust rulers. When Arab conquerors established their rule (in the ninth century) and began exacting high taxes, the people rebelled frequently, and the caliphal authorities had to crush the rebellions, which led to the massacre of its inhabitants. By the end of the ninth century, Qum had become a bastion of Shi’ism. A number of prominent Shi’ite scholars who had settled in Qum and were teaching there increased the city’s importance as a center of Shi’ite theology and tradition. In 817, Fāṭima passed through the city on her way to visit her brother, ‘Alī al-Riḍā, in Ṭūs (Mashhad). She fell ill, died, and was buried in Qum. Her mausoleum increased the reputation of the city and

actually proved to be its most attractive feature in its future development as the “Vatican” of Shi’ite Islam. While its seminaries provided high-quality religious education, the shrine of Fāṭima functioned as a spiritual cement that bonded various competing religious leaders and saints in a unique solidarity. The shrine also became the pivot around which the city developed in different directions, inducing the rulers and dignitaries to expand the sanctuary through their pious endowments and lavish gifts adorning the edifice.

The sanctuary of Fāṭima is richly embellished, and its four courtyards are adorned with seminaries and a hostel for pilgrims. Among the famous scholars who came to study and to teach are Mullā Muḥsin Fayḍ, Mullā Ṣadrā Shirāzī, and Qaḍī Sa’īd Qūmī. The cemeteries around Qum extend over an enormous area and include the tombs of many well-known scholars and distinguished people. The city is also known for its crafts, especially its hand-woven carpets. The tradition of seeking refuge in the shrine also attracted a large number of exiles and persons escaping from law enforcers. Among the contemporary Shi’ite scholars who have left a deep mark on the city, contributing to its importance as the leading center of Shi’ite learning and leadership, are Ayatullah Burujirdī (d. 1961), Ayutollah Mar’ashī Najafī (d. 1990), and Ayatullah Khomeini (d. 1989). Qum also witnessed rivalry with Najaf, Iraq, based on activist and conservative interpretations of the Shi’ite tradition, with major implications for both the political and the intellectual life of the Shi’ites in Iran, Iraq, and Lebanon and around the world.

Abdulaziz Sachedina

See also Iran; Shi’a Islam

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QUR'AN

The Qur'an is the holy book of all Muslims. The prophet of Islam, Muhammad, is believed to have received the Qur'an through direct revelation (610 CE). According to adherents of the religious tradition of Islam, Allah revealed the Qur'an to Muhammad through the angel Jibreel (Gabriel) during a period of 23 years.

There are 114 chapters, or suras, in the Qur'an. Traditionally, the suras are of two types: the Meccan Suras and the Medinan Suras. Each begins with the words, "In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate." These suras often center on the theme of faith. The Meccan Suras center on issues of faith, creed, and belief, and on stories of previous prophets and nations; the Medinan Suras concentrate on legislation and law. The Qur'an asserts that the goal of every human being is to live to worship Allah and obey his commands. Following Allah in obedience, according to the Qur'an, leads to heaven, while not following Allah leads to hell. Hence, reading, studying, memorizing, and believing the Qur'an, while adhering to its teachings, are some of the most important aspects of life for a Muslim.

The Qur'an includes the stories of prophets including Abraham, Moses, and Jesus. However, unlike other scriptures, Muslims do not recognize any human involvement in the Qur'an, such as authorial influence or human error, but insist that it is inerrant direct revelation and the true word of God. Since tradition holds that Muhammad was illiterate, the emphasis is on the divine miracle of the Qur'an's revelation and not on Muhammad as creator of the text.

The Qur'an does not unfold in only a linear narrative pattern or flow in a chronological manner. The suras concern themselves with issues of politics, economics, and law. The voice in the Qur'an frequently changes. Allah is at different times talked about in the plural first person, the singular first person, and the third person. Additionally, Arabic relies on gendered grammar, and this allows for interesting and complex gender dynamics with the words themselves that often cannot be well understood by non-Arabic speakers.

The Qur'an is considered to be the word of Allah and thus cannot be truly translated. The

Qur'an is considered the true Qur'an, in the strictest sense, only in Arabic and no other language. Any translation of the Qur'an from Arabic to another language or text is considered an interpretation of the Qur'an. This, however, does not mean that there are not different analyses of the meaning of the Qur'an. Interpretation of the Qur'an constitutes a discipline among Islamic sciences that is known as *tafseer*, and religious scholars, Qur'an interpreters, and religious communities have always played a large role in helping decipher what the Qur'an means for the followers of Islam. The rise in schools of interpretation of the Qur'an has generated much new literature.

The Qur'an is looked to as an ethical guide (*akhlaeq*) for many Muslims and comprises instructions on holy living. It is considered the ultimate source of teaching that affirms many values, such as hospitality, honor, justice, honesty, and kindness. The five pillars of Islam—namely, (1) affirmation of the oneness of God, (2) almsgiving, (3) ritual prayer, (4) fasting during Ramadan, and (5) pilgrimage (hajj)—are emphasized as ways of living ethically.

Human beings, as presented in the Qur'an, live their lives before Allah and are not evil but forgetful. To remember Allah, the Qur'an must be engaged constantly. By engaging in the religious tradition of interacting with the Qur'an, humans are reminded about the meaning of life and how Allah wants all human beings to live.

Muslims around the world have memorized the Qur'an. The Holy Book is also recited, and its rhythmic recitation in Arabic is part of the holiness of the book. The recitation process is central to learning the Qur'an. In fact, the lyrical pronunciations and rhythmic beauty of the Qur'an are almost as important as the words themselves. As a result of the importance placed on recitation, professional Qur'an reciters play a central role in many Muslim communities. Additionally, Qur'anic quotes are so important and beloved to many Muslim communities that they are found inscribed on buildings, monuments, and mosques. Moreover, the purity of a Muslim who wants to learn or approach the Qur'an is insisted on because the Qur'an is considered holy and not to be denigrated. Therefore, anyone who approaches the Qur'an must be in a state of moral cleanliness.

The history of the translation of the Qur'an is complex and varied. Though the availability of the Qur'an in English is often taken for granted today, it is important to note that Qur'anic translation has a history of its own. The translation of the Qur'an from Arabic to English is difficult for many reasons. First, the Qur'an employs end rhymes and rhythm interplay that are almost impossible to mimic in other languages. Second, the gendered nature of Arabic is lost when translated into English and other nongendered languages. Finally, the use of punctuation is limited, and therefore, it is difficult to translate the appropriate tone and speed at which the Qur'an is meant to unfold.

The first English translation of the Qur'an was written in the 12th century, at the urging of Peter the Venerable, and was finished in 1143. It was not until many years later, in 1647, that André Du Ryer, a Frenchman, presented a translation of the Qur'an in French, which was translated into English shortly thereafter. The most notable English translation was by George Sale, who created a new translation from Du Ryer's earlier work. This translation was prominent for almost 150 years and was the most widely read English interpretation of the Qur'an. From then onward, a new interest in style emerged, and translators became aware of the rhythm and rhyme of the Qur'an, which led to an increase in translations.

Stephanie A. Vogelzang

See also Arabic; Islam; Mecca; Muhammad

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QUTB, SAYYID (1906–1966)

Best known for providing an ideological basis for militant Islamic political resistance, Sayyid Qutb

has come to be known as the intellectual father of modern-day jihad. His writings have influenced Islamist radicals such as Abd al-Salam al-Faraj, Mustafa al-Shukri, and Ayman al-Zawahiri. Born in the village of Musha of Asyut in Upper Egypt, reared in a pious home, and educated in a traditional rural religious school, Qutb received a BA at the Teacher's College of *Dar al-Ulum*. Having excelled in the study of literature, he was appointed instructor at the same college on graduation and was soon employed in the Ministry of Education. Qutb's early writings were secular and nationalist oriented. They earned him fame early on as a political dissident and ardent social critic. Because of increasing friction with the government, he was sent to the United States between 1948 and 1951 to visit various teachers' colleges, undoubtedly in the hope that he would be impressed by America and thereby become a moderate. Instead, he became further convinced of the depravity of the West, which he saw as immersed in consumerism and godlessness. On returning to Egypt, he joined the Muslim Brotherhood and thus began his career as the pioneering intellectual of contemporary Islamist radicalism.

Combining themes of Islamic theology, anticolonial popularism, and socialist sentiments, Qutb's *Social Justice in Islam* was written prior to his departure to the United States and exhibits the early stages of his thinking. Many of his ideas were further developed in his multivolume *In the Shade of the Quran*, in which his literary erudition offers a distinctly modern and aesthetic commentary on the classic text.

Many of his ideas were then distilled into *Milestones (Ma'alim fi-l-Tariq)*, which has come to be regarded by many as the "communist manifesto" of contemporary global Islamic jihad. Written during his imprisonment by Gamal Abd al-Nasser in the early 1960s, it is a concise account of his vision for sustaining long-term Islamic resistance to the secular state, with the ultimate goal of establishing a government based purely on the Shari'a, or Islamic law. In *Milestones*, Qutb introduced three Islamic jurisprudential novelties that would later inspire some of the most radical Islamist groups in the world, including the assassins of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat in 1981.

The first advocated the creation of a vanguard of committed Muslims that would implement a

long-term campaign to challenge non-Islamic laws and practices in society. However, this vanguard was predicated up the belief that modern-day society was directly comparable to the “Age of Ignorance,” or *jahiliyyah*, of pre-Islamic, polytheistic Arabia. Concomitant with the conventional Islamic narrative wherein Prophet Muhammad steadily fought pagan Arabs until Islamic rule was established over Mecca and Medina, Qutb envisioned the vanguard as a direct parallel to Muhammad’s early companions, or the pious ancestors, *al-Salaf*. The last of Qutb’s innovations declared Muslim rulers and state administrators who presided over non-Shari’a laws, for example, secular law, to have abandoned Islam, making the murder of such rulers a legitimate and religiously obligatory act. This last position was a significant departure from the conventional Islamic tradition

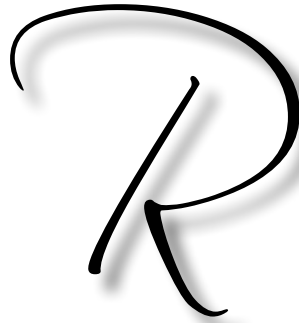
that strictly prohibits revolt against Muslim rulers, be they oppressive or religiously negligent.

Abbas Barzegar

See also Islam; Islamic Modernism; Islamism (Political Islam); Religious Nationalism

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RACISM

Systemic racism refers to the practice of unjustly bestowing enrichment and privileges on certain groups in society on the basis of their ethnicity or race while simultaneously discriminating against and belittling other groups. While racism need not be associated with religion, racist views are often a part of a broader cultural pattern that has religious dimensions.

Racism on both a personal and a societal level is found in many cultures and has been a feature of American society since its early years, when White people were regarded as the only legitimate citizens within society, to the exclusion of Native Americans and African Americans, the latter being brought to the United States as slaves.

The trajectory of racism in the United States has encompassed a broad range of social and psychological dimensions related to racism on the part of Whites: racist ideologies, attitudes, perceptions, emotions, habits, and institutions of U.S. society. Systemic racism has solidified privileged material, social, and ideological realities that are reproduced across generations of White communities while simultaneously disadvantaging and alienating communities of color.

The systemic racist foundation of the United States was secured through the genocide of indigenous peoples and theft of Indian lands, combined with a capitalist economic system that generated wealth through the enslavement of people of African descent. The initial unequal trajectories of

the White and Black communities have resulted in a persistent reality where White Americans have sat at the top of a castelike social hierarchy with Black Americans and the relatively few remaining American indigenous communities disproportionately represented the bottom.

The reformed Christian thought preached by the Pilgrims and their descendants was used later in history in the White conception of “manifest destiny,” to simultaneously rationalize slavery and anti-Indian genocide and to teach enslaved workers and indigenous peoples that their oppressed status in the New World was “God’s will.” Because the enslaved workers were stripped of all cultural attachments and personal identity, they assimilated on a marginal basis into a dominant White society that dictated their spoken language, religious teachings, and interpretations of the New World around them. Still, exposure to biblical interpretations preached by White church members that all people are equal in the eyes of God ironically provided a divine authority that served as a powerful source of counterframe development for those African Americans held in bondage. Resistance counterframes are those that reject inequalities and refuse to recognize unjust surroundings and circumstances as morally acceptable.

While initially, religious thought was the primary means used to develop and reinforce anti-racist counterframes among the enslaved, later inspiration from the secular and political realms came during the Revolutionary War, on the proclamation of the Declaration of Independence. Governed by civil rulings explicitly separated from

the church, the political doctrines of this era held that all citizens of a new United States should be guaranteed inalienable rights and freedoms. Though in the same exclusionary vein as the religion preached by oppressors, only those who were socially defined as “free persons” across the next century would be counted as U.S. “citizens,” entitled to the privileges, rights, benefits, and freedoms declared by the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution. Those rights and protections did not extend to indigenous peoples or enslaved workers, who were nonpersons. Despite the racist barriers, the first Black Christian churches emerged in the late 18th century, after the Revolutionary War and the proclamation of the Declaration of Independence.

Following the Revolutionary War, many Black ministers contributed to the growth of the Black theology tradition. John Saillant highlights the Revolutionary War soldier, New Divinity theologian, and Black Christian minister Lemuel Haynes, who combined New Divinity, revolutionary republicanism, and New England federalism to generate a Christian theology synthesized with a North American ideology that vehemently opposed slavery. Haynes ministered to congregations largely composed of Whites and fervently preached that slavery was immoral and that all people are equal in the eyes of God. Dr. Jeremiah Wright, the pastor of the Chicago church where President Barack Obama once worshipped, follows in the footsteps of early Black Liberation thinkers such as the Black ministers Richard Allen and Absalom Jones, who in 1787 attended a service in Philadelphia at St. George’s Methodist Episcopal Church, only to be expelled when they knelt down at the altar next to White worshippers. This event led the two men to establish the Free African Society, which accented a Black liberationist theology.

Soon, Whites in leadership created yet another key institutional barrier that served to protect the systemic racism forced on enslaved workers and other people of color. Scientific racism was reinforced by a new eugenics ideology backed with pseudo-scientific assertions, which gained force during the late 19th century. For example, Cesare Lombroso (1835–1909) held that some people were born criminals and could be identified through physical characteristics. Other theorists built on Social Darwinism that was shaped by

Thomas Malthus (1766–1834), Herbert Spencer (1820–1903), and Henry Herbert Goddard (1866–1957), arguing that the “socially deficient” and poor should receive no societal support. These White men held that providing assistance to the socially oppressed preserves artificial societies, which in their view should not survive. Their “expertise-based” scholarly authority influenced political leaders who incorporated eugenics ideologies into public policies. As late as the early 20th century, people of color were sterilized, institutionalized in prisons and mental wards, or otherwise segregated from White society. During this time, people of African and indigenous descent were not defined as human by the standards of “scientific racism.”

Despite the multifaceted racist hurdles and social barriers, Black theology continued to flourish in this era. Black churches served as resistance organizations and sanctuaries where members could tap into support networks. In contemporary times, Black churches continue to serve the same purposes. A segment of Black theology has transitioned into an extended theological body of thought that Wright has termed the prophetic tradition of the Black church. Wright has explained that this theological orientation traces the origins of Black thought to the prophetic tradition of the Hebrew Bible.

Thus, Black theology was born out of the brutal oppression of slavery and segregation colliding with the influence of inspirational Christian religious and political doctrines promulgated by people of European descent during that long era. Christianity’s liberation doctrines contributed to the development of Black antiracist counterframes and resistance strategies used to challenge White supremacy. Three primary institutional components working in concert sanctioned the civil statuses and definitions of what constituted a person eligible for U.S. citizenship:

1. Religious bodies that dictated biblical interpretations and religious laws
2. Local, state, and federal governments operating through laws engineered by oppressors
3. Scholarly institutions claiming ownership of expert knowledge that generated racist definitions of what constitutes a human being

Based primarily on skin color, the systemic long-term generational trajectories varied tremendously for Black and White Americans. In contemporary times and in the tradition of Black theology, scholars and ministers like Wright have developed a Christian-based prophetic tradition of the Black churches, one that ties directly back to the first religious congregations founded by the radical Europeans, the Pilgrims.

Athena R. Griffith and Joe R. Feagin

See also Equality

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RADHAKRISHNAN, SARVEPALLI (1888–1975)

Born near Chennai in South India, Hindu philosopher Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan achieved distinction in several fields. He studied and eventually taught philosophy at several universities, including the universities of Mysore, Kolkata, Delhi, Oxford University, and Banaras Hindu University. He was also vice-chancellor of Andhra University and Banaras Hindu University and chancellor of Delhi University. His diplomatic career included positions as ambassador to the former USSR and leader of the Indian delegation to and president of UNESCO. He became the second president of the Republic of India, serving from 1962 to 1967. He has been characterized as a philosopher, religious thinker, educator, and statesman. Much of his scholarly work sought to bring an understanding of Indian thought to the West.

Schooled in his childhood by Christian missionaries in India, he developed a deep understanding of Western values and philosophies, which led him to an appreciation of Indian philosophies and a particular interest in Vedanta. As an adult, Radhakrishnan was encouraged by the thought and actions of the leaders of the Indian independence movement, including Mohandas K. Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore, and Jawaharlal Nehru.

In his own view, Radhakrishnan's thought and position were the result of personal spiritual experience rather than an expression of the views of others. His experience of the world as he saw it prompted him to propose what he termed the religion of the spirit. In this endeavor, he advocated a type of experience that was consonant with the inductive thinking of science and Western philosophies. At the same time, he advocated the use of intuitive knowledge, as has been used in several Hindu philosophies. Intuitive knowledge in his view was superior and also crucial in the creative thinking evident in great scientific breakthroughs. In Radhakrishnan's view, inductive logic is helpful but inadequate to achieve the certainty that can only be supplied by intuition. In this, intuition includes, and is not limited to, logic and reason.

For Radhakrishnan, there was an imperative to overcome the barriers that divide people. To the extent that heroes break down the barriers between people and between the individual and the universal, they are religious. Religion in this sense is based not on dogma but on intuitive insight that recognizes spiritual values. The values he promotes include a sense of tolerance, in which it is necessary to actively seek out and recognize truth wherever it is found. It is insufficient for one to simply live and let live. Extending this thinking into the political realm, Radhakrishnan relies on a sense of the secular not as an opposition to the religious but as cooperating with all religions.

As a professor of philosophy, religion, and ethics, Radhakrishnan's contribution to reconciling the religions into a global community brought modern Hindu thought to the attention of the West. His extensive publication record provides a detailed exposition of his thinking, and his achievements document his actions. His deep interest in promoting a universal community is also evident in his extremely limited disclosure of personal details. In 1931, he was knighted in London for his

work, almost 30 years before he became the second president of India.

Lester de Souza

See also Gandhi, Mohandas; Hinduism; India

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RADHASOAMI

Since it was established in the 19th century, the Radhasoami religious tradition has spread from India around the world, creating a global religious movement. It has more than 1 million adherents worldwide, especially in North India, but it also has significant numbers of followers in the United States, United Kingdom, South Africa, and elsewhere. It is based on a lineage of spiritual masters (gurus) that has branched off from the founding movement in Agra, North India. The main centers are at Dayalbagh, near Agra; Beas, in the Indian state of the Punjab; and Kirpal Ashram in New Delhi.

The movement was founded in 1861 by Swami Shiv Dayal Singh, who taught a new form of spiritual practice, Surat Sabd Yoga (“the discipline of the sound current”). This yoga is a form of meditation that can be practiced by all, including the modern businesspersons, householders, and administrators, who make up much of the movement’s followers. The term *Radhasoami* is a Vaishnava phrase for God (lit. “the Lord [*swami*, or *soami*] of Radha, the consort of Krishna”). The movement does not believe in an anthropomorphic God, however, so the term *Radhasoami* is construed to mean the

master of spiritual energy. The movement is known as the Radhasoami Satsang (The Fellowship of the Lord). It advocates social service as well as personal meditation, and the movement is organized in communal quarters—some of which have become sizable towns. New branches of the community emerge when the death of a guru produces more than one successor and the community breaks apart as some adherents follow one successor and others follow another.

By the beginning of the 21st century, there were more than 20 branches of the movement. The largest, the Beas branch, has constructed a small city on the banks of the Beas River near Amritsar, where it has established a large hospital as well as quarters for the followers to stay during large fellowship events. In Agra, at the location of the founding master’s meditation grounds, Soamibagh, the community is involved in constructing a large cathedral-like memorial to the original master. Across the street, the Dayalbagh branch has supported various industries in the 20th century, including textile factories, model farms, and dairies; in the 21st century, it promotes computer-based information technology. It houses the Dayalbagh Educational Institute, which is a federally approved “deemed university” in India’s educational system.

Radhasoami is primarily based in India’s cities, appealing to urban businesspeople and administrators. The Beas branch has a sizable outreach to lower-caste villagers, but the leadership is largely urban and middle class. The movement has often encouraged initiates from Europe, the United Kingdom, and the United States, and the spiritual masters frequently travel abroad to appear before large rallies. During the 1960s and 1970s, Radhasoami became a part of the explosion of interest in Hindu-based guru movements in the West, and movements such as the Divine Light and Eckankar are based on its teachings. Increasingly, the followers abroad have included a substantial number of expatriate Indian immigrants, who find in the Radhasoami fellowship a more accessible and modern form of spirituality than is provided by traditional Hindu rituals and customs.

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See also Eckankar; Hinduism; India; New Religions

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RAHMAN, FAZLUR (1919–1988)

Fazlur Rahman was one of the foremost Indo-Pakistani scholars and educators of the late 20th century in the field of Islamic studies. He was born and raised in the Hazara district of the Punjab (now part of the North-West Frontier Province of Pakistan) and educated under his father's tutelage, which provided him with both a solid grounding in the Deobandi tradition of Islamic learning and an abiding appreciation for Western thought. After attending Punjab University in Lahore, where he obtained a master's degree in Arabic in 1942, he went to England to study Islamic philosophy at Oxford University. There, one of his teachers was the prominent Orientalist scholar H. A. R. Hamilton Gibb.

Having completed a doctoral dissertation on Ibn Sina (Avicenna, d. 1037), the medieval Islamic philosopher and physician, Rahman took an academic post in Islamic philosophy at Durham University. In 1958, he joined the faculty of the Institute of Islamic Studies at McGill University in Canada, but in 1961, he accepted an appointment by the Pakistani president Ayyub Khan (r. 1958–1969) to direct the newly formed Islamic Research Institute in Islamabad, the purpose of which was to help the government develop and implement national religious policies based on a modern understanding of Islam, particularly in the areas of education, women's rights, family law, and economics. Political opposition became so vehement that Rahman was obliged to resign and emigrate to the United States in 1968, where he joined the faculty of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations

at the University of Chicago as Professor of Islamic Thought. It was during this latter phase of his career that he became most widely known in North America and Europe.

Rahman's thought spanned a variety of subjects in Islamic studies, but at the heart of his endeavors was the development of a hermeneutic that would make the Qur'an's ethical message both relevant to the project of modern Islamic reform and more comprehensible to non-Muslims. In particular, he was concerned with showing how the Qur'an could be used to bring about egalitarianism and greater socioeconomic justice for both women and men in today's Muslim societies. He traced the problems that confronted these societies not to European colonialism but to the intellectual stagnation and irrationality that arose in the medieval era and obscured the original teachings of the Qur'an. He brought to the task of remedying this situation a keen intellect and a critical perspective that pointed out the strengths and weaknesses in his own Islamic tradition as well as in the West's understanding of it.

The Qur'anic hermeneutic that Rahman espoused called for bypassing centuries of cumulative scriptural commentary and situating Islamic revelation in its original sociohistorical context during Muhammad's life so as to distinguish between its contingent and universal commands. Once this original situation had been fully grasped, reform-minded Muslims could then appropriate the universal essence of the Qur'anic message and apply it to improving conditions in their own settings. Rahman saw this undertaking as a kind of "intellectual jihad." Expressly identifying himself with the modernist school of Islamic thought, Rahman argued against Muslim conservatives, who he felt only sought to preserve religious tradition, and he rejected the anti-Western, literal neofundamentalism of men like Ayatullah Ruhallah Khomeini (d. 1989), the leader of the Iranian Revolution of 1978 to 1979. On the other hand, he also maintained that modern secularism, both in the West and in Islamic societies, involved at best an artificial separation of religion and the world, and at worst led to atheism and moral decline.

Rahman was respected and known to many intellectuals and religious leaders around the world. His influence has been especially marked in North America among his students, Muslim and

non-Muslim, and among Muslim feminists. Students from abroad carried his influence back to their native lands, particularly those from Indonesia and Turkey.

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See also Islamic Modernism; Islamic Reform; Muhammad; Pakistan; Qur'an; Scripture

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RAMAKRISHNA

See Reform Hinduism

RAMANUJA (CA. 1077–CA. 1157)

The famous saint and philosopher Ramanuja, also known as Ramanujacharya, was born in India near Chennai at Perumbudur in 1017 CE and was the son of the Brahman Kesava Somayaji and Kantimath. Traditional accounts had given his lifespan as stretching to 120 years. This has not been accepted by modern scholars, who have attributed to him a lifespan from 1077 to 1157 CE. From an early age, he was attracted to the deeper realms of philosophy. Abandoning the life of a householder, Ramanuja became an ascetic. He was very well versed in the Vedic texts and

soon fell out with his teacher, Yadavaprakasha, over matters of interpretation. Referred to as *Yatiraja* (King of Ascetics), he established a *math* (monastery) near the Vaishnavite temples at Srirangam. People belonging to all classes came to him. Ramanuja also undertook pilgrimages throughout India, preaching salvation through bhakti (devotion).

Ramanuja brought a rapprochement between the Vedanta philosophy based on metaphysics and the tradition of bhakti. One of the most prominent thinkers of devotional Hinduism, his fame spread all over India through his sermons and writings. A philosophical outline of resurgent Vaishnavism occurred. God was the highest reality, and within Him were the individual soul and the material world, which possessed qualified reality. Ramanuja differed from another great thinker preceding him, Sankaracharya (788–820 CE), who had propounded the Advaita Vedanta (the doctrine of nondualism). The latter believed in monoism and that perceived duality was due to *maya* (illusion). In contrast, Ramanuja's philosophy of *Vishishtadvaita* (qualified nondualism) emphasized spiritual experience of God through intuition. Salvation could be attained through devotion. The God of Ramanuja was full of devotion and love. His Bhakti Yoga was a form of sublime surrender to one divine being: Lord Vishnu or Narayana, the highest Brahman.

Ramanuja authored important texts, which formed the intellectual framework of his devotional worship. The *Vedanta Sangraha* (Resume of Vedanta) was the first work delineating theism and existence of reality. The commentary on the Brahma Sutra titled *Sribhasya* was his magnum opus. Lord Vishnu was the highest Supreme Being, protecting devotees who worshipped with full sincerity. *The Vedanta Sara* (essence of Vedanta) and *Vedanta Deepa* (Light of Vedanta) were the two other commentaries. He also wrote a treatise on the Bhagavad Gita called *Bhagavad Gita Bhashya*. Ramanuja also authored a book on the ritual of daily worship, *Nityagrantha*. His three prose works called *Gadya Traya* were the *Sharanagati Gadya*, *Shriranga Gadya*, and *Vaikuntha Gadya*.

Ramanuja had to leave Srirangam around 1098 during the reign of the Chola king Rajendra II (r. 1070–1120), who was an ardent worshipper of Siva. The tradition maintains that Ramanuja was

persecuted and left for Mysore. The Hoysala king became his patron, and Ramanuja set up a monastery in Melkote. He returned in 1122 to Sirangam. The intellectual tradition created by Ramanuja was carried to centers of learning and pilgrimage in India. His philosophy exerted a great deal of influence on successive bhakti movements down the centuries. Ramanuja's prescription of daily worship is followed in many of the Vaishnava temples of India, where he is worshipped as an avatar (incarnation).

Patit Paban Mishra

See also Hinduism; India; Saints

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RASHTRIYA SWAYAMSEVAK SANGH

The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (commonly referred to by its acronym RSS) is a Hindu nationalist organization that is the ideological mentor of a large number of loosely affiliated Hindu nationalist organizations in India referred to as the *Sangh Parivar* (or the RSS family). Among those organizations is the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), currently India's largest opposition party and formerly a core group in the country's coalition government (1998–2004).

The RSS defines itself as a cultural organization whose prime goal is to train young men for service to the country. (There is a loosely aligned group for girls and women, the Rashtra Sevika Samiti, about 1/10 the size of the RSS.) The RSS rejects the notion that it is a religious organization in the conventional sense in that it focuses exclusively on the world and leaves metaphysical considerations to others. From the time of the RSS's formation in the mid-1920s, its leaders have argued that this training process, referred to as "character building," is its most important activity. That training has not changed significantly over the past eight decades. It is rooted in daily attendance at neighborhood-based groups, referred to as *shakha*, and participation in RSS-affiliated social organizations. There are several levels of leadership in the RSS, and the key position is the *pracharak*, a full-time worker who has been selected to go through a prescribed training program for young men judged to have leadership capabilities. Most of these full-time workers are bachelors who have committed their lives to the RSS and its Hindu nationalist ideology. Many *pracharaks* are loaned to the various affiliated organizations, and they are the glue that provides a similarity of purpose and ideology to the RSS "family" of groups. The leadership of most of the affiliated organizations are *pracharaks*—well known among them are Atal Behari Vajpayee (BJP prime minister from 1998 to 2004) and Lal Krishna Advani, past president of the BJP.

The major tenet of the RSS worldview is the preservation of Hindu solidarity, with Hindu society interpreted broadly to mean all Indians. It is a doctrine of assimilation whose purpose is to forestall erosion of commitment to the larger community. The cultural core is drawn from the great tradition of Hinduism, and the leadership of the RSS has come predominantly from high-caste Hindus, though the organization has made a major effort to attract Hindus from the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder and recently has even begun to accept Muslims into *shakha* membership. A narrowing of economic and social distinctions is perceived as necessary for the preservation of community, which has sometimes put the organization at odds with the market reforms adopted in the early 1990s and accepted by the BJP-led coalition government that was in power from 1998 to 2004.

The surge in urbanization, mobility, and prosperity in India over the past decade has created challenges to the RSS to keep itself relevant and continue to attract support. RSS publications talk about a loss in participation of about 20% in urban areas since the late 1990s, though with simultaneous gains in rural areas, participation in the daily *shakha* is still about 1,500,000 in some 49,000 *shakhas*. The RSS has sought to attract members in rural areas and remote tribal areas through social and educational programs. Equally challenging has been the rise of the BJP as a significant political force. The BJP has diluted the more controversial aspects of its Hindu nationalist agenda, such as the proposal to abolish the Shari'a-based civil code for Muslims, to attract allies necessary for it to remain a competitor for national power. Still another source of criticism of the BJP within RSS circles is the alleged level of corruption when the party was in power. Despite this criticism, there is no sign of significant loss of RSS support for the BJP, at least among the leadership.

Walter Korfitz Andersen

See also Hinduism; India; Politics and Religion; Reform Hinduism

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RECONSTRUCTIONISM (JEWISH)

See Judaism

REFORM HINDUISM

Reform movements have risen up within the Hindu tradition from the late 18th century to the present. Prior to these movements, the religious life of Hindus consisted of a localized folk religion, alongside a high Sanskrit tradition, shaped mainly by the learning of the Brahman caste and expressed in a centuries-old high culture of Vedantism and other related philosophical traditions.

The Brahmo Samaj

The rise of Reform Hinduism began with the impact of colonialism. By the early 19th century, new currents in imperialism, paradoxically shaped by a civilizing mission, utilitarianism, liberalism, and evangelism, influenced Hindu society, and Indian philosophers responded to this challenge. There remains a debate as to whether this response was indigenous and came from the modernity of tradition or was derived from the challenge from without. Its most powerful expression, the Bengal Renaissance, was in the area most exposed to British influence, but there were parallel movements elsewhere, in Maharashtra and in Tamil Nadu. Most significant was the *Brahmo Samaj* ("Society of God," sometimes described as the "Society of Friends"), formally set up in 1828 by a former civil servant of the East India Company, Ram Mohan Roy (1772–1833). He shared the liberal imperialist opposition to certain social practices in India such as sati (suttee) or widow burning; it was on a visit to Britain to contribute to a debate in the Privy Council on sati being made illegal that he died prematurely and was buried in Bristol. Roy seemingly appropriated Unitarian ideas in his understanding of Hinduism to affirm the monotheism of the Vedantic tradition. Intriguingly, though, it was Roy who converted his Baptist friend William Adam to Unitarianism, and his monotheist beliefs were made clear in his early work *Tohfah al Muwabbiddin* (A Gift to Deists,

1804). Under the charismatic leadership of Keshab Chandra Sen (1838–1884), who worked for the Bank of Bengal, the Samaj, much influenced by evangelical Christianity, became something of a missionary organization, but its Christian style of worship and its radical social program, attacking caste and favoring intercaste marriage, imposed strains on the Samaj, and it split in 1866 into a conservative branch under Debendranath Tagore—he kept the Samaj going after Roy’s death—and Sen’s more radical wing.

Subsequently, in 1878, the more committedly social-radical Brahmos broke away to form the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj. They felt betrayed by Sen for marrying off his daughter at a young age to the Maharaja of Cooch Behar and using a traditional ceremony they did not accept. But all these various expressions of the Brahmo Samaj always remained an elite formation, though Sen had attracted a following from the villages and towns of East Bengal and extended the Samaj outside Bengal. A loner who should also be cited as a Hindu reformer was Vidyasagar (1820–1875), who built on Roy’s campaigning against sati to bring about the Widow Remarriage Act of 1856. The plight of Hindu widows, a concern of the high castes, remained a touchstone of the reform movements throughout the 19th century.

The Arya Samaj and the Theosophical Society

By the late 19th century, more populist reform movements had emerged. The *Arya Samaj*, centered in the Punjab, founded by Swami Dayanand Sarasvati (1824–1883), was a proto-nationalist response. In his early life, he had undertaken an extraordinary journey through the sacred landscape of North India in search of moksha, or release. Subsequently, he became an expert on Sanskrit grammar, but it was a meeting with Keshab Chandra Sen in 1872 that drew him into the reform movements. In his key text the *Satyarth Prakash* (The Light of Truth, 1875), Dayanand made claims for the revealed authority of the Vedas every bit as polemical as the Christian evangelicals did for the Bible. Here was a populist movement that reached out to the lower castes with its anticaste agenda—it saw caste as the basis for a meritocratic society rather

than as an ascriptive phenomenon—and also through its championing of Hindi and attack on cow slaughter. This was to inspire an increasingly communal program that prompted a defensive response from the Muslim community and led to Hindu-Muslim tensions in the 1890s, which were the first signs of the Hindu-Muslim conflicts in India that would mar the 20th century. The Arya Samaj was the movement that the disaffected truth seekers of the Theosophical Society, set up in New York in 1875, under Colonel Olcott and Madame Helena Blavatsky (1831–1889), first turned to when they came to India in 1879, prior to transplanting their international headquarters to Adyar, Chennai. Here was a society relevant to the history of the international occult that was to mesh with the Hindu reform movements, though it rapidly fell out with the Arya Samaj. Its most extraordinary presence was Madame Blavatsky, of Russian aristocratic background, who had immersed herself in Gnostic beliefs on her leaving Russia in 1849, possibly in western Tibet, possibly in the Middle East, and who quickly made her mark on her arrival in New York in 1873 as a leading player in the spiritualist movement. But in its early years in India, Theosophy privileged Buddhism over Hinduism; Blavatsky in her childhood in Saratov had lived near the Kalmuch Buddhists, and hers was a claim for a Gnostic religion over and above all religions in her *The Secret Doctrine* (1888–1889). It was left to Annie Besant (1847–1933), another of the extraordinary personalities who shaped the movement, who became the society’s president on the death of Colonel Olcott in 1907, to emphasize its Hindu associations. Prior to her being converted to Theosophy by a reading of *The Secret Doctrine*, she had been a passionate supporter of atheism, socialism, and birth control. Given the Indian affront at the Christian missionary attack on Hinduism—and it cannot be emphasized enough that there was a strange symbiosis between Christian missions and the Hindu reform movements—here was an intellectual outlook highly attractive to Indians, and lodges of the society quickly spread. But Besant’s was a conservative and romantic view of Hindu society and tended to endorse the caste system. And Theosophy was always more an international movement, appealing to all faiths and reaching out to those seeking spiritual answers in a post-Darwinian world. This

international appeal only faded when J. Krishnamurti reneged on his training to become the world teacher of Theosophy in 1929.

The Ramakrishna Mission

A more autonomous response to the sense of flux in Hinduism, and one radically contrasted with that of the Arya Samaj, came through the mystic Ramakrishna (1836–1886). An illiterate village Brahman, in time he joined his brother in 1856 as a priest in the Kali temple at Dakshineswar. He described himself as having an extraordinary tantric battle with the goddess Kali, followed by a threat of suicide leading to a mystical encounter, and a passionate engagement with the world's religions—with Buddha, Muhammad, and Christ. Keshab Chandra Sen first drew attention to Ramakrishna, but there would never have been a Ramakrishna Mission but for the charismatic leadership of his successor, Vivekananda, born Narendranath Datta (1863–1902). Ramakrishna's conversion of this Sadharan Brahmo was his most brilliant recruit from Calcutta's Anglicized elite. Vivekananda's appeal was a mix of promoting the virtues of Hinduism abroad, famously at the World Congress of Religions in Chicago in 1893, and an unsparing critique of the social life of Hindus at home. Here was a patriotic reform movement, committed to social reform and, while pluralist in outlook, confident of the truths of Hinduism—above all Vedantism. In fact, Vivekananda was no administrator, and it was left to Swami Brahmananda to fashion an effective organization, centered in its new headquarters at the Belur Math. Here was to be a role reversal concerning missionary activity, with Ramakrishna monks opening monasteries in America, the most successful ones in New York, Boston, Washington, D.C., and San Francisco. It was to the Hollywood Vedanta Center in Los Angeles that Christopher Isherwood came as trainee monk in 1943, and even if his vocation failed, he was in his *Ramakrishna and His Disciples* (1965) to write the most lucid account of the whole movement.

Aurobindo Ghose

The most intensely intellectualized spiritual response within Hinduism to the dual challenge from

Western thought and internal flux came from a highly Westernized Bengali, Aurobindo Ghose (1872–1950). Educated at St. Paul's and Cambridge, he was an outstanding candidate for the Indian Civil Service—but he failed the horse riding test! On his return to India, he worked in the administration of the Maharaja of Baroda. Aurobindo was the first of the leading Hindu reformers to break a self-denying ordinance on political participation; Sister Nivedita (Margaret Noble), a disciple of Vivekananda, flirted with Bengali terrorism, and Annie Besant only turned political in 1909 and became a leading extremist in the Indian National Congress (INC). His was a messianic nationalism—he came to see nationalism as an expression of *Sanatana Dharma*; he was acquitted of terrorist charges in 1909 and, in 1910, fled to the French colony Pondicherry to escape further arrest and to pursue as a *karmayogin* a yogic quest for the Divine. In the same way as Ramakrishna's, it was a spiritual quest rooted in worship of Kali, the Mother. Vivekananda, he later claimed, had shown him the way while he was a prisoner in Alipore jail in 1909. He named his philosophy supramentalism. On November 24, 1926, he claimed a direct experience of the overmind. Only Ramana Maharshi rivals him as a spiritual leader in 20th-century India. Following his death, his partner, Mirra Alfassa (1878–1973)—she met Aurobindo in 1914 and later became known as the Mother—persisted with his experiment in direct, physical absorption in the Divine. In February 1968, she set up a new religious center in Auroville, adjacent to the Aurobindo ashram. This has proved an awkward mix of European disciples of Aurobindo and Indian villagers.

Mohandas Gandhi

Most reform movements had kept out of politics through fear of the repressive power of the colonial state. Besant, always politically minded, took Theosophy into the Home Rule movement and at one stage was a leading player in nationalist politics, when she was elected President of the INC in 1917. But she was rapidly outshone by the more charismatic Mohandas Gandhi (1869–1948), following his return to India from South Africa in 1914. Theirs was always an uneasy partnership. One could interpret Gandhi as being less the

nationalist and more one of the spiritual reformers of Hinduism, though he failed to meet Vivekananda in 1902—he was too ill—and his career runs parallel to that of Aurobindo. In South Africa, he began his experiments in alternative living—his two ashrams, Phoenix near Durban and Tolstoy Farm near Johannesburg. In such communities and in his ambulance brigade during the Boer War, he sought to fashion a new Indian social community out of its disparate regional and caste groupings. On his return to India, continuing his ashram experiments, he became a critic of the sanatanists, defendants of Hindu orthodoxy, taking up on a national scale the plight of the untouchables and insisting on their right to be integrated within the Hindu community and to have access rights to temples. While rejecting the materialism of Western civilization, Gandhi had learned much of this vision of a revitalized Hinduism from contact with Christians, in particular the White Fathers in South Africa. His ashrams were run like monastic communities.

Hindutva

The merger of Hindu reform and Indian cultural politics is expressed in the concept of Hindutva. This idea that Indian society is united by an underlying Hindu cultural tradition was advocated by the Hindu Mahasabha, founded in 1915, and by the even more ideologically committed Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), founded in 1925, which also advocated *seva*, or “social service.” M. S. Golwalkar, who took over as leader in 1940, had briefly worked under Swami Akhandananda of the Ramakrishna Mission. A key figure was V. D. Savarkar, whose text *Hindutva: Who Is a Hindu?* (1923) became the bible of Hindu nationalism. Though not personally pious, Savarkar embraced Hinduism as a cultural rather than as a religious force. But Hindu nationalists left it to the noncommunal and secular INC to lead India to independence and remained eclipsed till Mrs. Indira Gandhi’s Emergency regime of 1975 to 1977, in part through the Congress Right usurping its pro-Hindi agenda. The RSS was allied with other groups, such as the *Vishva Hindu Parishad* (World Hindu Council), collectively known as the *Sangh Parivar*. They exploited the belief that a mosque in the small town of Ayodhya, in Uttar Pradesh, was built over the birthplace of the god

Ram. With the vandalism of the Babri Masjid mosque in December 1992, a new landscape on the role of an exclusivist Hinduism in India came into view.

The Hindu Diaspora

The extent to which this internal development took place with the active encouragement of the Indian diaspora is open to debate, but it is self-evident that a sense of being an embattled minority, which so strangely moved the Hindu majority in India, would also have been the experience of Indians abroad. Some Indian religious organizations such as the Swaminarayan sect were to exercise quite some influence. The question for all diasporas is whether to assimilate into the host culture or retreat into the comfort zone of their own cultural tradition. On the evidence of the Swaminarayan movement, which has erected imposing Hindu temples around the world, including the well-known Glen Ellyn temple in Chicago, theirs was the latter strategy. The sect in India closely identified with the Hindutva movement and the BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party) and was to pay a heavy price with the massacre by Muslim terrorists in the cultural center near Ahmedabad in 2002.

Communalism

The question has to be asked of these new religious movements whether they in any way contributed to the rise of communalism. The Arya Samaj, through its *shuddhi* or reconversion mission to rural untouchables, may have played into the hands of Hindu communalists, for anger against Muslim landlords could be redeployed into communal hostility against Muslims at large.

Under the pressures of globalization, Hinduism underwent a radical transformation. But the religious reform movements that tried to steer this in the direction of social change and religious pluralism have become increasingly eclipsed by a more exclusivist Hinduism. It can be argued that some, such as the Arya Samaj, colluded with this process. The RSS claims to be dedicated to *seva* or service, the leitmotif of the Ramakrishna Mission, and has appropriated great Reform Hindu names such as Vivekananda and Gandhi to its cause. But it is also an agency for Hindu cultural nationalism. Important

social service is still undertaken by reform movements such as the Ramakrishna Mission, which played a huge role in relief work following the Orissa cyclone. Meanwhile, the Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, the Belur Math, the Aurobindo Ashram in Pondicherry, the international headquarters of the Theosophical Society at Adyar, all remain welcoming, highly civilized communities.

Antony Copley

See also Auroville; Ayodha Mosque Attack; Bharatiya Janata Party; Charisma; Gandhi, Mohandas; Hinduism; India; Orientalism; Pluralism; Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh; Swaminarayan Movement; Theosophy

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REFORM JUDAISM

Reform Judaism emerged as part of a larger Jewish response to modernity. The term *Reform*

Judaism is used today to refer to a movement or “stream” of Judaism that involves institutional leadership, universities with rabbinical and other training programs, and a particular approach to Jewish living in the modern world. It is also known as Liberal Judaism and Progressive Judaism. The movement began in western Europe, and the majority of its leaders, institutions, and practices developed in Germany. Historically, the movement’s cohesion evolved only gradually and with much internal debate. Due to the extreme differences between eastern and western Europe in Jewish legal emancipation and its accompanying social changes, Jews in western Europe encountered the challenges of assimilation much earlier than did their counterparts in the East. As a result, western Europe became the geographic center of Jewish reform. Reform depended not only on the expansion of legal rights and social mobility but also on the desire to maintain Jewish life and practice in the face of such developments. Reformers were acculturated Jews who aimed to retain their connection to Jewish religiosity and tradition but in a modified way that would accommodate their status as citizens of a nation-state. They often chose to relinquish rituals and practices that they found “outdated” or incompatible with life in modern societies while maintaining what they identified as core beliefs of Judaism.

Emancipation in Europe

Legal emancipation occurred at different times for European Jews, depending on a variety of factors within each nation-state. French Jews obtained the rights of citizenship in 1791, but Jews in the Russian Empire did not gain the same rights until 1917. Prior to emancipation, European Jews lived in semiautonomous communities in which they observed Halakha (Jewish law) and were beholden to the decisions of their local rabbis. The government of the state in which they resided imposed laws as well, including taxes, fines, and restrictions in terms of where Jews could live and what occupations they could hold. Jews exercised some “group rights,” in that their own leaders governed their daily lives, but they could not exercise many of the individual rights granted to their fellow non-Jewish citizens. Emancipation provided for the same individual rights accorded to non-Jews but

eliminated group rights. State governments intended that Jews would assimilate into the larger national culture. Many Jews converted to Christianity to obtain the social benefits associated with Christian identity. Reformers, however, struggled to counter these conversions by offering a form of Judaism that would retain Jewish tradition and some practices but allow for social adaptation and mobility.

Catalysts for European Reform

The beginnings of the reform movement were interwoven with the Haskalah (Jewish Enlightenment). The proponents of the Haskalah, called *maskilim*, advocated the adoption among Jews of Enlightenment values, such as rights and liberties based on common law, as well as Jewish interaction with the wider society. The Haskalah, like the reform movement, emerged first in western Europe and only gradually moved to the east.

Moses Mendelssohn (1729–1786), a founding figure of the Haskalah, did not support the broader institutional reforms later advanced by the Reformers, but his translation of the Hebrew Bible into High German allowed Jews with waning knowledge of Hebrew to read the text and encouraged the use of German. Knowledge of Hebrew had decreased as German Jews increasingly emphasized secular education at the expense of Jewish learning. The translation provided a resource for Jews who desired to know the Bible and to live as modern Germans.

Some *maskilim* focused their attention on the relationship between Jewish history and modern culture. *Wissenschaft des Judentums* was a movement comprising Jewish thinkers who attempted to apply the same objective standards esteemed in other secular subjects to the study of Jewish texts. Many of the members of this German collective became the earliest proponents of the Jewish reform movement. These thinkers were influenced by the contrast between the scholarly approaches employed in the German universities where they studied and the traditional, nonhistorical approach to Jewish law. Their experiences in German universities and the wider German society also differed greatly from their upbringing in traditional Jewish homes. Significantly, these thinkers varied widely in their personal assessment of what became

the reform movement. Whereas, for instance, Zacharias Frankel (1801–1875) advocated historical criticism of Jewish law, he rejected Abraham Geiger's (1810–1874) position that the Talmud could therefore be abandoned. Leopold Zunz (1794–1886) disagreed with what became reform positions on Jewish observance, but he initiated much of what was unique to *Wissenschaft* thinking. Frankel became the ideological father of the Conservative movement in the United States, and Geiger, though not the *originator* of reform ideology, integrated existing concepts into an overarching approach to Judaism then embraced by the reform movement. Samuel Holdheim (1806–1860) served as a model for radical Jewish reform in the United States. Holdheim asserted that to be Jewish no longer required ritual observance, and he even agreed to perform interfaith marriages.

Beginning of the Reform Movement in Germany: Religious Changes

In 1810, Israel Jacobson (1768–1828) built the first Reform synagogue in Seesen, although he transferred his rabbinical leadership to Berlin in 1815. Meanwhile, another Reform synagogue was established in Hamburg—in a direct challenge to the traditional Hamburg rabbinate—and used its own *siddur* (prayer book). Three rabbinical conferences in Brunswick (1844), Frankfurt-am-Main (1845), and Breslau (1846) declared the permissibility of interfaith marriages (as long as states allowed the children to be considered Jews), expressed the loyalty of Jews to the laws of their home nations, and laid the groundwork for future reforms. Frankel established a seminary in Breslau in 1854, and Geiger opened another, called the Berlin Hochschule, in 1872. Although they differed from each other in their interpretations of reform, they claimed the name “Liberal,” because they associated “Reform” with more radical reformers like Holdheim. The Union of the Liberal Rabbis of Germany was founded in 1899, adapted 9 years later as the Union for Liberal Judaism. The union supported a set of reforming guidelines at its conference in 1912.

Reformers aimed to modify Jewish observance such that it would exist compatibly with the modern culture of the nation-state. They responded to charges of sectarianism from both within and

outside the Jewish community by taking care to frame the changes they proposed in the context of an ever-evolving Judaism. They specifically cited transformative moments in Jewish history as the pretext for their own ideas. In some ways, however, the changes that they adopted did depart markedly from earlier evolutions of Judaism that occurred historically. For instance, many reformers advocated the abolition of *kashrut* (dietary laws), an unprecedented move, so that Jews could eat with their Gentile associates. On a broader scale, the reform movement approached the relationship between Jewish communities and the external environment in an entirely new way, in that the movement generated questions about the unity of Written Law (Torah) and Oral Law (Talmud and other commentaries) and the process of halakhic development. Until the emergence of Reform Judaism, the Oral Law—believed to have been transferred from sages to students since the time of Moses and Joshua—had been uniformly viewed as an accurate and true accompaniment to the Written Law revealed to Moses by God at Mt. Sinai. Certainly, many Jews continue to view the Oral and Written Laws as unified, but significantly, the reformers questioned the ultimate truth of Oral Law. Some argued that Written Law was of divine origin while Oral Law was of human origin. For traditional Jews, such claims were heretical.

As what became Reform Judaism took shape in Germany and then in France, England, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and Denmark, followers of the movement adopted changes in observance, dress, and practices at prayer services. These new practices emerged, in part, due to the *Wissenschaft* arguments compiled by Abraham Geiger, that Jewish law is located within history and is thus subject to the revisions of a new historical era. Jewish reformers adopted rules of decorum, organ music, choirs, and the use of the colloquial language. In some reformed synagogues, women sat together with men. Traditional synagogue services, in contrast, separated men and women into different sections of the synagogue and allowed people to wander in and out, daven (pray) at their own speed, and talk with each other while others continued to pray. In traditional services, davening was the only source of music, and it occurred in Hebrew. Reform services also sometimes included

sermons, similar in structure to their Protestant counterparts, in which the rabbi spoke and congregation members listened. Traditional Jewish services, on the other hand, included sermons only twice a year, and the sermons began active discussions regarding topics in the Torah.

Traditional Judaism involves regular rituals, including specific blessings before eating different foods, washing hands, and many other regular practices. Men are obligated to pray three times a day and to lay *tefillin* (phylacteries) every morning. On a monthly basis, married women visit the *mikveh* (a purifying body of water). *Kashrut* (dietary law) is strictly observed. Prior to the reform movement, the laws of *kashrut* generally prevented Jews from eating with Gentile colleagues, thus separating the Jewish community from the wider society. Sabbath observance, which involves many restrictions on normally acceptable activities, inhibited Jews from working on Saturdays.

Many reformers aimed to omit these practices from Jewish observance, since they viewed the practices as restrictive to proper Jewish participation in the society of the nation-state. Jewish law, they argued, had evolved over the ages, depending on the requirements of each era. In this era of the Enlightenment and the Haskalah, reformers struggled to present Judaism as a “universal” religion that offered moral values and theology applicable to all citizens. Not all reformers sought to dispense with the Halakha, however, and a number of more traditional rabbis were willing to modernize prayer services by including a sermon or making other changes as long as no violations of Jewish law occurred. Therefore, the reformers’ critiques and innovations ultimately fostered a new vision of what it meant to be a Jew.

The Reform Movement in France and England

Although the reform movement in Europe gained adherents and established synagogues in several countries, radical reforms were only adopted in Berlin and in several congregations in England and in France. In France, the rabbinical leadership remained hierarchical, and rabbis who applied for the leadership position of “grand rabbi” were required to state their positions on various reforms.

Reformers looked to Germany for leadership, but attempts to assimilate were modeled on French Catholicism rather than German Protestantism. As a result, Jewish services remained in Hebrew just as Catholic masses were held in Latin.

The Jewish community in England reemerged in the 17th century for the first time since Jews were expelled in 1290. Like their non-Jewish counterparts, British Jews were not very religiously observant. They also exercised most of the same legal rights as non-Jews. Perhaps for these reasons, the reform movement did not immediately gain much strength. Claude Montefiore (1858–1938) did attract some followers among acculturated English Jews to “Liberal Judaism” at the end of the 19th century. Lily Montagu (1873–1963) then developed the institutional structure of Liberal Judaism in England into what became the Jewish Religious Union. Montefiore chose Israel I. Mattuck (1883–1954) to serve the Liberal Jewish Synagogue, the first new, reformed synagogue, in 1912.

At the turn of the century, some French Jews found Liberal Judaism compelling as well, since most of them were acculturated yet dismayed by the anti-Semitism of the Dreyfus Affair in 1894, in which the French Jewish army captain Alfred Dreyfus (1859–1935) was erroneously arrested for treason. This event marked a turning point for many Jews, who realized that their identity as Jews made them suspect despite their acculturation and loyalty to the French state.

The Reform Movement in the United States

The reform movement was very successful in the United States, because whereas in Europe the reformers encountered many obstacles due to restrictions both in government and in rabbinical leadership, in the United States few such barriers existed. The emphasis in the reform movement on individual authority in religious matters was immediately compatible with American individualism.

The reform movement traveled to the United States with German immigrants in the 1840s and 1850s, but it was largely dependent on European intellectual developments until the turn of the century. Reforms had already occurred in the United States by the mid-19th century, beginning with the division in the Charleston, South Carolina, synagogue Beth Elohim. In 1824, a number of members

signed a petition requesting moderate reforms, such as Hebrew prayers read in English, a weekly discussion of Jewish texts and principles in English, and a shorter service. These members decided to form a separate congregation the following year, after their requests were repeatedly denied. In the resulting society, services were mostly in English and included a choir and instrumental music, and men were no longer required to wear *kippot* (head coverings).

In the United States, the reform movement grew in response to both American and German influences. The majority of Jewish immigrants to the United States during the mid-19th century came from Germany, and most of them were already familiar with the religious changes brought about by the reformers. Isaac Leeser (1806–1869), a German immigrant, became the *hazan* (cantor) of the Sephardi Mikveh Israel congregation in Philadelphia. He was an orthodox Jew, and hence rejected many Reform beliefs, he but adopted modern practices, such as a regular English sermon during Sabbath services and a Sunday school formed on the Christian model. He also translated the Hebrew Bible and *siddur* into English.

Reform Judaism began to spread in the United States during the 1840s. Existing synagogues revised their services, and new congregations emerged, forming around Reform ideals, so that by 1855, one could find synagogues with various degrees of reformed ritual in Charleston, Baltimore, New York, Albany, and Cincinnati. Congregation Har Sinai in Baltimore adopted Reform services in 1842, and Temple Emanu-El became New York’s first Reform synagogue in 1845. Isaac Mayer Wise (1819–1900) became the foremost figure in American Reform during this period. Wise was born in Bohemia and studied in a yeshiva in Prague before emigrating to the United States. He was a rationalist yet believed that the entirety of the Torah had been revealed to Moses at Mt. Sinai. He became a national Jewish leader from his synagogue, Bene Yeshurun, in Cincinnati. Wise founded a weekly Jewish paper, the *Israelite*, and in it urged a national unified Jewish conference. However, division plagued both the movement and relations between Reform and Orthodox communities.

Although Wise had hoped to unify American Judaism and succeeded in convincing nine rabbis to sign a statement to that effect at a conference in

Cleveland in 1848, Reform and Orthodox perspectives were too disparate. Wise, however, accomplished a great deal in terms of establishing an institutional structure for Reform Judaism. In 1857, he wrote the first American *siddur*, titled *Minhag American*. He founded the Union of American Hebrew Congregations in 1873 and the Hebrew Union College in 1875, both formative institutions in American Reform Judaism.

One of Wise's toughest critics was another Reform rabbi, David Einhorn (1809–1879). Einhorn emphasized the universalism of Jewish ideals and embraced a more radical position of rejecting traditional observance and the binding nature of Talmudic law. Einhorn wrote his own *siddur*, titled *Olat Tamid*, in 1858. Whereas Wise's *siddur* included a traditional Hebrew service, Einhorn's *siddur* seriously modified the Hebrew prayers; used his own, loose translation; and included German prayers that he wrote himself. Einhorn also rejected the attempts to placate Orthodox rabbis at the Cleveland conference, such as the affirmation of Talmudic authority. In response, Einhorn called another conference in Philadelphia in 1869, inviting only reformers. Wise attended for fear that his views would be excluded.

Wise presided over a conference of Reform rabbis in Pittsburgh in 1885, and the resulting document, deemed the "Pittsburgh Platform," explained the opinion of the majority of attending rabbis but caused a split between them and the more traditional rabbis who also attended. The latter group founded their own movement, which became Conservative Judaism.

The reform movement's eight-point Pittsburgh Platform became the core doctrine of Classical Reform Judaism but was eventually revised in 1937 with the Columbus Platform and then again in 1976, 1997, and 1999. The eight-point platform was intended to establish the definitive principles of Reform Judaism. It affirmed the significance of monotheism and moral laws but rejected dietary restrictions and other practices deemed incongruent with the modern age. The platform also relinquished the hope of returning to Zion as a vestige of the past and affirmed a commitment to economic justice. During the 1890s, most congregations further unified by adopting the *Union Prayer Book* as their official *siddur*.

In the United States, the Columbus Platform of 1937 accounted for changes in thinking that had occurred since the Pittsburgh version. It reveals the influence of Mordechai Kaplan's (1881–1983) Reconstructionist movement in terms of the absence of Jewish chosenness and the significance of Jewish art and music to Jewish identity, but it also rejects Kaplan's de-emphasis on the synagogue as the main site of Jewish tradition and defines Judaism as a *religious* tradition. This Platform, however, is most known for its endorsement of political and cultural Zionism, a vast shift from the position upheld in Pittsburgh.

In the 1940s, the reform movement in the United States began to focus more intensively on American society, specifically the issues of free speech, and then in the 1950s and 1960s, civil rights and the American presence in Vietnam. Changes occurred within the movement as well. Sally J. Preisand, ordained by the Hebrew Union College, became the first female rabbi in 1972, marking an important leap forward for gender equality among Reform leaders. The movement had nominally supported women's equality for decades, although prior to 1972 all rabbis and the majority of synagogue leaders were male. By May 2001, however, 373 women were ordained. Also in 1972, gay and lesbian Jews established the Metropolitan Community Temple in Los Angeles, the first openly inclusive synagogue in the United States. In 1975, many congregations replaced the *Union Prayer Book* with a new *siddur*, *The Gates of Prayer* by Chaim Stern, which offered a variety of Sabbath prayer services. The San Francisco Platform in 1976 reflected on 100 years of the reform movement and its impact on Judaism and Israel. It outlined commitments to God, the people of Israel, the Torah, and religious practice and obligations to the State of Israel and the Diaspora, to survival and service, and to hope in the face of the Shoah (Holocaust). In 1978, Rabbi Allen B. Bennett was the first rabbi in the United States to come out as gay. The Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR) determined in 1983 that Jewish identity could be inherited through one's father as long as one is raised in a Jewish household, modifying the traditional view of matrilineal descent. The CCAR passed a resolution in 1990 that explicitly approved the ordination of gay and lesbian rabbis. In 1997, at the centenary of the

World Zionist Congress, the Miami Platform addressed the relationship between Reform Judaism and Zionism. Then in 1999, the reform movement adopted a new Pittsburgh Platform that revised much of Classical Reform Judaism in that it emphasized the religious significance of traditional practices, such as dietary laws and wearing the *kippot*, although it did not require them. In 2003, the Union of American Hebrew Congregations changed its name to the Union for Reform Judaism, and in 2007, a new *siddur* was published, titled *Mishkan T'fillah*.

Reform as a Global Movement

Jewish reforms became a truly global phenomenon between the two World Wars. The reform movement particularly expanded in Europe. In 1926, English Reform Jews, led by Lily Montagu, organized a London conference that established the World Union for Progressive Judaism. The World Union's first official conference was held 2 years later in Berlin. Although the World Union did not greatly influence American Reform, it significantly unified European progressive Jews and strengthened emergent institutions in Russia, Poland, the Netherlands, Sweden, and Israel. Progressive Judaism also drew interest and support among communities in Bombay, South Africa, Australia, Canada, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay. In all countries except Israel, the Jewish community is a minority group, and thus, Reform Judaism has sometimes experienced obstacles such as anti-Semitism. In Israel, however, the reform movement has faced religious challenges, since Orthodox rabbis officially govern religious rites, such as marriage, divorce, and conversion. Reform rabbis in Israel lead congregations as in other countries but are not granted religious authority by the state.

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See also Jewish Diaspora; Judaism

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REFUGEES

Escape from violence is one of the oldest motivations for people to migrate. Within the modern world of sovereign territorial nation-states, various kinds of forced migrants are captured by the category of "refugees." The standard definition is given in Article 1 of the Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, adopted by the United Nations in 1951, according to which a refugee is a person who

owing to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion is forced to migrate involuntarily across an international boundary and remain outside his country of nationality.

While this (legal) categorization of refugees might obscure similarities with involuntary migrants who seek refuge from interstate or civil wars, humanitarian crises, climate catastrophes, or economic shortage, it seems useful to reserve the term for those who, fleeing direct or indirect violence of their own state, seek refuge within another state.

Religion is intimately related to the refugees' experiences of flight, migration, and integration. Although largely understudied within the interdisciplinary field of refugee studies, religion is not only a root cause of flight, but as discussed in the following sections, it also shapes social networks and identity formation during flight, resettlement, and repatriation. In addition, religion has played a crucial role within the emerging international refugee protection regime.

Religion and Forced Migration

Religious nonconformity has always been the prime reason for persecution and exile. The pre-modern history of the Jewish Diaspora since the destruction of the Second Temple is archetypical for the plight of religious refugees. Expelled from England (1290) and Spain (1492), Jews were, next to heretics, a particularly vulnerable group in the "persecuting society" of medieval Christian Europe. What distinguishes modern religious persecution from its medieval predecessors is its intricate relationship with the sovereign power of territorial states. Emerging out of the European Wars of Religion, early-modern territorial states attempted to ensure confessional conformity among their populations. For instance, the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685 forced hundreds of thousands of Huguenots to flee France in what at the time was known as *Le Grand Refuge*. Throughout Europe, Anabaptists, Mennonites, Methodists, Quakers, and many other dissenting Protestant minorities were denied freedom of religion, and they emigrated to neighboring states or to the British colonies in North America. With the upswing of nationalism in the 19th century, religious nonconformity gave way to ethnic distinctiveness as a major motif of state persecution. However, as a marker of ethnic or national identity, religion continued to be a ground for persecution as shown by the massacres of Armenians during the breakup of the Ottoman Empire and, of course, the genocide of Jews.

The varieties of religious, or ethnoreligious, persecution at first received only scant attention when in response to forced migrations after the two World Wars the international refugee protection regime was founded. The United Nations' (UN) Geneva Convention (1951) had the rather circumscribed

purpose of protecting and assisting refugees who had fled the Holocaust. The millions of Muslims and Hindus who had to cross borders between West Pakistan, East Pakistan (now Bangladesh), and India after the partition of the subcontinent as well as many other forced population movements resulting from postcolonial nation building in the South were included under the mandate of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) only in 1967 with the First Optional Protocol to the Geneva Convention. During the period of the Cold War, when socialist states widely pursued antireligious policies, there was little interpretative guidance as to when fear of persecution for reasons of religion was a well-founded ground to claim refugee status. In 2004, in light of rising global religious fundamentalism, the UNHCR adopted the "Guidelines on International Protection: Religion-Based Refugee Claims Under Article 1A(2) of the 1951 Convention and/or Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees" (HCR/CIP/04/06). Embracing a broad definition of religion that covers belief, identity, and ways of life, the "Guidelines" name restriction of religious freedom, discrimination, forced conversion, or forced compliance as major forms of religious persecution, either by states or by nonstate agents where states fail to provide effective protection. They also call on states to assist religious refugees and prevent religious persecution by respecting the human rights of minorities.

Whereas the UNCHR collects detailed statistics of its total population of concern, which includes legally recognized refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced persons (IDPs), stateless persons, as well as returned refugees and returned IDPs, the precise number of religious refugees is hard to estimate, since data are typically not collected by ground of persecution but by country of origin. However, the fact that almost half of the 11.4 million refugees in 2007 consist of Afghans (3.1 million), Iraqis (2.3 million), and Sudanese (523,000) shows that the enormous increase in refugees that has occurred after the end of the Cold War is not the least due to religious cleavage structures.

Religion and Identity Formation Among Refugees

The UNHCR distinguishes three durable solutions for refugees: host country integration, resettlement

in a third country, and voluntary repatriation. That in each of them religion needs to be taken into account is increasingly recognized by scholars in anthropology, sociology, and law.

Often sustaining the social networks along which flight occurs, religion plays a key role in the dynamics of acculturation, assimilation, and reactive ethnicity among refugees in situations of both host country integration and resettlement. While these dynamics are similar to those known from migration studies more generally, they take a specific form among refugees. First, the experience of violence leaves refugees particularly traumatized. Thus, among Muslim refugees from Somalia, Christian refugees from Sudan or Iraq, Buddhist refugees from Cambodia, and many others, religion has been found to provide strong psychological support in coping with trauma and sustaining individual personhood. Second, due to the involuntary character of their migration, refugees typically retain a stronger homeland orientation than other migrants. Hence, religious community formation among refugees is closely interwoven with a struggle for authenticity and ethnic maintenance and the emergence of long-distance nationalism. Third, religion may provide an explanation of the refugees' experience by situating it within divine history. Thus, as in the case of Cao daists from Vietnam, flight may be interpreted as divine will to spread the religious truth, an interpretation that gives rise to a de-territorialized transnational diaspora with strong proselytizing motivations.

Refugees' religious beliefs and ritual practices do not leave the new host country unaffected. The best known example is the emigration of Protestant dissenters to North America, which formed a pluralistic society in which religious liberty eventually became a prime constitutional principle. In many other cases, such as the flight of Tibetan refugees to the Indian border region, the presence of a refugee community with strong religious identities may, by altering the religious field, induce new potential for conflict. The social impact of refugees' beliefs and practices is perhaps greatest in situations of repatriation. For instance, Uzbeks who had fled the communist regimes in the 1930s and 1950s and had adopted Wahhabism in Saudi Arabia became key players in the re-Islamization of Central Asia, when they returned after 1989. The repatriation of religious refugees may thus

induce far-reaching cultural change within their home country.

Religious Refugee Aid Organizations

While religious, or ethnoreligious, persecution seems endemic to the modern system of territorial nation-states, it was for religious nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to take the lead in providing assistance to refugees. First, faith-based organizations, notably Jewish and Quaker charities, pressured states to create an international refugee protection regime and have ever since lobbied the UN for the cause of all forced migrants. Second, faith-based organizations are among the major actors assisting refugees in situations of host country integration, resettlement, or repatriation. In many Western states that have subscribed to the Geneva Convention and its principle of *nonrefoulement*, governments cooperate with religious organizations in catering to refugees, both domestically and in foreign policy. Within member states of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) who are currently host to several million refugees but often have refrained from ratifying the international refugee instruments, Islamic humanitarian charities even substitute state action in providing assistance to forced migrants.

Together with other international religious organizations, such religious refugee aid organizations form an integral part not only of global governance but also of the global religious system. To the extent that a key motif for assisting religious refugees is solidarity with fellow believers, they translate the imagined communities of world religions into viable social networks. Where refugee aid is considered an instrument of proselytism, they additionally increase competition among globalizing religions. In contrast, the more they adopt the human rights principles underlying the international refugee protection regime, for instance, by assisting refugees without discriminating on grounds of belief, faith-based refugee aid organizations become important sites of inter-religious contact.

Matthias Koenig

See also Diaspora; Globalization; Jewish Diaspora; International NGOs; Politics and Religion; Religious Minority-Majority Relations

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RELIGION AND STATE

Rather than attempting to develop a typology of the relations between church and state—at the risk of comparing situations without taking into account the often profound discrepancies between their components—this entry addresses a specific form, the modern Western state, and its relations with religious groups and institutions. This form remains today and often is taken for a universal paradigm, especially in developing countries that have looked to the West for models of political organization. It was the Western concept of the secular nation-state that gave rise to the worldwide adoption of the term *state* with a political connotation.

The state is characterized by an impersonal power, distinct from the person of the governor. Over time, relations of authority gradually became detached from the personal relationship of leader to subject and came to be based on preestablished rules that apply to all and whose execution is guaranteed by the administrative apparatus often described as bureaucracy.

The role of Christianity in the process that led to the development of the Western notion of the state remains one of the great questions of modern political philosophy. It should be considered with two things in mind: (1) the way in which the construction of the state is a potential development of Christianity and (2) the way in which the state has assumed its modern guise by emancipating itself from this religion and its institutions.

Religion and the Shaping of the Modern State

The expansion of Christianity occurred with the support of imperial Roman power but would never eradicate the initial duality that came from the conditions of its birth in the margins of Roman power and its structures. Both the alliance made with the Church to constitute the pedestal of the medieval monarchies and the rivalry at the highest level between religious and political powers, the Holy See and the Christian Empire, presuppose the definition of two distinct spheres: temporal and spiritual. And if the emergence of the territorial state in the Middle Ages is attributable to many other factors, first and foremost the requirements of war and its financing, its existence was reinforced by the struggle of the monarchs against Rome.

In its nation-state form, the European state also owed a great deal to the effects of the Reformation. The first reaction to the rupture of Western Christian unity was an attempt to remain loyal to the principle of a sole religion as a national cement—already one of the principal driving forces of the conversion of pagan monarchies to Roman Catholicism since the beginning of the Middle Ages. The Treaty of Augsburg in 1550 adopted the saying *cuius regio eius religio* and engaged a whole portion of Europe in the process of “confessionalization” by creating a mosaic of homogeneous political groups held together largely by an attachment to the same religion.

This homogeneity, however, never became complete, and the war continued to tear Europe apart. The Peace of Westphalia in 1648 decreed the break with the old principle. It brought to an end a century of religious wars by accepting religious pluralism among the European states. Henceforth, the main role of the state would be to guarantee the coexistence rather than the salvation of the populations

and their religions. The creation of a diversified and specialized administration and bureaucracy characteristic of the modern state would use the services of many clerics and especially their mastery of the written language, but the sphere of its activity and the increase of its capabilities were applied to domains beyond any spiritual preoccupations.

Thus began the real era of “state religions,” among which the foremost was undoubtedly the Anglican Church “established” by the British monarchy. In the 18th century, they would spread under the very firm hand of enlightened despots. Since access to the functions of the state apparatus were reserved to their members (the Test Acts of England and the American colonies), these churches thus gained control of social practices and secured their positions. In exchange, they accepted a certain submission to a state free to initiate reforms that sometimes turned out to be quite radical, such as those of Joseph II of Austria.

The proven impossibility of imposing a single path to salvation also produced a great deal of philosophical speculation. Each in his own way, first Machiavelli and then Spinoza, Hobbes, and Locke relieved the state of the burden of shepherding its members toward salvation to direct it toward other tasks. Politics became autonomous in its means and ends, while the definition of individual rights starting from natural law tended to transform the modern state into a state of laws. We have never ceased to play out the effects of abandoning the Aristotelian search for a supreme good and becoming distant from God in a world subject to decoding by science and its laws.

In the 18th century, the engagement of Enlightenment thought with the improvement of life here on earth assigned the joint missions of utility and happiness to the state while once more decisively shifting the political debate away from religious preoccupations. Meanwhile, the development of the state proceeded from the incorporation into its own domain of a series of tasks and functions, such as education, health, and welfare, long defined and provided by the churches.

Finally, it must be recalled that the equality of civic rights had often been obtained in opposition to limits and exclusions defined by religious membership, the latter often constituting the last bastion of resistance. The affirmation of individual rights has pulled the course of Western history

toward the generalization of different arrangements of separation of church and state, even if they have functioned in the past and continue to appear today in varied forms.

The Western trajectory constitutes a very specific history, marked by a sizeable dose of fortuitousness in the development of the potentiality of the dominant Christian religion. To what extent does the application of the political form of the state to the world presuppose a concomitant extension of this type of relationship between the state and religion?

The Ways of Separation Between Church and State

The separation between the “churches” (in the Durkheimian sense of the word applied to all forms of religion) and the state, or even to varying degrees between religion and politics, is an important element of the Western “process of dissociation.” This cleavage is certainly very important from country to country depending on whether a separation exists between the religions in their institutionalized form and the state. Nevertheless, it does not account for all the real and functional differences or nuances that have a considerable impact on the lives of its inhabitants, for modes of alliances or associations between these two types of structures have been adapted to all sorts of requirements, for example, to those of a more or less open or limited “tolerance,” but especially to civil equality within the state. Depending on the context and other requirements of civil society, concordats or established churches may conceal very different realities. Accordingly, the attachment to plurality by a nation such as Great Britain cannot be called into doubt.

On the other hand, one can certainly insist on the existence of a major connection when there is a concept of two different spheres, more or less separate but well identified as distinct. This virtual distinction within Christianity, historically developed in its Western version, was even integrated by the foreign element formed by Judaism, something that issued long ago from conditions of exile, dating from Jeremy’s summons to the Hebrews at Babylon (Jeremiah 29) but even more clearly and closely from the prolonged presence of the Jews in the West.

It remains true that the separation was never perfectly airtight or stable but always under tension. The American “wall” has “windows,” and that has always been the case. What is conceivable in one national context can be inconceivable in another. France and the United States are the two pioneers of separation, but they present two very different models, so different are their underlying premises.

The international adoption of the term *laïcité* cannot hide its application to very different realities. At least in France, it constitutes a qualifier or even a characteristic of politics—it is the Republic that the constitution defines as *laïque*—and not merely, as is often the case elsewhere, a regime of religions. Historically, the laicization of society preceded the separation of “the churches” and the state. The neutralization of the political public sphere is not simply neutrality in regard to different expressions of religion, but it posits the possibility of a civil morality common to all citizens regardless of their faith and denomination or absence thereof.

Today, thanks to international law and its dominant values, the world political order has made the state the unique model to which each society must conform. International structures and organizations are based exclusively on national states, to which norms presumed to be universal are applied.

However, it would appear that the economic and technical hegemony of the Western powers has not been definitively established, and moreover, the adoption of their political institutions and their values has not and will certainly never occur in many regions of the world. In those regions, there will never be a development comparable with that of the West or a convergence along other paths to the Western conception of the individual as an autonomous bearer of rights but rather the survival and even the consolidation or reformulation of other concepts of society in which religion plays an essential role.

If Western-style development had never been in the cards, it must be admitted that any chance to achieve it would have been gravely compromised by the way in which one essential stage was negotiated. The greatest moment for the spread of the Western model was undoubtedly the colonization of the 19th century. But the colonial powers subordinated the

equality of individuals to the notion of their “civilizing” task, whereas the very principle of the colonial system exempted them from satisfying the requirements of a veritable local development of the state. If they actually created public administrations and services, it was with the greatest subordination to the metropolis and its interests. Nor did they hesitate to rely on the structures, personnel, and networks of metropolitan religions or to manipulate indigenous religious differences, the better to guarantee the enforcement of the colonial order.

As long as it lasted, the Western powers’ world hegemony would have nonetheless implanted the state model in most of the regions of the world, with considerable consequences, especially on a religious level.

In certain regions, in Islamic lands for example, where *laïcité* was at one time much in demand, the laicization process in no way resulted in a separation between the church and a state that, on the contrary, counted very much on retaining its strictest control. After Turkey, in Iran as in several other Arab countries, this reform imposed by the authorities in societies that were not very secularized went hand in hand with a single-party political system largely supported by the army and with the submission of its populations: for example, the destruction of religious or ethnic particularism in Turkey, the repression of the Muslim Brotherhood by the Egyptian regime, or the frontal assault on “traditional” Islam in Tunisia.

In many authoritarian regimes, among which figure postcolonial regimes and “popular democracies,” religion became at once a refuge and a silent form of dissent, often the only one possible. Sometimes dissent was less silent, especially in Eastern Europe as the Soviet Union was dismantled, and in the Arab world laic ideologies declined after the 1967 military defeat by Israel. There, we see very diverse and unstable versions of the relationship between the state apparatus and religion: In Wahhabist Saudi Arabia, this relationship tends toward an instrumentalization of power accompanied by an intense activity of international religious advertising; in Iran, with its “clerocratic” tendencies, civil religious movements have brought a renewed horizon and increasingly substantial support. There is also, however, “re-Islamization” in contested states that have recourse to Islam to prop up their identities.

Even unrealized, the hypothesis of a generalization of the Western model carries a heavy burden. For not only was this model not adopted, its rejection was moreover accompanied by resentment carried over from the colonial past, going as far as a hostility aggravated by the religious question. Western secularization is seen as radical materialism, the reign of trade, and generalized depravity. It is from this perspective that today we hear the Chinese Communists invoke their Confucian heritage to deny any legitimacy to remarks made about their human rights practices and even to criticize the Western version. Moreover, the current dynamism of radical tendencies from within religious traditions gives rise to a will to control social practices that more and more radically lay claim to the state and its services. Examples multiply, from the condemnation by the Malaysian civil courts of a Muslim citizen who wished to convert to Christianity to the influence of religious groups in the American political sphere.

Separation and Regulation: The Needs of Today

In practice, the need for what sociologists call "regulation" of the religious has produced a demand for the intervention of the services of the state; countries that are familiar with a separation regime are no exception. Even in the case of French *laïcité*, in a regime whose attachment to separation is most unequivocal, the state has always had an interest in religious life. However, from one country to another, one observes the diversity of the forms of public function, according to preferences that may be legislative; administrative, as in a number of Latin American countries; or juridical, as is the case in Anglo-Saxon countries.

The evolution of what currently constitutes religious pluralism, its expansion in purely quantitative terms, would in any case suffice to render this task more and more delicate. To this, we must add the evolution of the nature of demands and needs and especially the affirmation of new social preoccupations related to the religious sphere in terms, most notably, of public safety, which would gain them a place on the "political agenda."

These public policies can lead to excesses. They can encourage a will to control or even shape religions according to an image more familiar to the

state or to make them conform more closely to preoccupations that the state chooses to favor in function of various types of considerations. But we must not exaggerate the omnipotence of the state. Historical examples of the limits of its influence are not lacking, even during times when it has not hesitated to resort to the most brutal means of action.

The state does not constitute a monolithic and autonomous entity, but it is a heterogeneous ensemble of political and administrative actors called to take charge of complex and interactional problems with other political and social forces in a context of uncertainty. This opens up the question of intelligence and the competence of its services.

States and their citizens are also increasingly concerned with the structures and norms edified beyond national frameworks. The European Community is undoubtedly one of the most developed examples of this insofar as it decrees norms of common requirements and gives citizens of different countries the possibility of appealing to justice in its court, the European Court of Human Rights. It has produced very diverse results: Whereas Greece renounced the inclusion of religious confession on its nationals' identification cards, some religious bodies may also be tempted to obtain on a supranational level that which they were unable to obtain on a national level. Alliances intended to obtain the limitation of certain rights such as, oddly enough, birth control in the name of religious principles are routinely denounced.

It would also seem that there is a confirmed tendency for the state apparatus to withdraw from functions on which it had once actively seized but that it now wishes to abandon to other social actors, including religious ones. This is particularly striking on the international scene. A high proportion of nonstate aid is the work of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) issuing from a religious institution or with explicit reference to a religious discourse. They have many militants at their disposal and large budgets fed by church networks and, in certain cases, by public monies from their respective states. Their religious character can present specific problems. Some limit their help to their "faithful" or dispense it according to confessional or at least moral criteria, exacerbating local tensions between communities and engaging in, in certain fields, real missionary competition. Owing

to the debacle of postcolonial states, the situation is particularly critical on the African continent. During its civil war, Sudan thus saw itself divided between Islamic NGOs in the north and evangelical ones in the south.

A comparable tendency is also observable on Western soil and in the former Soviet Socialist republics. The decline of the welfare state; the abandoning of social responsibilities, which are passed on or delegated to associations; and the transfer of peacekeeping missions or social control to religious authorities in certain specific territories have evoked a process of “deseccularization.” Such an evolution also comes up against the propensity for religious currents or forms to attempt to provide a moral and social framework as well as for individual well-being. The result may be to cloak economic and social problems in religious terms at the risk of compromising their diagnosis and treatment and of enclosing individuals in rigidified identities.

In religious matters, the state may constitute the greatest of oppressors, and it certainly possesses all the necessary means. Although, in spite of all its failings and limits, one can take the measure of the importance of the role of the state, which, as a priority, recognizes individuals as bearers of laws, guarantees social peace, makes sure that its requirements are respected locally, and guarantees the conditions of pluralism notably as an alternative to relations of force. In this domain, the efficacy of such a state remains unequalled, and the authority that could take its place is, at the present moment, yet to be identified.

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See also Enlightenment; Islamic State; Laicization; Nation-State; Politics and Religion; Postcolonialism; Religious Nationalism; Secularization; Tolerance

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RELIGIONS AND WORLD FEDERATION

Stimulated by a desire to reduce war and political tensions through global governance, some religious groups have advocated the creation of a world federation of nations. Noting how democratic federal governments have advanced peace and justice within countries, many religious people have advocated the creation of a democratic federal government at the global level in addition to national, regional, and local governments.

They have concluded that global problems are not being solved under the existing United Nations (UN) organization, a confederation of national governments based on the principle of unlimited national sovereignty. The UN has often been ineffective because of these reasons: The General Assembly can pass only nonbinding resolutions based on the nondemocratic system of one nation one vote, each of the five nations that are permanent members of the Security Council has a veto, there is no adequate system of enforcement for international treaties, and the organization has a limited budget based on dues that are not always paid by national governments. One solution that is advocated by the supporters of a world federation is that the UN be transformed into a democratic world federation of nations—based on the principle of subsidiarity—that would create, enforce, and adjudicate world laws as well as having the power and authority to arrest and incarcerate individuals who violate them.

Under an effective world federation, war as a means of settling disputes between and within countries would be outlawed, and verifiable disarmament of the weapons of war could take place. In contrast to the present war system, thousands of

innocent civilians would not be bombed or suffer under international sanctions because of the decisions of their leaders. Conflicts would be settled, and global problems could be solved through a nonviolent democratic process. A world constitution would make explicit the powers and limitations of the world federation; the rights, powers, and limitations of national governments; and the rights and responsibilities of all citizens of the world.

Roman Catholic bishops at the Second Vatican Council called for outlawing war by international consent and creating a universal public authority that would safeguard security, justice, and rights. In their encyclicals, Pope John XXIII and Pope Benedict XVI have stated that there is an urgent need for a true world political authority that would be regulated by law, observe the principles of subsidiarity and solidarity, promote human development, manage globalization, and establish the common good.

According to the teachings of Baha'u'llah and the Baha'i Universal House of Justice, acceptance of the oneness of humanity is a prerequisite for establishing a world federation. According to Baha'is, every national government will need to give up every claim to make war and should only maintain armaments for purposes of maintaining internal order. Baha'is and many others also believe that understanding between all people and the facilitation of a world federal democracy would be enhanced by the universal use of a common auxiliary language in addition to the national languages.

Many individuals from religions that lack a central teaching authority have also promoted the goal of a world federation. For example, many liberal Protestant Christians and many Unitarian Universalists are world federalists. Hindus such as Swami Satprakashananda, Buddhists such as Nikkyo Niwano, and many individuals from other major religions have emphasized the need for a global system of enforceable world laws.

Before the legal and political superstructure of a world federation can be created for world peace, the advocates of a world federation believe that the world's religions have the responsibility of building a firm foundation for it by emphasizing their versions of the Golden Rule, common ethical commandments, "humatriotism" (loyalty to the human family), world citizenship, and the stewardship of

creation. They are urged to participate in local, national, and international forums for interreligious dialogue and cooperation as well as act according to the principles of the "Declaration of a Global Ethic," which has been developed by the Parliament of the World's Religions.

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See also Politics and Religion; Religious Dialogue; World's Parliament of Religions

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RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

Dialogue among religious traditions is challenging, since traditions vary enormously, and especially from one societal context to another. Some constitute all the spiritual insights, reflections, observances, and practices that have been part of a community's life over many centuries. Other religions originate as the result of an intense religious experience of a prophet or leader who becomes the founder of a new religious tradition. Still others begin as protest or reform movements within an existing religious tradition and gradually evolve as separate religious entities. Historically, religious traditions have, by and large, been in mutual isolation or at times seen themselves as mutually exclusive or even rival communities. In some periods, religious communities have been at war with each

other. In some places, as in India, for instance, many religious traditions have coexisted for centuries in mutual tolerance and peace. Throughout history, there are also numerous instances where individuals and communities have tried to build bridges of understanding across the religious divide.

Religious dialogue, also often referred to as interreligious dialogue, as a conscious activity and a recognized discipline within the religious field, became prominent as more and more communities worldwide began to feel the impact of religious plurality. Vast population movements of refugees, migrants, and displaced peoples in recent centuries, as well as enormous advances in travel, communications, and the economic interdependence of nation-states, have resulted in bringing peoples of numerous religious communities to live together as neighbors. Almost all major cities of the world now have multireligious communities. Most of these communities practice their own religious commitments, build their own places of worship, and look for ways to find their place within the plurality of religions. It is in this context that religious dialogue has emerged as a concept that defines the relationship between religious communities in pluralistic environments.

The Concept of Dialogue

Mutual respect, mutual openness, and willingness to accept the other in their “otherness” are the hallmarks of interreligious dialogue. Religious dialogue begins when religious plurality is accepted as a given and is not seen as a threat to life in community. It does not expect any religious community to change or give up its own religious convictions, but it expects all religious communities to be open to building relationships across the religious barriers despite the differences. “Different does not mean wrong but different” is one of the slogans within interreligious dialogue. This means that one should be open to living with what is different even if one does not necessarily accept what the other believes or practices as something one would embrace. Also accepted within this discipline is the conviction that each community should be allowed to define itself so that relationships are not based on the prejudices, misunderstandings, and misconceptions that have marred much of the interreligious relations of the past.

The concept, however, also has elements that go beyond simple mutual respect. It is believed that when religious communities do engage in relationship with genuine openness and respect, they would be able to grow in appreciation of one another’s faith, begin to see their own faith in a new light, and understand the ways in which others have perceived their own faith and practices. They would also begin to understand the prejudices and misgivings that had led to some of the tensions and conflicts that had been part of their common history. Therefore, it is held that interreligious dialogue can also lead to mutual enrichment, mutual correction, and mutual self-criticism. Another common saying within interreligious dialogue is that “we not only need to know the other, but we need to know the other to know ourselves.” In other words, it is believed that interfaith dialogue helps a community to see itself as others see it, so that it can have a chastened understanding of its place within the larger social context.

Kinds of Dialogue

Those who have observed the interreligious dialogue activities that have gone on over many decades in the past identify five different types of dialogue. The first is the recognition that not all interfaith relations are formal or organized. Religious communities have been in conversation with each other for centuries at the grassroots level. In all pluralist situations, people have been in contact with each other in their ongoing life, sometimes with religious awareness and at other times over issues, concerns, and problems that affected their common life. In fact, in all religiously plural situations, men and women have found ways of relating to one another and respecting each other’s religious traditions, often without consciously intending to do so. This first kind of dialogue has been called the “dialogue of life” and is considered basic to all other forms of dialogue.

In new pluralistic environments where the forces of globalization have brought religious communities into close proximity, there are formal processes to bring the different religious communities into conversation so that new relationships can be built. This kind of dialogue, called “dialogue of discourse,” is also helpful to bring together communities that have been alienated from one another

because of the tensions and conflicts that have marked their history. Jews and Christians, for instance, have had a very difficult history from the very beginning, which was accentuated since the Second World War. Similarly, Jews, Muslims and Christians have also had tensions and conflicts in their history. These traditions also suffer from mutually exclusive religious teachings that had troubled their relationships. In these situations, opportunities for religious dialogue are organized so that representatives of these traditions could sit down to look at their common history. They benefit from the opportunity to study together the matters over which there had been conflicts in the past and to examine ways in which as contemporary followers of these traditions they might overcome some of the barriers that keep them apart.

The dialogue of discourse has sometimes been criticized as elitist; the representative character of those who participate in them is questioned; some view it as overly intellectual and not related to the real issues that people face in their day-to-day relationships. In reality, however, the dialogues of discourse do have an important contribution to make. Many who participate in them begin to write and speak about their own religious traditions and those of others in new ways that build community. These dialogues create communities of conversation and of heart and mind across religious barriers. Some of those who participate in these dialogues are opinion makers within their own communities and have the ears of the religious leaders of their respective groups. Many of them teach in their religious communities and have the opportunity to influence the thinking of emerging future leaders who study with them. Thus, while the dialogue of discourse certainly is not fully adequate to address the issue of interreligious relations, it is deemed to play an important role in the overall process.

Many who doubt the effectiveness of the dialogue of discourse highlight the importance of the "dialogue of spirituality," which is based on the conviction that whereas communities might have insurmountable difficulties in agreeing on doctrines and teachings, they should be able to come closer on the basis of spirituality. Even though spirituality is a difficult concept to define, those who advocate this mode of dialogue hold that there is a dimension to activities such as meditation, worship,

prayer, and spiritual practices that transcends religious labels. In reality, there are aspects of worship and prayer life that are deeply rooted in particular religious traditions and use much symbolism that is particular to those respective religions. Yet the willingness to engage in prayer and meditation together, to study one another's scriptures together, and to engage in one another's spiritual practices is seen as a significant way to promote interfaith relations. In fact, there are today many groups in all parts of the world that engage in this form of dialogue. Intermonastic dialogue also belongs to this mode. For instance, there is an annual exchange of monks between Zen monasteries in Japan and the Benedictine monasteries in Europe so that they may be enriched in their spirituality by learning and practicing spiritual disciplines that belong to each other's monastic communities.

Yet another mode of interreligious dialogue places the emphasis on action and is called "dialogue of action." Here, attempts are made to bring groups from different religious communities together to engage in common action on issues that are important to the larger community. Issues of peace, justice, human rights, the environment, rights of children, and so forth have been the subjects around which interfaith coalitions have been created. It is believed that engagement in issues that are of common concern is one of the best ways to promote interfaith dialogue. Adherents of all religious traditions easily find teachings within their traditions that support the matters advocated, and in the course of common action the doctrinal differences begin to take a back seat. At times, those engaged in such actions are asked to explain the religious motivation for their engagement, which gives them an opportunity to learn from each other.

The last mode is called "institutional dialogue." This relates to the numerous local, regional, national, and international instruments and institutions that have been created to bring religious traditions together for dialogue, reflection, and action. International interfaith organizations such as the World Conference of Religion and Peace, the World Congress of Faiths, the International Association for Religious Freedom, the Temple of Understanding, the International Interfaith Initiative, and the Parliament of World's Religions regularly hold international assemblies and conferences in which

leaders of all religious communities participate. These have great symbolic value insofar as the faithful followers of the several religious communities see that their leaders support the growth of the interfaith movement and its objectives.

In addition to these modes of dialogue, there are also dialogue events and movements that put the emphasis on youth and women to ensure their presence and participation in the interfaith movement and to harness the specific perspectives they bring to the dialogue.

Brief Historical Survey

Many consider the World Columbian Exposition of 1893 held in Chicago as the occasion of the birth of religious dialogue and the interfaith movement. So many people were coming to the Exposition from all parts of the world that it was decided that the Exposition must provide the opportunity to hold consultations, conferences, and parliaments on many subjects, such as labor, medicine, commerce, and so on. As part of this process, it was decided that a Parliament of World's Religions would be held from September 11 to 27, 1893. This turned out to be the largest event related to the Columbian Exposition and the very first global engagement of the Western and Eastern religious traditions. Of the many leaders of the Asian religious traditions Ven. Anagarika Dharmapala of Sri Lanka, representing the Theravada school of Buddhism, and Swami Vivekananda from India, who represented Hinduism, stood out. The eloquence of Swami Vivekananda to his audience of some 7,000 was a historic moment that would introduce deep interest in Hinduism in the Western world.

Even though the impact of the Parliament should not be minimized, one should say that religious dialogue, as we understand and practice it today, evolved over a long period of time and is one of the unintended consequences of the global Christian missionary expansion from Europe into other parts of the world. While most Christian missionaries engaged in the traditional mission of preaching their message, some began to take a deep interest in the religious traditions of those to whom they had come to preach. In some cases, interest in other religious traditions turned to deep appreciation. Gradually, some of the missionaries

began to question the assumptions about other religious traditions that underlay Christian missionary activity.

An outstanding example of the growing dissatisfaction concerning Christian assumptions about other religious traditions was manifest in the first World Missionary Conference held in 1910 in Edinburgh, Scotland, which is seen as the beginning of the modern Christian ecumenical movement. The conference was called to develop strategies and to harness resources to try to evangelize the whole world in that generation. However, one of the commissions of the Conference (Commission IV) that was charged with reflecting on "The Missionary Message in Relation to Non-Christian Religions" began to question the Christian approach to other religions. It advocated that Christian missions should seek greater understanding of the spiritual values in other religious traditions and look for points of contact for the sharing of their own message.

This subject became a hotly debated issue in the subsequent World Missionary Conferences in 1928 in Jerusalem and in 1938 in Tambaram in South India. Several Western missionaries and Christian thinkers from Asia began to raise serious doubts about the prevalent Christian approach to other religious traditions, resulting in the International Missionary Council and the World Council of Churches (WCC, formed in 1948) instituting a lengthy study of the issue. Out of these struggles emerged the concept of dialogue between Christians and peoples of other religious traditions, and it received an institutional expression with the formation of a WCC program on "Dialogue With People of Living Faiths and Ideologies." This program subunit of the WCC began to hold Christian-Jewish, Christian-Muslim, Christian-Hindu, and Christian-Buddhist dialogues in many parts of the world and brought out publications that promoted the concept and practice of these religions. In 1977 at a meeting in Chiang Mai, Thailand, it drew up the "Guidelines of Dialogue," which inspired the development of many local and national guidelines for the relationship between religious traditions.

While these developments were taking place within the WCC, which represented the Protestant and Orthodox families of churches, important

advances were also being made within the Roman Catholic Church. The Second Vatican Council, which opened under Pope John XXIII in 1962, undertook an extensive review of the Roman Catholic Church's relationship to other Christian churches and to other religious communities. A papal encyclical, *Ecclesiam Suam*, and three of the documents of the Second Vatican Council, namely, *The Declaration of the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions* (*Nostra Aetate*), *Dogmatic Constitution of the Church* (*Lumen Gentium*), and the *Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity* (*Ad Gentes*) between them chartered a new approach to other religious traditions. This was fortified by the creation of a Secretariat for Non-Christians, which later became the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue. These instruments of the Roman Catholic Church also promoted interfaith dialogue and published guidelines and other publications that promoted the notion and the practice of religious dialogue.

Other Initiatives

Even though the new approach among Christians to other religions and the programmatic activities that stemmed from them played a very significant role in moving the religious dialogue forward, Christians are by no means the only ones who saw the need for interfaith dialogue and cooperation. As mentioned above, in 1893 the Parliament of World's Religions broke new ground in interfaith relations. The centennial of the Parliament was held in Chicago in 1993, and since then, the Parliament meets periodically in different parts of the world and has become one of the significant arenas for interreligious dialogue. In 1961, some of the religious leaders from around the world came together to consider how religious communities could work for peace, resulting in the creation of the World Conference of Religion and Peace (WCRP) in Kyoto in 1970. WCRP also holds regular assemblies to bring religious leaders and adherents together and has some 75 national WCRP chapters affiliated to it. Several Buddhist-sponsored international interfaith initiatives for dialogue and cooperation have come out of Japan, Korea, and Taiwan, and numerous local and national bodies seek to promote interreligious dialogues at local levels. The Muslim World League, The World

Council of Muslims for Interfaith Relations, and other such organizations support, encourage, and initiate interreligious dialogues. A number of Islamic states have also begun to sponsor conferences and events that seek to promote Islam's relationship with other religious traditions. In view of religious tensions in India, there have also been several Hindu-initiated programs to promote interreligious dialogue at local levels. All these have led to a proliferation of programs, events, publications, and institutions that seek to promote dialogue among religious traditions.

Issues and Concerns

Even though migration, globalization, and the increased interdependence of human communities have pushed forward the need for religious dialogue, the very same forces have also increased the tendency among many religious communities to withdraw from engagement into forms of conservatism and fundamentalism. The reentry of religion into the public space has also led to extremist and militant forms of religious expressions and to violence in the name of religion. These developments present new challenges to interreligious dialogue. Religious dialogue is also criticized for the noninvolvement of the native (indigenous) and traditional religions, which do not have religious expression analogous to the major world religions. There has also been justified criticism from subaltern groups that in the interest of promoting interreligious harmony, many dialogues do not take up the oppressive side of religions as matters for conversation and dialogue. Thus, interreligious dialogue also creates deep divisions within the religious communities that fear syncretism and compromise. Many, therefore, hold that interreligious dialogue needs to be accompanied by intra-religious dialogue so that religious traditions work out their own attitudes to the challenge of religious plurality.

Despite these reservations, interreligious dialogue has been on the increase because many see dialogue and engagement as the only way forward in a world that is increasingly pluralistic. Some insist that "the only way to be religious today is to be interreligious." In fact, there is growing awareness that if the religious traditions are able to work together, they would be able to play a significant

role in the struggles for reconciliation, justice, and peace in a fractured world.

S. Wesley Ariarajah

See also Pluralism; Politics and Religion; Religious Freedom; Religious Identity; Religious Minority-Majority Relations; Religious Nationalism; Syncretism; Vatican Council, Second; World Council of Churches; World's Parliament of Religions

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RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

The modern era of religious freedom began in the 17th century in 13 American colonies that later rebelled and became the United States of America. In the middle of the 20th century, “freedom of religion or belief” became a human right under international law after the United Nations (UN) was created. It is not a coincidence that generally it has taken secular legal systems to protect what many describe as “the right of conscience,” for religious organizations are generally more concerned with maintaining discipline among their members than with protecting their rights. This entry compares the meaning of religious freedom in the United States as well as in international law. It then examines the development of religious freedom in various religious communities and nations. Finally, the entry considers how the concept of the right of conscience has been shaped by federal

legislation and judicial rulings in the United States.

Two Meanings: Religious Freedom in the United States and International Law

In the American tradition, religious freedom is defined by the First Amendment to the Constitution, which begins thus: “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.” Religious freedom in American law has been described as the “separation” of church and state, although this language (attributed to Thomas Jefferson) is not in the Constitution. The First Amendment prohibits the federal government from establishing a particular religious tradition or practice, and after the Civil War the Due Process and Equal Protection Clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment were interpreted as applying to state governments the rights affirmed by the First Amendment.

The “freedoms” of the First Amendment, including the freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and the right to assemble and petition the government, are distinguished from the “civil rights” asserted in other amendments to the Constitution, which reflect the social contract theory of law that justifies governmental authority. The liberty rights of the First Amendment are affirmed as inalienable “natural rights” inherent in our humanity.

Article 18 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) reflects this tradition:

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which came into force in 1976 as the main treaty implementing the civil and political rights affirmed in the UDHR, asserts in Article 18.1,

Everyone shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. This right shall

include freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice, and freedom, either individually or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in worship, observance, practice and teaching.

Article 18.2 states, “No one shall be subject to coercion which would impair his freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice.”

Five years later, the UN General Assembly approved the 1981 Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief. Article 1.1 of the 1981 Declaration reaffirms, “Everyone shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.” Article 2.2 states,

For the purposes of the present Declaration, the expression “intolerance and discrimination based on religion or belief” means any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on religion or belief and having as its purpose or as its effect nullification or impairment of the recognition, enjoyment or exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis.

Freedom of religion or belief under international law differs from the U.S. right of religious freedom in two respects. First and foremost, international law does not prohibit a national state from having an established religion. In the middle of the 20th century, there were many European nations with established religious traditions that, without reservation, accepted the legal obligation to ensure nondiscrimination. Today, nations with an established religion by law or practice include largely Catholic countries in Europe and Latin America; several primarily Eastern Orthodox or Lutheran countries in Europe; a few, mostly Buddhist, countries in South Asia; and more than 30 Islamic countries in Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia.

Second, the freedom to change one’s religion is central to the U.S. tradition and was included in the UDHR because Protestant leaders persuaded the dominant Western governments that this assertion was required to protect the right of Christian missionaries to seek converts from every other religious tradition. Not surprisingly, the governments of many nations have sought to limit this freedom.

In the ICCPR and the 1981 Declaration, the affirmation of the UDHR that “this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief” has been replaced by statements prohibiting coercion, intolerance, and discrimination. This shift in language largely reflects the power of communist governments in the UN prior to the collapse of the Soviet Union and the increased number of nations with Islamic traditions that were admitted to the UN by the General Assembly between 1948 and 1981. Article 18.3 of the ICCPR and Article 3.1 of the 1981 Declaration each assert the following: “Freedom to manifest one’s religion or beliefs may be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary to protect public safety, order, health, or morals or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others.”

International Religious Freedom Act

In response to reports of increasing religious persecution in other countries, in 1998 the U.S. Congress passed the International Religious Freedom Act (IFRA), which created the Office of International Religious Freedom in the Department of State to promote religious freedom as part of U.S. foreign policy.

As described on the U.S. Department of State website, the Office of International Religious Freedom seeks to

- promote freedom of religion and conscience throughout the world as a fundamental human right and as a source of stability for all countries;
- assist newly formed democracies in implementing freedom of religion and conscience;
- assist religious and human rights nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in promoting religious freedom; and
- identify and denounce regimes that are severe persecutors of their citizens or others on the basis of religious belief.

Since 2001, the Office of International Religious Freedom in the U.S. Department of State has issued an annual report on the status of religious freedom in each of the 195 countries (i.e., all

countries other than the United States). U.S. embassies prepare initial drafts, gathering information from a variety of sources including government officials, human rights monitors, journalists, NGOs, religious groups, and scholars. The Office of International Religious Freedom consults with experts on issues of religious discrimination and persecution, religious leaders from diverse traditions, and experts on legal matters. The Department of State submits this annual report to Congress.

The IRFA authorizes the President to designate a nation that has “engaged in or tolerated particularly severe violations of religious freedom” as a Country of Particular Concern (CPC). The IRFA defines “particularly severe violations of religious freedom” as

systematic, ongoing, egregious violations of religious freedom, including violations such as torture, degrading treatment or punishment, prolonged detention without charges, abduction or clandestine detention, or other flagrant denial of the right to life, liberty, or the security of persons.

The president’s authority to designate CPCs has been delegated to the secretary of state. When noneconomic policy options are not effective in ending particularly severe violations of religious freedom, the secretary of state may impose economic sanctions on a CPC. A CPC designation generally lasts 2 years but may be ended at any time if the secretary of state certifies to Congress that the foreign government has “ceased or taken verifiable steps to cease particularly severe violations of religious freedom.” In the 2010 report, the secretary of state designated the following nations as CPCs: Burma, China, Eritrea, Iran, North Korea, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, and Uzbekistan.

The Office of International Religious Freedom sponsors reconciliation programs for religious groups in conflict, offers educational programs for American religious communities, and collaborates with the Commission on International Religious Freedom (also created by the IRFA). The commission makes recommendations on international religious freedom to the president, the secretary of state, and Congress.

European Court of Human Rights

In 1998, the European Commission of Human Rights and the Court of Human Rights, which were founded in 1953 with authority to hear individual complaints concerning violations of human rights, were joined into the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR). In 2003, the ECHR ruled that member states of the Council of Europe should not recognize Islamic law (Shari’a) that violates religious freedom under international law, as asserted by the European Convention on Human Rights.

International Efforts

International efforts to resist religious intolerance include implementation of the ICCPR by the Human Rights Committee created by the treaty, the UN High Commission for Human Rights, and the UN Human Rights Council, which in 2006 replaced the UN Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR). Special rapporteurs have been appointed to assess problems and recommend ways of realizing the standards of the 1981 declaration. A 1998 report on the United States praised the free exercise of religion in general but criticized the lack of protection for Native American practices and land consecrated by religious ceremonies.

Religious Support and Resistance

Religious communities that are minorities in a country support the right to religious freedom for every group, but religious communities that represent the majority of a nation often claim preferential status. Thus, it is inaccurate to say simply that Christians support religious freedom, as the Orthodox Church in several countries and also many evangelical Protestants in the United States defend governmental support for their Christian beliefs. Furthermore, although many Jews support religious freedom, Israel is a Jewish state in which Orthodox rabbis regulate religious practice. Also, Muslim minority communities in Western nations generally support the human right to freedom of religion or belief, whereas Islamic states do not fully endorse this right.

Religious History

The Protestant Reformation asserted the right of conscience in opposition to Catholic authority,

but reformers often suppressed dissent within their own communities. Religious freedom was not effectively institutionalized among Protestants until, in the middle of the 17th century, Roger Williams established Rhode Island as an independent colony. In the 18th century, many individuals who embraced the idea of “natural rights” (including religious freedom) were members of Protestant churches in Europe and the United States. The legal protection of civil and political rights, however, was largely the result of a successful political and economic rebellion and the experience of freedom that inspired and sustained it.

Protestants did take the lead in urging that the Charter of the UN and also the UDHR affirm human rights. Twenty years later, during Vatican II, the Catholic Church endorsed international human rights law, including the right to freedom of religion or belief. Of the nations with largely Muslim populations that were UN members in 1948, the pro-Western governments of Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, and Pakistan voted for the UDHR. Saudi Arabia and Yugoslavia were unwilling to do so but were persuaded by Eleanor Roosevelt (who chaired the UDHR drafting commission) to abstain rather than vote against it.

The World Council of Churches (WCC) has always promoted freedom of religion or belief and other human rights, and since Vatican II, the Catholic Church has supported international human rights law. Both of these Christian organizations support missions but reject proselytism. In 1961, the WCC asserted, “Witness is corrupted when cajolery, bribery, undue pressure or intimidation is used—subtly or openly—to bring about seeming conversion.” In 1965, the Catholic Church adopted a similar clarification: “Proselytism is a corruption of the Christian witness by appeal to hidden forms of coercion or by a style of propaganda unworthy of the Gospel. It is not the use but the abuse of the right to religious freedom.”

Nonetheless, international law does not make this distinction, and many Protestant missionaries do not abide by it. Therefore, to protect the public welfare against proselytizing that denigrates and undermines traditional religious practices, many countries impose restrictions on foreign missionaries.

Restraints on missionaries often conceal a double standard. India limits Christian activity in certain

areas to protect indigenous traditions, yet groups promoting Hindu teachings take advantage of the right to proselytize in Western societies. Muslims in western Europe and North America expect protection for their right to seek converts in historically Christian societies, but Islamic governments deny non-Muslims the right to seek converts.

Religious Nationalism

Anger at proselytizing fuels nationalistic resistance to religious freedom. For many in central and eastern Europe, religion is inextricably related to culture and national heritage. This is very different from the Protestant conception of a religious community as a gathered congregation of individual believers, a notion that is reflected in the emphasis on the right of conscience in the U.S. tradition of religious freedom. Most Orthodox churches identify strongly with the particular ethnic and cultural history of a nation, and so an Orthodox national church expects the state that governs “its” people to promote the interests of the church.

For example, the 1990 Russian Law on Freedom of Conscience and Freedom of Religion was passed when U.S. influence on the new government of Russia was at its peak. In 1997, to limit missionary activities, the Moscow Patriarchate backed amendments to the 1990 law requiring registration and organizational requirements by foreign religious groups.

Nationalism, of course, is not limited to Orthodox confessions. The constitution of India mandates a secular government, yet there is considerable political support in India for a government that favors Hindu cultural and religious traditions. In Sri Lanka, the attempt by the majority Sinhalese community to create a political order reflecting its Buddhist tradition has been resisted violently by the minority Tamils, who are mainly Hindu. In Japan, Soka Gakkai fields political candidates espousing a Nichiren Buddhist vision of Japanese government. In the struggle to control the government in Sudan, conflict between tribes that are Muslim or Christian contributed to a protracted civil war.

Nationalist movements in some of the autonomous republics of the Russian Federation are hoping that new movements for democratic government

will support the recovery of religious traditions that were suppressed under a half-century of Soviet rule. For instance, the Chuvash National Congress is promoting a return to the Chuvash pagan tradition and resisting efforts by the Orthodox Church to establish itself as the national religion. In Mari El, the parliament has legislated protection for traditional “religious cult zones” (sacred groves of trees). It is not hard to understand why these peoples now support laws, in the name of religious freedom, that give preference to their ancient religious and cultural heritage.

Islam, in theory, does not recognize any nationality but only the community of the faithful. In reality, Islam has been used to bolster nationalistic movements. Pakistan is an Islamic state, and criminal laws enforcing Islamic prohibitions are applied to Christian and Hindu Pakistanis as well as Muslim citizens. Hamas proclaims through the mosques of Gaza a jihad to achieve Palestinian national independence. The U.S. International Religious Freedom Report for 2010 confirms that there are numerous violations of religious freedom in Pakistan, but verifies that in the Occupied Territories administered by the Palestinian Authority (PA), where Islam is also the official religion, “the PA sought to protect religious freedom in full and did not tolerate its abuse by either governmental or societal actors.”

Religious Beliefs

Contemporary Jews assert that Pesach (Passover), Succot (Tabernacles), and Shavuot (Pentecost), the three major festivals in the Jewish year commemorating aspects of the exodus from Egypt, provide support for religious and political liberty. Purim (Lotteries), which recalls the danger to the Jewish people portrayed in the story of Esther, is said to affirm the rights of minority peoples. In remembering martyrs to their faith on Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement), Jews affirm the fundamental right of conscience.

Jewish scripture, however, is also used by many Jews to claim the land once governed by ancient Israel exclusively for the Jewish people and to interfere with the rights of Palestinians to live and practice their religious faith where their ancestors have lived for centuries. Members of an extremist Jewish Israeli group, the Gush Emunim

Underground, even tried to blow up the Dome of the Rock, the sacred Islamic shrine in East Jerusalem. Other Jewish organizations, such as Rabbis for Human Rights, defend the human rights of Palestinians, as well as of every other human being, including the right to freedom of religion or belief.

Muslims affirm that their government has a responsibility to enforce the Islamic teaching that God alone is sovereign. Equality of rights regardless of skin color or ethnicity is a firm tenet in Islam, and for centuries, Muslims have been better at putting this ideal into practice than Christians. Religious freedom, however, has not historically been embraced in Islamic teaching, although Christians and Jews have had a protected status as “peoples of the book” because the Qur’an recognizes the revelations given to Moses and Jesus and thus reveres them as prophets.

When Asians or Africans from Hindu, Buddhist, or indigenous traditions argue that international human rights law embodies the principles of Western culture, they are making an accurate historical observation. When they claim that each culture has the right to practice its religious tradition in its own way, they are challenging the affirmation of international law that freedom of thought, conscience, and religion is a natural and universal right and must be protected by law to ensure the necessary social conditions for human dignity.

Right of Conscience

Before the 18th century, religious communities did not recognize freedom of conscience, and many today deny this right. This was the position of the Catholic Church until Vatican II, and it continues to be the policy of many Orthodox churches in eastern Europe. Native American leaders have gone to court to enforce tribal rights against the rights of individual members. All new religious movements affirm the right to religious freedom, but in practice, many deny freedom of conscience to their members.

Muslim teaching continues to reject the right of an individual to convert from Islam to another religion, on the grounds that God has constituted the Islamic community to rule on earth. To convert from Islam is seen as rejecting God and those

charged to rule for God. Some Muslims support the right of conscience by pointing to the *sura* in the Qur'an that reads as follows: "Let there be no compulsion in religion." The dominant historical interpretation of this text, however, is that no one should be compelled to convert to Islam.

Religious freedom in the United States presumes that protecting the right of conscience requires disestablishment. But establishment problems arise concerning the accommodation of religious practice (prayers in Congress, chaplains in the military and in prisons, etc.). Free-exercise claims challenge the government's authority to enforce general laws that do not concern religion but adversely affect an individual's religious practice.

The U.S. Supreme Court in *Sherbert v. Verner* (1963) emphasized the right of conscience in its ruling that the government may not "substantially burden" the exercise of religion unless it demonstrates a "compelling interest." This was the legal standard until *Employment Division v. Smith* (1990), a decision involving the religious use of peyote by Native Americans. *Smith* holds that the free exercise of religion does not mean that "an individual's religious beliefs excuse him from compliance with an otherwise valid law prohibiting conduct that the state is free to regulate." *Smith* asserts the presumption that laws "of general applicability" do not deny the free exercise of religion.

This decision prompted the U.S. Congress in 1993 to pass the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA), which made the standard of *Sherbert* the law until the U.S. Supreme Court declared the RFRA unconstitutional in *Boerne v. Flores* (1997). At least five states have passed RFRA laws, but courts have reaffirmed the *Smith* standard.

International law asserting "freedom of thought, conscience and religion" presumes that states with established religious traditions are able, nevertheless, to ensure nondiscrimination. Everywhere, minorities within a country of every religious tradition claim their human right to manifest their religion "in teaching, practice, worship and observance." Yet governments with established religious traditions—especially Eastern Orthodox churches, Orthodox Judaism, and Sunnī or Shi'a forms of Islam—significantly restrict the exercise of the right of conscience.

Robert Traer

See also Human Rights; Politics and Religion; Religion and State; Religious Dialogue; Tolerance

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RELIGIOUS IDENTITY

Religious holidays, celebrations, community commemorations, rites of passage, foodways, artistic and musical styles, types of dress, and modes of speech are all aspects of culture that can become enmeshed within the makeup of a religious identity. Religious identity correlates to a number of social factors: age, gender, economic status, national and ethnic identities, educational background, social standing, sexual orientation, and personal identifiers. Religious identity is also molded by a set of carried beliefs: dogmatic principles, moral standings, coded mythologies, highly esteemed parables, social taboos, and understandings of God or divinity, the supernatural, and the cosmological universe. As adopted ideas transform patterns of thought, ways of identifying self become linked to external actions shaped by internal, belief-based realities: Within this meaning-making process, religious identity becomes individuated as practices become solidified. As local access to global traditions and spiritual worldviews exponentially increases with technological

access, the boundaries between religious identities must be individually and communally redefined.

Idiosyncratic personality factors can greatly affect not only how one thinks about religion but in what ways one enacts one's religious identity through religious experiences, practices, and ceremonies. As a person's thinking capacity, personality, and emotional maturity develop, his or her religious identity will generally become more integrated. Times of transition, traumatic events, and highly charged conversion experiences can dramatically alter a person's religious identifiers as questions of doubt, certainty, and confusion arise within the individual's mind. Likewise, hot-button social issues such as war, abortion, interreligious marriage, homosexuality, divine law, and social justice can raise questions about or alter one's religious identity, at either the individual or the communal level.

Religious identity is often linked to ethnolinguistic, geographic, and national affiliations as well as the social expectations tied to these: vocational and spousal selection, gender roles, migrational patterns, models of community service, and normative emotive behaviors and interpersonal interactions. While more individually centered, pluralist societies promote a greater focus on personal stories of divine connection or disbelief, based on self-reliance and independent decision making, societies with a higher percentage of single-religion practitioners have a greater expectation for community members to uphold civic duties through respecting family and ethnic religious affiliations, the bedrock of most close-knit communal identities. Indigenous traditions, for example, may not distinguish between a religious identity and a communal identity because religious practices are so embedded within social realities that the two are virtually inseparable: religion is life, and life is religion.

While some practitioners externalize their religious identities to be recognized within a public social milieu, other practitioners, due to fearful circumstances, social ostracization, or personal preference, may keep religious identities more private. Religious minorities may hide identity markers, often externally formulated and defined by the nonpracticing majority, as a protective community measure.

Christi M. Dietrich

See also Christian Identity; Conversion; Detraditionalization and Retraditionalization; Ethnic Nationalism; Generational Change; God; Religious Minority-Majority Relations; Religious Nationalism

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RELIGIOUS MINORITY-MAJORITY RELATIONS

A religious majority may be constituted by its numerical preponderance or by its dominant power, or both. Normally talk of religious majority-minority relations concerns relations between different religious communities, but in many modern societies, it is also salient to consider majority-minority relations between religious and secular constituencies.

Majoritarian status fluctuates not only over time but also by geographical scale. As globalization has progressed and religious groups and individuals have become linked by high-speed global communication networks, a religious minority on a local or national scale may also be a majority at a larger scale. For example, in Denmark, Muslims are a minority, but on a global scale, they greatly outnumber Danish Christians and secularists. When Danish Muslims were offended by the publication of insulting cartoons of Prophet Muhammad in 2005, they were relatively powerless at the national level. But when Muslims across the globe joined in the protest and boycott of Danish goods, their power was greatly enhanced.

Global Level

On a global scale, Christianity is the largest of the world's religions, followed by Islam. The total numerical size of a religion—the number of its followers worldwide—is not, however, a particularly salient measure of majority or minority status

because none of the “world religions” operates as a unified whole. Internal divisions within religions militate against such mobilization and, historically, are often as important as those between different religions. For example, divisions within Protestant Christianity, let alone between Protestants, Catholics, and Orthodox Christians, are as socially and politically significant as those between Christians and Muslims or Christians and Hindus. This point is often obscured in talk about clashes of “civilizations.”

In practice, the power of a religion depends not only on its size but also on its relations with other forms of social power, including political and military power and economic power. For example, a religion that has official support from a polity may function as a majority religion even if other religions in the same political territory have more followers in aggregate. When a religion has such a status, however, it will often win over a majority of adherents as well. Majority religions in this sense often exist at supranational scales (and it is important to remember that the nation-state is in any case largely a modern phenomenon). Such majority religions are often tied up with political formations that have extensive and expansive territorial control, as in the case of many historic empires. For example, Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire, and Islam was integral to a number of empires.

By their very nature, imperial religions “create” minority religions. They may treat the latter in various ways—ranging from toleration to harsh repression—but not as having equal status. Secular empires (e.g., the USSR) have also been repressive of religion in many instances. Minority religions enshrine views, identities, values, and priorities that differ from the majority and may serve as seedbeds of social and political resistance and change. Global alliances between minorities that share a common religious commitment may greatly enhance their power and the opportunities of their members.

National Level

The creation of modern nation-states often involved the drawing of boundaries around territories that included more than one religion. This sometimes led to a religious and/or ethnic “cleansing,” in which minority religions were proscribed

and expelled (e.g., Protestantism in France, Islam in Spain) or discriminated against (e.g., Catholicism in Great Britain and Northern Ireland). The United States was unusual in being founded on the principle of freedom of religion and nonestablishment of a majority religion, even though in practice it has a “civil religion” with a Christian flavor. Modern India also has a secular constitution that enshrines neutrality toward religions and offers some special privileges to religious minorities to protect their interests.

The principle of religious freedom is now widely accepted by nation-states—in theory if not in practice. In Europe, for example, where human rights law enshrines the principle of religious freedom and toleration, Islam nevertheless has the status of a minority religion in practice, and in some countries, limits are placed on the freedom of Muslims to express their religion (e.g., to wear Muslim dress or erect minarets). Here, Islam finds itself a minority in relation to both Christian *and* secular majorities. The more it is challenged by majorities, however, the more religiosity may grow among Muslims as they attempt to defend their identity.

Local Level

The relative status of religious majorities and minorities is often clearly evident at the local level, not the least in the way in which it is displayed in the built environment. Majority religious groups often occupy prime locations and display their distinctive architecture and symbols prominently. Minority religions may have no dedicated space at all or may have only a few, much poorer buildings. Similarly, the rituals and calendrical cycles of majority religions impose themselves on society in a way that those of minority religions do not and may force the latter into a defensive or countercultural stance.

Contemporary Pluralism

Modernization has tended to increase the degree of religious pluralism in local, national, and supranational areas, and religiously homogeneous societies are now rare. The challenge of governing religious pluralism and respecting the rights and freedoms of religious minorities—without alienating religious or secular majorities—has become a pressing

issue in many societies. Although religious majorities are often the enemy of religious minorities, they can also exist in harmony with them or even become their defenders. In contemporary Western societies, for example, religions may band together to oppose secular initiatives or mobilize in a common cause. In some situations, state churches have become defenders of the rights of religious minorities. The causes of cooperation or conflict between different religions rarely lie in the religions alone but also have to do with wider social, political, ethnic, and economic factors and alliances.

Linda Woodhead

See also Globalization; Multiculturalism; Pluralism; Politics and Religion; Religious Dialogue; Religious Freedom; Religious Identity

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RELIGIOUS NATIONALISM

Events of recent years have caused a resurgence of interest in both nationalism and religion as forms of political identity and sources of collective solidarity. This has been particularly true of, though not limited to, instances of political conflict and, in some cases, collective violence that to some observers appear to be motivated by nationalist and/or religious aspirations. These instances of religious politics and politicized religion include conflict in the Middle East between Israelis and Palestinians; the rise of a Hindu nationalist party in India and repeated instances of interreligious strife there; the increasing scope and power of the Religious Right in the United States from the late 1970s through the early 2000s; conflicts between

the Chinese state and minority religious movements such as Falun Gong; a genocidal campaign in Sudan, in which both nationalist and religious motives seem to play a role; a long-standing war in Russia between the state and Chechen separatists, in which religious boundaries are interwoven with nationalist ones; a rise in western European nativism in the face of unprecedented immigration by religious minorities; complex internal and religious conflict in Iraq following the removal from power of Saddam Hussein; the rapid spread of Pentecostalism in Latin America and other parts of the developing world; and, perhaps above all, the rise of global networks of terrorists who claim to carry out their violence in the name of Islam—and who at the same time harbor political aspirations. All these examples have caused scholars and policy makers to revisit earlier views of secularization that saw unilinear modernization processes as leading to a reduction in religion's scope and influence over collective life. Though several decades ago, social scientists widely expected both nationalism and religion to wane as modernization proceeded, the consensus has now shifted, and both are recognized as among the most potent forces in the contemporary world.

Yet while there is scholarly consensus that to understand the contemporary world there is a need to understand the sometimes interconnected phenomena of religion and nationalism, there is little consensus indeed about basic conceptual and definitional approaches to them. Above all, there is a need to understand what forms relationships between nationalism and religion can take and, especially, whether or not the generalized phenomenon of "religious nationalism" can be said to underlie some or all of the recent global developments noted above. What would it mean for nationalism to be "religious"? To a considerable extent, this question depends on how scholars define "religion" and "nationalism." While these issues may seem to be "academic," they are an unavoidable starting point for the questions under consideration here.

Defining and Conceptualizing Religion and Nationalism

As can be seen in other entries in this volume, myriad definitions of "religion" and "the religious"

have been formulated. While not all can be surveyed here, it is worthwhile to note several characteristic types of definitions relevant to the questions at hand. Some approaches are “Durkheimian” (meaning that they are derivative from or share an affinity with the work of the pioneering sociologist Émile Durkheim, and here we use this categorization loosely so as to include some approaches that differ on some points from Durkheim’s own approach). These approaches tend to see religion as pervasive and deeply embedded in all of social life. From a Durkheimian point of view, all “collective representations” or symbols ultimately have religious roots, and thus, any social order is religious. Such approaches, it is worth noting, treat the terms *religious* and *sacred* as essentially synonymous. It is also worth noting that Durkheimian conceptualizations and definitions of religion and the religious tend to be *functionalist*: They typically attempt to include claims about the fundamental purposes or social needs served by religion. For example, such approaches might define religion in part by its capacity to engender and maintain social solidarity or by its ability to engender symbolic images of the social order and the social world outside it that make society possible. Viewing religion in broad, Durkheimian terms has a number of advantages. At the same time, it has the potential to gloss over some distinctions that might be useful for research purposes.

Others take views of religion that we might loosely label “Weberian” (meaning that they are derivative from or share an affinity with the work of the sociologist Max Weber, and, as above, I use this categorization loosely). That is, they see religion as fundamentally a system of beliefs that serve to create “meaning,” in a world that is in and of itself meaningless. Weber himself did not offer a specific definition of religion, and he, like Durkheim, regarded it as a pervasive feature of most societies (though, unlike Durkheim, he saw modernity as characterized by “rationalization” and “disenchantment” and established the theoretical groundwork for later theories of secularization).

Much—though by no means all—of 20th-century social-scientific research on religion, and accordingly research on religious nationalism, saw it in terms that drew on both Weberian and Durkheimian views. This can be most clearly seen in the influential approach of Clifford Geertz, who

offered perhaps the most widely cited definitional approach to religion, treating it, like Durkheim, in functional terms but stressing, like Weber, the core function of meaning generation. It is worth noting that Marxian views of religion, which treat it as a form of “false consciousness,” have also been common. These, like the Weberian and Durkheimian views of the classical tradition, treat religion as a generalized phenomenon, roughly interchangeable with other forms of “ideology.”

At the same time, a wide variety of definitional approaches aim to escape from the one feature that unites most Durkheimian, Marxian, and Weberian conceptualizations of religion: The implication of these views is that religion is pervasive and largely universal and inseparable from other basic features of any given culture (or, in the case of Marxian and Weberian views, inseparable from such features in most historic societies). This can only be done by focusing on and drawing distinctions about the content or nature of religious belief, as opposed to other beliefs within a culture. The most common approach here is to focus on the allegedly “transcendental” or “supernatural” elements posited by religious beliefs. From this point of view, religion, whatever else it is, can be distinguished from alternative cultural systems by virtue of the fact that it is ultimately oriented to concerns that go beyond the sensual experience of the world. Critics of this kind of approach—and particularly of definitions of religion that build in belief in a deity as a necessary feature—have pointed to cases such as Daoism, Confucianism, and Buddhism (though this is a more complex case in this regard) that do not, strictly speaking, evoke gods. Some argue that some of these traditions are characterized by “immanence” rather than “transcendence” as their basic orientation. While it is quite clear that the notion that all religions must posit “gods” is unnecessarily limiting, the notion of religion as pointing to specifically *transcendent* sources of meaning, its defenders argue, holds up and, more important, allows for analytically useful distinctions to be drawn. We shall return to these issues and their specific implications for the study of religious nationalism below.

As with religion, defining “nationalism” has been a source of conflict. According to Anthony Smith, major theoretical approaches to nationalism can be divided among the “primordialists”

(those who believe that nationalism is ancient or perhaps a human universal), the “perennialists” (those who advocate a kind of intermediate category of theories that treat nationalism as not a universal feature of human experience but as one with a long historical trajectory and deep roots), and the “modernists” (or those who see nationalism and national identity as only emerging in the modern period). Clearly, these different theories center on the question of when nationalism emerged and developed, and this, in turn, depends on what one takes nationalism to be. Primordialists tend to conceptualize national identity as identical with other forms of collective identity. It is worth noting that figures like Geertz, who, as noted above, treated religion as a pervasive feature of human existence, are likewise proponents of the view that nationalism and national identity are pervasive, and they are thus identified as primordialists. Their primordialism is a Durkheimian inheritance: Religion and nationalism, for such scholars, are essentially built into the human experience. Perennialists often conceptualize nationalism and national identity as bearing a strong similarity to earlier bases of collective solidarity but with added features, for example, the political form of the modern state or the development and consolidation of a common vernacular. Proponents of such views tend to see a strong continuity between religious and national culture. Modernists define and conceptualize nationalism and national identity in a variety of ways, and it is worth noting that most contemporary research on nationalism takes place within this broad camp. This camp has been further subdivided into those who see nationalism and national identity as largely a consequence of the social structural features of modern societies and those who see nationalism and national identity in cultural terms. In general, though with notable exceptions, “modernists” see nationalism as inherently secular, and thus, the predominant view in the field remains one that sees nationalism as consistent with a secular, “modern” world.

Nationalism, Religion, and Secularization

Many have observed that nationalism and national identity, at least from a modernist perspective, seem to share an affinity with a secular world. In part, this oft-noted observation may derive from

the core of the “modernization theory” that was prevalent in American social science in the 1950s and 1960s. Modernization theory tended to see social-structural change as fundamental and as underlying both a decline in religious belief and the emergence and development of national identity. Likewise, the belief that nationalism and secularization are somehow linked could, for many, be a result of simply noting the temporal simultaneity of nationalism’s seeming rise (again, from a modernist perspective) and religion’s seeming decline.

Yet some see more to the connection. Indeed, modernist theories of nationalism and its relationship with religion tend to take one of several forms: (a) what we might call “vacuum” theories, which see nationalism as filling a cultural space produced by religion’s demise following secularization, which is a product of independent causes; (b) theories that treat nationalism as a distinctly modern form of religion; and (c) theories that see nationalism as actively displacing religion and thus fomenting a kind of secularization. Each of these perspectives has its own implications for the concept of religious nationalism.

Those theories that we are calling vacuum theories presuppose some degree of prior secularization (the alleged causes of the said secularization vary from theory to theory and range from the rise of science and related forms of rationalization to, in Benedict Anderson’s famous account, the transformation of print technologies and the commercial market for printed products). They tend to argue that nationalism fills the gap left by religion’s decline. Different theories argue for the centrality of different sorts of gaps. Some, for example, think of the fundamental impact of religion’s decline as a reduction in its ability to generate a coherent image of the broader cosmos and to provide meaning. Nationalism might thus be seen as a functional equivalent at least insofar as it can provide an alternative structure of meanings. Others point to religion’s decline, creating a systemic need for new sources of and justifications for political authority—and nationalism as providing that authority: The projects of the state and the duties it imposes, which would have been rationalized before in religious terms, are now presented as binding on members of the nation by virtue of their membership.

A view that is at least superficially similar takes nationalism to *be* a religion. Some theorists, such

as Josep Llobera, argue that nationalism, in essence, *deifies* the nation, and a number of other scholars note that nationalism has the potential to “sacralize” the nation. It is important to remember here, though, that the religious/secular distinction and the sacred/profane distinction are identical only if one accepts an essentially Durkheimian view of religion. If one does not, then it is perfectly consistent to see nationalism as sacralizing elements of social life while remaining an essentially secular force. The most fundamental divide among scholars who treat nationalism as a kind of religion is between those who are modernists as defined above and those who are primordialists—that is, between those who see nationalism and religion as seamlessly linked cultural dimensions of any society and those who see nationalism as distinct from what they judge to be other forms of religion. Among the modernists are those who see nationalism as a form of “civil religion,” though, it should be noted that Robert Bellah, the most influential author on the subject of civil religion in the context of the United States, is careful to specify that though related and overlapping, American nationalism and civil religion are not identical.

Yet another view resembles the vacuum theories perspective in so far as it posits a strong link between nationalism and secularization but differs from it in that it posits an active causal role for nationalism in *fomenting* secularization. Liah Greenfeld—a modernist theorist of nationalism—has argued that what distinguishes national identity from earlier forms of identity is that it posits that the members of a nation are fundamentally equal and that, moreover, the nation itself is declared sovereign. Rather than simply filling a gap left by religion’s alleged decline, this suggests that nationalism may play an active causal role in displacing religion from some of its most important functions. Such a view has a good deal to recommend it. First, it accords well with recent turns in the literature on secularization. Scholars have in the past several decades criticized and debated earlier approaches to and conceptualizations of secularization, and several have notably argued for drawing distinctions between possibly distinct processes such as the alleged decline of religious belief and the differentiation of a variety of social spheres and/or institutions from religion’s

influence. In different ways, José Casanova, Mark Chaves, and David Martin have been particularly significant in pushing these developments. Recent research that chooses to focus on a particular form of secularization—essentially the secularization of the state and the variety of forms that this process takes—would do well to consider nationalism as a potential causal factor in producing these transformations. Indeed, if national identity is a fundamentally modern phenomenon, if this form of secularization is likewise taken to be modern, and moreover if the process of the spread of nationalism and the spread of at least partial secularization of the state are chronologically consistent with each other, this is highly suggestive. This is indeed the case in the major European cases and in Latin America, and it seems to be true of much of Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. Of course, state secularization takes a variety of forms—general patterns of variation being extant both within and between these regions—and it seems likely that a variety of factors influence the extent and shape of church-state differentiation following the rise of nationalism. The major factors seem to be the following: (a) the degree of religious pluralism in the society in question, (b) the institutional forms of the major religious groups present in the society in question, (c) the type of nationalism in each case (e.g., ethnic vs. civic, individualistic vs. collectivistic), (d) the position of the social groups that first import nationalism into a given society vis-à-vis other groups within that society (i.e., the position within a given society’s internal stratification system of nationalism’s *carriers*), and (e) the alliances between those groups, their opponents, and religious organizations during the conflicts that inevitably arise when a society’s identity becomes national rather than purely religious in character.

At the same time, a great deal of empirical research in this area remains to be done.

Religion and the Nation in a National World

It is worth remembering, though, that even if the rise of national identity may cause a particular kind of secularization, this does not mean that national societies are not religious or that, as noted above, fully national societies’ political worlds lose touch with the sacred, or even that *religious* elements of their political worlds are entirely eliminated or

privatized. The relationship between nationalism and religion can take many forms. Some of the common patterns are as follows:

1. The *anticlerical or "laicist" form*, in which nationalists in control of the state aim to eradicate or otherwise to severely circumscribe religion and religious institutions. The classic case here is revolutionary France, though one sees less successful efforts in this connection throughout Latin America, and it is clearly present in the anticolonial, "modernizing" nationalist projects of Egypt and Turkey, among other places. While we do not know for sure, this seems a likely outcome when (a) religious monopoly is present and the form of organization prior to the emergence of nationalism is the church form (as defined by Max Weber and Ernst Troeltsch), (b) nationalism is carried by a group that does not find itself in a strategic alliance with the ecclesiastical hierarchy, (c) the nationalism in question is of the collectivistic variety, and (d) the church or other religious organization in question aims to confront nationalism, reduce its spread, and avoid its implications for the reorganization of political life.

2. The *denominational form* (as analyzed by Niebuhr, though not specifically in relation to national consciousness), in which the state takes on a stance of at least de jure neutrality vis-à-vis religious organizations and national membership does not presuppose any particular sort of membership in one religious organization or another. It is important to recall that this is an ideal type, and in actual empirical cases, there may be limits to the pluralism that is culturally recognized as consistent with national unity. It is also worth noting that the kind of civil religion discussed by Bellah is only possible given this type of settlement of the conflict between national and religious conceptions of sovereignty. Here, the classic case is the United States. The United Kingdom, though it does technically have an established church, among several others that formally adhere to the "national church form," falls in this category.

3. The *national church form*, in which religion is given a central symbolic place in the national imaginary. Ideally, the boundaries of the nation and its chosen religion are isomorphic: One essentially cannot be a member of the nation without

being a member of the religious group in question. In actual point of fact, though, there is often tension between this settlement, which aims to render religious identity and loyalty subservient to national identity and loyalty, and the broader churches or other religious organizations, whose boundaries extend beyond any given nation-state and which often have universalistic goals. Conflict with the Roman Catholic Church is paradigmatic here, though similar problems can be found in other arenas of church-state relations, such as in the world(s) of Eastern Orthodoxy. In some cases, though, schismatic national churches have been developed. These were attempted, among other places, in various parts of 19th-century Latin America and again very recently on a small scale in Venezuela, though it is unclear how influential this will be. Frequently, there is also conflict between the ideal/typical vision of a pure isomorphism of religious and national boundaries and the presence of religious minorities. This can be resolved in a variety of ways, and social reality in this case—as in others—does not correspond perfectly to the pure type. Yet even a latent or potential conflict of this sort—in a way analogous to the presence of minority ethnic groups in secular nationalist societies that construct their boundaries in ethnic terms—has the potential to serve as a point of cleavage in the event of economic or political difficulties. Political entrepreneurs can and sometimes do exploit such points of cleavage to demonize and scapegoat religious minorities under such conditions. This form, which is very common, is often conflated with religious nationalism as such, although it is worth stressing that it is only one of several possible forms of religious nationalism.

4. The *separatist religious nationalism form*, in which a group that feels in some way alienated from the power of the state or the mainstream society that the state represents attempts to establish boundaries between itself and (a) other religious or ethnoreligious groups and/or (b) the secular order of the state itself and to then use those boundaries as a wedge for political action. This type is considerably varied. For example, there is considerable variation between majority- and minority-group religious separatist nationalism as well as between nationalisms that aim to carve out a distinct geopolitical space for themselves and those that aim to

achieve revolutionary change within an existing geopolitical space (in short, between those who aim to create their own religious-national state and those who merely seek to increase their influence over an existing state). Finally, there are important analytical distinctions to be drawn—discussed in more detail below—between cases of religious nationalism and movements that seem to be forms of religious nationalism but actually are not nationalisms at all, and between different types of “transnational” religious action.

Nationalism, “Religious Return,” and the Contemporary World

Perhaps the most important scholar working in this area has been Mark Juergensmeyer, who treats the current frequency of radical religious engagement in politics as a wave of religious nationalism, itself formed in response to the prior development of secular nationalism and the secular state, to which secular nationalism gives rise (or which, at least, secular nationalism seeks to create). In much of the world, the path of transmission of national identity to begin with was via colonialism, which, as a carrier of Western “modernity” more broadly, defined both colonizing and colonized populations as nations, essentializing this contingent and particular way of conceptualizing human communities and rendering it normative. Thus, when anticolonial independence movements spread throughout much of the world over the course of the 20th century, they did so, in part, through a process in which their elite leaders framed their action in relation to Western-derived ideas of the nation and its sovereign rights. This means that they framed the political projects of these newly independent states in secular terms (and, very often, it is worth further noting, they approached nation-religion relations through the French-derived anticlerical/“laicist” model noted above). As Juergensmeyer’s analysis suggests, this produced a situation in which, potentially, disaffected members of these societies could critique the modernizing projects of their own elites as more subtle extensions of the colonial rule of their former oppressors, particularly when the secular projects of independent national states were sullied by their own apparent hypocrisy (e.g., corruption and clientelism, widespread abuse of human rights).

The potential for religiously framed social movement activity and even revolutionary action against secular nationalist regimes became only clearer in cases—such as that of Iran under the Shah—in which such governments were openly supported by foreign powers, particularly the United States (though it is worth remembering that the intellectual trajectory of much of contemporary radical jihadism has its roots in Egypt, where it thrived even under Nasser’s radical anti-Americanism).

Beneath this general pattern lurks considerable variation. Indeed, it is fairly difficult to discern the extent to which many of the best known cases of contemporary religious militancy deserve the label of religious *nationalism*, evidence a traditional (prenational) orientation, or constitute the emergence of some new form of political identity. More to the point, each of the best known political-religious movements of the contemporary world is likely made up of a variety of subgroups and individual actors who think of themselves, their movements, their societies, and the basic sources of political authority in starkly different terms. At the ideal/typical level, we can try to disentangle and clarify some of these strands.

1. First, one is likely to find some traditionally religious actors, meaning those who never fully internalized national identity and its basic implications. Such actors, therefore, never internalized the notion that the ultimate basis of political authority is or ought to be the sovereign will of the people. This idea, for such actors, would have been encountered only in oppositional terms: The idea served as the basis for those very social actors who they believe to have sold out or colluded with the West. For such actors, the entire “national project,” identified with secularism, can be rejected in favor of a traditional religious identity. The Taliban of Afghanistan would be a reasonable approximation of this ideal/typical case.

2. Second, and probably more often, particularly among leaders of “religious nationalist” movements, social actors would have first internalized the basic tenets of secular nationalism and then reconsidered them, rejecting key elements. The Iranian Revolution, among many others, gives ample illustration of this pattern,

particularly given that the revolution itself, as scholars such as Saïd Arjomand and Charles Kurzman have pointed out, was made not just by a multiclass coalition but by one evidencing considerable ideological heterogeneity, including Marxists, secular nationalists, and religious devotees. Even religious leaders such as Khomeini began their political careers deploying the concept of the nation in what seems to be a secular sense. In such cases, one is likely to find that though nationalism's basic structure is upheld, a particular conception of the nation and its boundaries is disputed, to be replaced by another, religious, conception. The fundamental point of contention, of course, as in different ways the work of both Greenfeld and Juergensmeyer suggests, concerns where ultimate authority is imagined to derive from. From an ideal/typical nationalist point of view, it is imagined to derive from "the people." From an ideal/typical religious point of view, it is supposed to derive from some transcendent source. Yet the seeming contradiction can be dealt with in a variety of ways. First, cognitive dissonance is only generated if the social actors in question are conscious of the distinction and see clearly the ideal/typical poles. If, however, it is believed that the will of the people and that of the deity coincide, either in actual point of fact (e.g., it is believed that "the people" actually favor a more robust role for religion in public life, against the wishes of those who have betrayed both the nation and the deity) or at the level of logical possibility (e.g., it is believed that "the people" cannot truly will anything that is not righteous and that the individual wills that seem to conflict with the deity's imagined will are in error—a view not so distinct from Rousseau's notion that the general will "never errs" and is not reducible to the wills of individuals), then this is not a problem. Thus, while it may be difficult to reconcile religious nationalism with the kind of pluralist democracy that one finds in individualistic and civic nationalisms, it is not necessarily inconsistent with collectivistic nationalisms and the kinds of democratic (or nondemocratic) practice with which they are associated.

3. Third, a broad group of actors are sometimes referred to as "transnational." What is worth stressing here is that transnational identities can take either of the two forms discussed above.

That is, transnationalism can be bound to traditional religion or can be "postnational" (and thus carry nationalism with it). The Catholic Church's engagement with and opposition to nationalism (most notably over the course of the 19th century) was "transnational" in character, given that the Church as a universal community was defined as more important than the particularistic communities tied to the temporal powers of the nation-state. This same kind of universalism was present in many, though not all, traditional religions before their engagement with nationalism. To the extent that some transnational actors mirror these earlier forms of universalism, they can be considered traditionally religious. Yet most of the transnational actors of concern to students of contemporary religious nationalism seem to fall into the second category. That is, their thinking is "postnational": Even if it formally rejects the idea of the nation and the nation-state, it carries with it key nationalist ideas. Indeed, the question of whether the critique of secular nationalism as neo-colonialism can be made outside a nationalist framework is a legitimate one.

Conclusion

While much of the contemporary interest in questions of religious nationalism has been focused on it as a source of conflict and even collective violence, in closing this entry, it is worth stressing that not all religious nationalisms inevitably lead in this direction. Indeed, recently scholars such as José Casanova have pointed to a variety of attempts at the reconciliation of religious politics with pluralist democracy in the contemporary world, and the exemplary case of religious nationalism in Poland expressing itself through the peaceful and democratic solidarity movement has been masterfully analyzed by Genevieve Zubrzycki. In any case, it remains clear that both religion and nationalism—sometimes in tandem and sometimes in tension with one another—remain among the most potent ideological forces in the contemporary world, and their further study, at the levels of both theoretical clarification and empirical analysis, is in order.

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See also Authority; Civil Religion; Equality; Ethnic Nationalism; French Revolution; Global Religion; Hindu Nationalism; Islamism (Political Islam); Laicization; Modernization; Multiple Modernities; Politics and Religion

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RÉUNION

On a visit to this Indian Ocean island in 1989, the pope noted Réunion's reputation for racial and religious harmony. The landscape, dotted with Hindu and Buddhist temples, mosques, and Catholic and Protestant churches, matches this reputation for hybridity. As a French overseas department, Réunion is classified as mostly Catholic, and religion is considered mainly a private matter, as in the French tradition. However, a 2008 survey confirmed growing religious syncretism, especially among younger and poorer Réunionnese. *Métissage* (mixing) through religion and marriage first started with colonization, which officially began in 1665. African and Malagasy slaves and, later, Indian contract laborers and Chinese "coolies" were obliged to become Catholic. They were thus creolized, or welded together—their own ancestors' religious beliefs and practices forced into the background. Ironically, the dominance of Catholicism helped lay a common basis for more religious syncretism recently, especially among younger and poorer people. Réunion does not have its own syncretic religion, such as Vodou in Haiti, but its population have many shared religious practices, as in neighboring

Mauritius, where the dominance of Catholicism has historically been much less than in Réunion.

During the colonial era, the religious beliefs, rituals, and faith-based practices of immigrant groups took mainly cultural forms. The *maloya*, a dance of Malagasy origin, for example, was originally performed in honor of the dead. Animist beliefs and devotion to the dead have remained widely shared and are expressed in *servis malgas*, a recent revival, for example, where people “speak” with ancestors. People’s religious identities in Réunion are more mixed than the following separate identity categories of Creole society imply: Kaf is a person of African origin, descended from former slaves, and is distinguished from the Metis (mixed people). A Malbar or Tamoul person is of Indian, but not of Muslim, origin and can be called a Hindu. Ti Blancs (from *petits blancs*, or “poor whites”) now mostly live in mainland France or the mountainous interior. Chinois are descended from Chinese laborers and mostly run corner shops; like the Malbars, many Chinese converted to Catholicism while maintaining some beliefs, in their case from Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism. Hindus, from Malabar, Bengal, Kolkata (formerly Calcutta), and Puducherry (formerly Pondicherry), similarly were forced to adopt Catholicism and were thus similarly creolized. Only economically independent and more recent migrant groups, such as the Zarab (Muslim traders, not “Arabs” as the term suggests) and the metropolitan French (*Zoreil*), who arrived in the past century, could resist creolization through conversion to Catholicism. Retaining their distinctive culture and beliefs, Muslims remain a distinctive faith-based group in Réunion, even though they share some ancestral and animistic beliefs with the rest of the island’s population. It is interesting—again according to the 2008 survey—that younger and poorer Réunionnese tend to be more syncretic than wealthier and older people. Among low- and middle-income groups, it is more common to practice two or even three religions, with just one religion the norm among wealthier people, including mixed people, those from mainland France, or the Zarab. Syncretic religious practices in Réunion today are as much a matter of social class as of community or ancestry.

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See also France; Haiti; India; Madagascar; Mauritius

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RITES OF PASSAGE

Rites of passage are rituals that mark what are conventionally agreed to be critical or landmark stages in the life of an individual, such as birth, puberty, marriage, and death. The Belgian anthropologist and ethnographer Arnold van Gennep (1873–1957) used the term *rites of passage* to categorize the rites of what he described as “life crises,” the accompanying stages that mark the transition of individuals from one stage of life to another. In his seminal text *Les Rites de Passage*, which was first published in 1909 (with the first English translation, *The Rites of Passage*, appearing in 1960), van Gennep considered rites from within the standpoint of their religious and social context.

A rite of passage usually accompanies a change in biological or social status. The shift from childhood to puberty is an example that cuts across both domains. The biological changes that occur during puberty are also accompanied by social changes, where a girl becomes a woman or a boy becomes a man. Rites of passage are often marked by ceremonial acts, such as naming, circumcision, and puberty rituals.

In the above cases, the rites of passage are specific to an individual’s life and do not correspond to calendar time. However, the term *rites of passage* is also used with reference to the changes of the seasons or marking the New Year. In these examples, the same pattern can be applied—so the “death” of the old year is replaced by welcoming the New Year.

van Gennep argued for the anthropological importance of rites of passage as a regulatory mechanism to ensure the functioning nature of society. With a rite of passage, it is not simply the individual who is affected but also the family and the wider community. And it is often high-standing members of the religious community or tribe who are involved in the implementation of the rite of passage. van Gennep conceived of life in society as

a house with many rooms, where the individual moves from room to room. The spatial separation of rooms reflects van Gennep's understanding of the stages in life as operating as definitive passages that do not happen gradually but abruptly and through a series of ritualized actions that demarcate the passage from one to the other. He also describes the ritual process in geographical terms, with recourse to the metaphors of entrances or exits, crossings and journeys, and crossroads and thresholds. Many rites of passage are one-way and so cannot be reversed—you cannot return to boyhood following manhood. An exception is the annulment of a marriage.

Some religions recognize the significance of rites of passage within their philosophies. Hinduism, for example, recognizes four stages or *ashramas*: the youth or student, the householder, the hermit, and the renouncer or ascetic. Van Gennep identifies three major stages or phases that occur in all rites of passage irrespective of culture or religion. These are separation, transition, and incorporation. He also stated that some rites might focus on or develop one of the stages more than other stages in the ritual act. So while the stage of separation may be more central in funeral ceremonies, incorporation is often more significant in marriages. However, all rites involve some degree of experiencing each of the stages before they are fully accepted into the society or culture. In the case of death, the three stages aid the community in coming to terms with the deceased. These are complex stages that are clearly demarcated by separation, transition, and incorporation. Some theorists describe the last phase as reincorporation because the individual is returning to the community, albeit in a different status after a period of separation.

From Separation to Transition to Incorporation

In the first stage of separation, the individual experiences separation from his or her current affiliation. One is removed from normal social life and is stripped of former ties and affiliations. One is singled out, is often physically separated from the group, and is regarded as outside the group. One is, to use a phrase employed by the British anthropologist Victor Turner, “betwixt and between.”

In the second stage, the individual is suspended between the old and new states. One is regarded as an outsider and is marginalized within the community. One is in a state of limbo or liminality, at the threshold between different states. In this liminal state, roles are often suspended or reversed. Turner (1969) modified van Gennep's three-part structure into structure, antistructure (which corresponds with the transitional or liminal phase), and revised structure, and he focused on the importance of the liminal phase, which, he argued, demonstrated *communitas*. The ambiguous and amorphous status of the individual in this stage means that he or she is vulnerable. The British anthropologist Mary Douglas has argued that there are dangers surrounding an individual in this state of indeterminate identity. The individual transgresses boundaries and is capable of polluting others. Another way of framing the differences is to think in terms of the sacred and the profane—where the community represents the profane, while the individual undergoing the rite of passage is sacred. The etymology of the term *sacred*, to set apart, refers to the position of the individual who is suspended between two states. In the liminal state, the sacred individual has to be kept apart from the profane.

The third and final stage involves the reincorporation of the individual into the group, culture, and society. One has completed the process and now has a new status within the community. This is often marked symbolically with the giving of gifts, feasting, and other communal actions.

From the first to the third stage, the old status of the individual is removed and the new status conferred. The third stage can be viewed as the reversal of the first stage; instead of being stripped away, new meaning and identity are given to the individual, and he or she is welcomed back into the community. From the first stage to the third stage, there is a preponderance of symbolic rituals, many of which involve bathing or washing and the putting on of new clothes. This symbolizes the shift from the old to the new, where the physical changes mirror the psychological changes that the individual has undergone and the social shifts of status. Some rites of passage involve assessment or examination. The explanation for this is that the initiate is under surveillance and is being tested for his or her worthiness. This might require one to

perform an activity, such as reading from sacred texts, or to give a testimony. In more extreme cases, such as in African rituals of scarification, pain is inflicted on the initiate.

Although generalizations can be made with regard to what are regarded as landmark occasions in the life of an individual—birth, puberty, marriage, and death—the importance attributed to certain rites of passage varies. In some cultures where importance is given to ancestry, such as in East Asian religions, funeral rituals are often lengthy. Death is structured according to a complex series of ceremonies that mark the transformation of the dead person into an elder. Maximum attention is paid to ensure that the soul of the deceased leaves the body and joins the ancestors.

There is also enormous variation in the particular rituals that mark these various rites of passage. In some religions, there is an equivalence or similitude between the puberty rites of passage; so, for example, in Judaism the Bar Mitzvah denotes the passage from boyhood to manhood, and the Bat Mitzvah marks the transition from girlhood to womanhood. There are slight differences in the ritual ceremonies or in the implications of the rituals: After the Bar Mitzvah, the initiate is counted in a minyan of 10 Jewish adults for prayer, but the same does not apply after the Bat Mitzvah, where, particularly in the Orthodox tradition, girls cannot be included in a minyan. It should also be noted that the Bat Mitzvah has not been completely accepted in the Orthodox Jewish tradition, compared with its practice in the Reform, Conservative, and Reconstructionist traditions originating around the 1920s. In Hinduism, there is a coming-of-age rite for Brahman boys, known as *Upanayana*, which in translation means “a sacred thread ceremony”; however, there is no equivalent for girls as a separate ceremony. The marriage ceremony is regarded as significant for girls and marks their transition from girls to women and also from a daughter to a wife.

In contemporary culture, with changes in the social structure, as with regard to women’s rights, some rites of passage have been modified and modernized. There are also greater choices in many societies for individuals—the institution of marriage is not a necessity in many societies and cultures. Conventions too have changed with

regard to a variety of social and cultural traditions and have led to the expansion, or in some cases the dilution, of rites of passage. Particularly in Western societies, rites of passage have become more individualistic and less a matter for the community.

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See also Ancestors; Death Ritual; Douglas, Mary; Festivals

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ROMAN CATHOLICISM

The Roman Catholic Church is the largest branch of Christianity and is a global institution, headquartered in the city-state of Vatican City in the heart of Rome, Italy. It has a presence in more than 220 countries, numerically most pronounced in Brazil, Mexico, the United States, and the Philippines, and is currently experiencing fast-paced, exponential growth in Africa and Asia. The Church’s multinational presence; the cultural and economic diversity of its population; the expansive range of its institutional services (e.g., education, health, social welfare) and interinstitutional relations; its active public engagement with issues of economic development, social justice, and human ethics; and its increasing attention to the socioeconomic and geopolitical challenges of globalization consolidate its core relevance to any discussion of globalization. This entry provides a selective overview of critical historical developments in the evolving history and identity of Catholicism and discusses its current demographic composition, its ethnocultural and interpretive diversity, its social doctrine, and its response to globalization and religious pluralism.

Critical Historical Events

In one sense, Roman Catholicism exists only in distinction to Orthodox and Protestant branches of Christianity, and the earlier history of Christianity that is common to all three branches is a separate historical narrative. In another way of viewing the history of Roman Catholicism, it can be merged with the history of Christianity itself, thereby spanning close to two millennia. It is understandably, therefore, a complex and multi-layered narrative encompassing wide-ranging theological debates, political events, intra-institutional reforms, and diverse philosophers (e.g., Thomas Aquinas), prophetic thinkers (e.g., Jacques Maritain), and charismatic figures (e.g., Pope John XXIII, Pope John Paul II, Dorothy Day). In terms of understanding the institutional evolution of Roman Catholicism in the modern era, a few transformative events stand out. One salient event is the Council of Trent (1545–1553), convened in response to the emergence of Protestantism following the Reformation spearheaded by the German theologian Martin Luther (1511) as a protest against certain aspects of Catholic theology (e.g., the mediating authority of the pope, bishops, and priests between the individual believer and God) and specific institutional practices (e.g., the granting of indulgences or a remission of sins in exchange for money from wealthy families). The Council condemned Protestantism and affirmed several tenets of Catholic teaching (e.g., the centrality of the sacraments, Eucharistic transubstantiation, the importance of the saints and the Blessed Virgin Mary, the sacred authority of priestly ordination and of the Church hierarchy, the importance of faith and good works for redemption) that sought to sharply differentiate Catholicism from Protestantism.

The Council of Trent's legacy was not only significant in establishing a well-demarcated, authoritative outline of Catholicism and what specific beliefs and practices Church membership entailed, it also contributed to consolidating the religious-geographical-political divide set in motion in Europe following the Reformation, whose contours intertwined the subsequent political and militaristic conflicts that dominated Europe into the early decades of the 20th century. Amid this drawn-out turmoil, Catholicism became associated with a regressive stance, whereas Protestantism

was seen as accelerating the march of modernity economically (e.g., industrialization and the growth of capitalism), politically (e.g., the consolidation of the authority of the nation-state), and culturally (e.g., the emphasis on the values of individualism, pluralism, and scientific reasoning). Amid the transformative changes of the late 19th century, the Church's official assertion of its long-held presumption of papal infallibility (at the First Vatican Council, 1869–1870) and its condemnation of Americanism (by Pope Leo XIII, 1899) and modernism (by Pope Pius IX, 1907) conjointly crystallized what was seen as its failure to adapt to modernity and solidified the perception of it as a tradition-bound, immutable institution whose relevance belonged to an earlier, pre-Enlightenment and antidemocratic era.

The idea that Catholic doctrine and institutional practices were set in stone was radically undermined, however, by the church hierarchy itself at the Second Vatican Council (Vatican II; 1962–1965), when the Catholic bishops of the world convened in Rome for an unprecedented, comprehensive, open-ended, and deliberative evaluation of Church doctrines and traditions. In the long sweep of the Roman Catholic Church's history, Vatican II is considered revolutionary. Its overarching commitment was to open the Church to the modern world, and this it accomplished through several wide-ranging reinterpretations of Church teaching and major reorientations in the Church's institutional identity and practices. Among its many transformative changes was a new emphasis on the active role of the laity in the life of the Church (e.g., embracing the ethos of the Church as the "People of God"), the affirmation of religious freedom and personal conscience in moral choices, and the importance of reevaluating knowledge and personal and institutional decisions in light of historical consciousness and social-scientific research.

Vatican II also marked a new departure in the Church's and Catholics' understanding of their role in civil society. It affirmed the validity of religious and cultural pluralism, the necessary importance of a differentiation between the functions of Church and state, and the obligation of Church leaders and laity to become a publicly engaged Church—civic actors who advocated in particular for equality and social justice—and thus for

Catholics to collectively work with others to remedy unjust social institutions. Vatican II redefined the Church from a rigidly hierarchical, authoritarian, imperialist, and antimodern institution to one that became more relevant to and highly engaged in the modern world, a church whose leadership is not afraid to assert itself in complex public debates and to claim moral authority not just among Catholics but in society at large.

Demographic Composition

There are many strands in the multifaceted and highly diverse character of post-Vatican II Catholicism. Changing demographic patterns across the globe is a major component of the dynamics of contemporary Catholicism. Population growth since the 1950s has led to a doubling of the world's Catholic population (from approximately 437 million to more than 1 billion). As noted by Bryan Froehle and Mary Gautier, population increase in Africa coupled with population decline in Europe and concomitant trends in the geographic distribution of the Catholic population have given greater visibility to the Church in Africa, even though Catholicism continues to be a dominant religion in Europe (approximately 40% Catholic) and even more so in North and South America (approximately 50% Catholic). In South America, according to the 2006 Pew Forum, Catholicism remains strong but has increasingly to compete against a post-1970s surge in the popularity of Pentecostalism (from approximately 4% to 28% of the region's population), a trend especially evident in Brazil, Chile, Argentina, and some Central American countries. In the United States, the percentage of Catholics has remained remarkably steady since the 1960s; currently, Catholics constitute 24% and Protestants 51% of the population. Despite the stability in the proportion of U.S. Catholics, there is much fluidity in the composition of the Catholic population. As noted by the 2008 Pew Forum, Catholics are far more likely than those affiliated with other denominations to switch from their childhood religion in adulthood, but this net loss (of approximately 7.5%) is largely offset by the inflow of Latin American immigrants—close to half (46%) of all U.S. immigrants are Catholic. Therefore, just as European immigrants were critical to the substantial growth in the U.S. Catholic

Church in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, current immigration trends are bolstering the Catholic population and at a time of attenuation of Protestantism's historical dominance.

Ethnocultural and Doctrinal Diversity

The ethnocultural diversity of Catholicism translates too into a diversity of doctrinal views. Catholic identity is far from being a monolithic or one-dimensional phenomenon. Although the Church strongly emphasizes the transnational universality of its liturgy and doctrine, Church practices and Catholics' beliefs are highly contingent on the specific local—and not just national—context in which they are expressed. While many see interpretive diversity in any institution, tradition, or society as a sign of vitality and engagement, it is, nonetheless, not without tension. In Catholicism, this tension shows itself in several varied ways. One of the biggest internal challenges for the Church is how to craft an authentic global Catholic community amid and out of its geographical and cultural diversity. Most visibly, this tension is seen in Church leadership—although a global universal church, all of the modern popes have been Italian until the election of the Polish pope John Paul II (in 1979) and his German successor, Pope Benedict XVI (in 2007). In recent years, American and some non-Western cardinals and priests have gained greater access to the levers of Vatican decision-making power. Nonetheless, the Church's historical Eurocentrism (and its legacy in establishing U.S. Catholicism) tends to slow down its response to the changing currents in the Church. In the United States, for example, there are several local tensions over the accommodation and assimilation of new Hispanic immigrants and their particularistic rituals (e.g., special devotions to Mary and other popular figures) in churches founded by earlier generations of European immigrants, whose ethnic offspring have long since moved elsewhere.

The unity of purpose of a global Catholicism is also challenged by the variation in the pressing issues confronting bishops and laity in different regions of the world. Whereas majorities of American and European lay Catholics want priority given to changing Church teaching on women's ordination and celibacy, African bishops are

focused on meeting the most basic material, health, and literacy needs of their communities. Similarly, issues pertaining to AIDS and to birth control have much greater practical urgency in Africa and Latin America than in the West, notwithstanding their relevance here too.

Political context also matters and cautions against any assumption that the Church speaks or can speak with one voice. In Europe, Church leaders negotiate a highly secular civic society, where it is strongly presumed that religious voices and religion-based arguments should not impose on political debates; in the United States, Catholic bishops compete with several other religious and nonreligious groups to make their moral teaching and policy views known (e.g., against abortion and stem cell research and in favor of immigration reform), and they do so even against the views expressed by substantial numbers of their own members. In many South American countries, Catholic leaders are negotiating the new legitimation challenges emerging from their loss of government support and the attenuation of long-standing political alliances between the Catholic Church and the state. In China, Church leaders defend an underground church; and in many African countries, Catholic bishops feel obliged, but not always empowered, to stand up to highly corrupt and authoritarian political leaders.

This broad portrait of Church differences and dilemmas across the globe necessarily sweeps over the many nuances and differences in Church political/civic relations within any one nation or region. By the same token, there is also remarkable diversity of doctrinal beliefs and of Church-related and other attitudes across, and among, Catholics within any one national, ethnic, or cultural context. In part, this diversity stems from the multiple strands and interpretive traditions that constitute the large body of Catholic theology and from Catholicism's core commitment to the coupling of faith and reason, an ethos that legitimates the application of an informed and reasoned assessment in the practical interpretation of Catholic teaching in a particular lived, social context. Interpretive diversity is especially apparent regarding Church teaching on gender and sexuality. For example, although American Catholics (along with the Irish and the Poles) are among the most

frequent churchgoers in the Western world (approximately one third of U.S. Catholics report monthly Mass attendance), their doctrinal and Church-related views frequently deviate from official Vatican teaching. Large majorities of U.S. Catholics favor the use of artificial contraception (banned by Pope Paul VI in his 1968 encyclical *Humanae Vitae* [Of Human Life]), oppose celibacy for priests (a Church rule dating back to the fourth century), and favor women's ordination (despite the Vatican's theological opposition to women priests). Similarly, a majority favor the legal right to abortion, a stance that is a particular ongoing frustration to Church officials, who have made opposition to abortion a core part of the Church's moral and social teaching on the right to life, and Catholics increasingly favor same-sex unions (despite the Vatican's natural law-based declaration of homosexuality as an objectively disordered condition). On all of these issues, American Catholics' views are essentially echoed among European Catholics, whose increasing secularism since the 1970s, as highlighted by the legalization of contraception, abortion, and same-sex relations in even the most culturally Catholic of countries (e.g., Italy, Spain, Ireland), is of particular concern to the Vatican.

The Church's Teaching on Social Justice

Economic and social justice is the second major axis in the Church's sociomoral teaching. Since the late 19th century, notwithstanding criticisms then of the Church's irrelevance to the modern world, the Vatican has actively argued in favor of greater economic equality against the backdrop of industrialization and the excesses of capitalism. As in its teaching on gender and sexuality, the Vatican grounds its analysis of economic justice largely in natural law and individual reason (rather than Scripture alone). In a major encyclical coinciding with the early impact of industrialization, *Rerum Novarum* (Of New Things, 1891), Pope Leo XIII affirmed the right to private property and condemned socialism but also affirmed the rights of workers to a fair wage, the social value of labor unions, and the moral obligation of governments to buffer individuals and families from the harsh conditions of competitive, profit-driven capitalism. These themes have been variously elaborated and

nuanced in several successive encyclicals and, most notably in a time of further economic and political transformation, by Pope John Paul II in 1991, in *Centesimus Annus*, coinciding with the 100th anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*.

Additionally, Catholic leaders have devoted significant attention to denouncing war (e.g., outlining strict grounds as to when war might be morally justified) and have also offered a trenchant critique of the superficiality of the consumer culture. The Vatican's emphasis on a significant role for government in ensuring the economic and social welfare of all in society, with particular attention to the needs of the underprivileged, has been a cornerstone of Catholic teaching. It is also one that frequently pits Church leaders against politicians and members of its own laity who favor free market economic policies, notwithstanding the social problems they exacerbate (e.g., unemployment, homelessness, health underinsurance). Overall, however, Catholic laity in the West are far more likely to agree with official Catholic teaching on peace and economic justice than with the Church's stance on sexuality and women's roles.

Globalization and Religious Pluralism

Catholicism's long-standing concern with human dignity and the expansion of human rights informs its approach to the emerging processes and consequences of globalization. In 2009, coinciding with the G8 Summit in Italy, Pope Benedict XVI issued an encyclical, *Caritas in Veritate* (Charity in Truth), in which he argued that there was an urgent need for a global political authority to manage the economic crisis effects of global capitalism and to institute policies that would transform what he termed the unethical and perniciously sinful economic practices that perpetuate inequality and trample on social justice. Specifically, Pope Benedict stated that "business management . . . must . . . assume responsibility for all the other stakeholders who contribute to the life of the business: the workers, the clients, the [production] suppliers . . . the [larger] community" (No. 40). The encyclical also emphasized human responsibility for stewardship of the environment and discussed the challenges encountered in a globalizing society by a wide range of issues including migration, sexual tourism, terrorism, energy use, and bioethics. These issues and

the dilemmas associated with implementing more economically equal and nonexploitative social relations are known to Church officials firsthand as a result of the Church's long missionary and institutional presence (including its global Catholic Relief Services) on the ground in many poor communities, particularly in Africa, Asia, and Central and South America.

Although the Catholic Church is well attuned to the economic and social issues surrounding globalization, it continues to struggle in its negotiation of the politics of religious pluralism. Although there have been significant strides made by the Vatican to bridge its historical differences with Jews (e.g., papal visits to Israel and to symbolically rich synagogues in Rome), some of its actions—such as its promotion of the sainthood of Pope Pius XII despite some Jews' concerns that he did not do enough to condemn the Nazi deportation of Jews during World War II—continue to fuel tensions in Catholic-Jewish relations. Similarly, although the Vatican emphasizes the importance of interfaith dialogue, Pope Benedict XVI offended Muslims in a theological speech whose remarks were widely interpreted to imply that Islam was not open to reason and change. Nonetheless, the Pope has also emphasized that Catholics and Muslims—and members of other faiths too—are obliged to meet with one another and to overcome their differences while not diluting the tenets of their own faith. The practical demands this entails have been further broached by him in a dense intellectual dialogue with the eminent German social theorist Jürgen Habermas, as both seek to address—especially in the context of European post-Christian society characterized by significant numbers of Muslims of immigrant descent—how the demands of Western civic republicanism can reasonably accommodate non-Western religious and cultural differences. The bridging of differences is, clearly, a requirement of multicultural society and one that, irrespective of religion, is difficult to achieve. Nonetheless, it is understandable that as human society seeks to craft a global moral community, we might look to global religions to lead the way. Whether Catholicism and other world religions can play a prophetic role at this critical time in world civilization remains to be seen.

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See also Benedict XVI; Christianity; Eastern Orthodox Christianity; Encyclicals; Protestant Christianity; Religion and State; Religious Identity; Social Justice; Vatican Council, Second

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ROMANIA

According to the 2002 census, in the eastern European country of Romania the dominant Orthodox Church claims the allegiance of 86.7% of the country's total population of 21.7 million. Other large religious groups are the Roman Catholic Church (4.7%), the Reform Church (3.2%), and the Pentecostal Church (1.5%). The Greek Catholic Church United With Rome represents 1%, Jews 0.1%, Muslims 0.3%, and atheists another 0.1%. The Roman Catholic and Reform churches attract many of the ethnic Hungarians living in Transylvania. Like Poland, Romania is a religiously and ethnically homogeneous country and registers significantly higher levels of religiosity than other European countries. Unlike the predominantly Catholic Poland, Romania is predominantly Orthodox.

Historians have discovered proof of the existence of Christianity in Romanian lands beginning in the fourth century. By the Middle Ages, the southern and eastern parts of what is now Romania were predominantly Orthodox, and Slavonic was the official language in both church and state affairs. Greek Catholicism resulted from the conversion by the Jesuits of some Romanian Orthodox faithful in Transylvania in 1698. Many Transylvanian Hungarians and Germans were initially Catholic, but they converted to Protestantism starting in the 16th century. The Orthodox Church was recognized as the dominant church in 1866, became autocephalous in 1885, and was elevated to the rank of an autonomous patriarchate in 1925. Like other eastern European Orthodox kingdoms liberated from Ottoman rule in the 19th century, the nation-state of Romania embraced the concept of *symphonia*, whereby the church and the state collaborated for the good of the society and the state supported the preservation of an Orthodox Christian culture. *Symphonia* placed all other religious groups at a great disadvantage.

An antireligious campaign was launched after the country turned communist in 1945. The Greek Catholic Church was dismantled; anticommunist church members were imprisoned; the Concordat with the Catholic Church was revoked; and the state nationalized church property, severely restricted the training of priests, closed down confessional schools and monasteries, ceased religious instruction in public schools, and banned public religious celebrations. A dedicated secret political police department penetrated the rank and file of religious groups and marginalized unreliable clergymen. While initially the Communist Party saw religion as a capitalist remnant expected to wither away as its social basis disappeared, during the 1970s and the 1980s, it forged a special relationship with the dominant Orthodox Church, which agreed to support its policies.

Since the collapse of the communist regime in 1989, the Orthodox Church has reasserted its dominance, remaining the country's most trusted institution. New legislation allowed religious groups to be autonomous from the state and offered protection to religious minorities and non-registered groups, which can worship freely.

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See also Christianity; Eastern Orthodox Christianity; Europe; Roman Catholicism

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ROME

Rome is famous for being the headquarters of the Roman Catholic Church, a world city of pilgrimage and religious tourism. The primacy of the pope and the centrality of Rome are the product of a long history of pilgrimages, principally those of the "Holy Years." Moreover, the case of the first Global Jubilee, held in the year 2000, shows what kinds of challenges the Roman Catholic Church is facing today.

Rome has also a history of pluralism, which is often overlooked. Contemporary immigration has increased dramatically this historical-religious diversity of Rome and brought profound cultural changes. There are important signs that religious pluralism is under construction.

Rome and Catholicism

Rome is known as the center of global Catholicism. No other city in the world has a higher number of Catholic churches or institutions than the capital of Italy: more than 330 parishes, 1,700 diocesan clergies (with more than 3,500 members of religious orders), 50 new churches built just for the Jubilee 2000 celebrations, a cardinal who is the general vicar of the pope, and seven auxiliary bishops. It hosts pontifical academies, biblical and theological research institutes, a solid structure of charitable and immigrant services, the headquarters of dozens of male and female religious orders, congregations and ecclesiastical movements, and

many of the most important sacred works of art in Christendom.

Every year, millions of pilgrims arrive from all over the world. According to tradition, the martyrdom of Peter occurred in the Circus of Nero between 64 and 67 CE. His tomb became a place of pilgrimage for the early Christians. The emperor Constantine built the first basilica over the tomb, a huge building completed in 349 CE. The basilica fell into ruin with the passing of time, and it was rebuilt many times by the greatest architects of the Roman Renaissance and Baroque periods. The church today contains 45 altars and 11 chapels embellished with innumerable works of art, among which the "Pietà" of Michelangelo stands out. Under the basilica lie the tombs of many popes. Bernini's square (1656–1667), consisting of a great elliptical arcade with 284 columns and 88 pillars in travertine was designed to express the symbolic value of the square as "Christianity's port." The right-hand door of Saint Peter's Basilica only opens during the Holy Years (it is usually walled), symbolizing the passage from sin to grace.

Holy Year or Jubilee

Within its Jewish origins, the Jubilee was a holy time that occurred every 50 years. The celebration was set by rules to be found codified in the Book of Leviticus (25:1–13), and the meaning stood for the acquisition of freedom by all those who lived in misery, oppression, and slavery. The Jubilee year originally represented an expected and joyful occasion to balance social inequalities. The introduction of Jubilees or Holy Years within the Catholic Church came later, and their key elements are the "plenary indulgence" (remission of the sins through which the believer could regain a state of perfect innocence) and the pilgrimage to Rome. In the 11th century, the use of "general remissions" was widespread, granted by the pope or the bishops and related to visits to certain sanctuaries. Saint Bernard referred to the Jubilee on the occasion of the plenary indulgence granted to the participants in the Second Crusade (1144–1149). At that time, the crusaders brought from the Holy Land a huge number of relics, and the cult of these "spiritual treasures," gathered in Rome in the most important basilicas, attracted many pilgrims. The first and real Christian Jubilee is dated to

1300, when Pope Bonifacio VIII granted the plenary indulgence to all those who came to Rome “with reverence” to visit the basilicas of the apostles Peter and Paul. In 1350, Clemente VI added the Basilica of Saint John in Lateran as a goal of pilgrimage. Through the centuries, the Christian Jubilee changed in its rituals and habits, but the constant thread was the reinforcement of the centrality of Rome and the supremacy of the Pope.

In contemporary society, concerning pilgrims’ experiences, differences with the past are evident. In former times, the pilgrim’s journey was individual. The journey took longer and could be so dangerous that many died in the effort of reaching the goal. Today, mass tourism permits easy and cheap access to places of worship and museums, ranging from penitence pilgrimage to religious travel aiming at reconstruction of the sacred within the standards of a secularized society. However, yesterday and today, the Jubilee is also an occasion of socializing and meeting of people of different social backgrounds, nationalities, and ages.

The Jubilee 2000 Celebration

The year of the bimillennium of the birth of Jesus was a real global Jubilee. The Pope described it as the “first in the media age,” and the coverage by the mass media was unprecedented. Another difference concerns the territorial extension of the possibility to attain remission of sins to places other than Rome—the Holy Land (Israel/Palestine) and local churches assigned by the bishops on a global level. Notwithstanding, an estimated 25 million people arrived in Rome during 2000. It is true that besides being a spiritual event, it must also be considered as a mass touristic event. The support of the civil and political authorities (both national and from the municipality of Rome) was unconditional and included provision of funds, with major commissions for the restoration of historic churches and monuments.

Numerous empirical studies of the 2000 Jubilee showed that effectively 60% of pilgrims expressed a strong interest in the art of Rome. Moreover, as researchers have pointed out, another strong wish was “to see the pope,” consistent with predilection of the Christian narrative toward charismatic examples and the contemporary need to feel strong emotions in order to adhere subjectively to the

Divine. Furthermore, the pilgrims interviewed in Rome during 2000 suggest an emergent heterodox ethos of Catholicism. For example, regarding the priesthood for women, 47% of those interviewed were favorable, in opposition to the official position of the Catholic Church. In 2000, Rome also hosted street “oppositions to the Jubilee,” which aimed at triggering a debate about the presumed universality of the principles of Catholic morality. In a speech in St. Peter’s Square following an international gay pride march, the pope labeled it as a clear offense to Christian values.

The Rome 2000 Jubilee is also to be considered as an exceptional test for *pluralism*, both inside and outside the Catholic Church. The strong image of John Paul II, but more generally the dogma of papal infallibility and the believers’ subordination to his will, fostered conflicts that seemed irresolvable. Empirical research on the “Jubilee of others” showed the difficulty of ecumenism, starting from the words used. For example, the response of Protestants to the expression *lucrare l’indulgenza* (“to earn indulgence”), still officially in use by the Catholic Church, offers little ground for surprise; the same expression was a matter of debate even during Luther’s times. The Jubilee 2000 campaign for debt cancellation in “the poorest countries” (an initiative close to the original purpose of the Jewish Jubilee) has found support among the Baptists, Waldensians, and Seventh-Day Adventists. The dialogue is proceeding, since such debt cancellation is still a distant goal.

Rome and Other Religions

Jewish Romans

It is estimated that in Rome during the first century, there were approximately 50,000 Jews, 10% of the total population. But the long history of the Jews in Rome is marked throughout by persecutions. Already by 1215, the IV Lateran Council of the Catholic Church imposed on the Jews the obligation to wear a distinctive symbol and prohibited them from accepting public office; in 1555, Paul IV, following the example of Venice, instituted the Ghetto, which was only “opened” in 1870, when the Papal State fell. The end of the Ghetto and even the mayoral election of a Jew, Ernesto Nathan, in 1907 seemed to open a new era for Roman Jews. But the advent of fascism meant

institutional racism (Race Laws of 1938) and, later, deportation to the extermination camps. Today, the Jewish community of Rome has approximately 13,000 members, of the 35,000 Jewish Italians.

Waldensian Protestant Church

The first Waldensians arrived with the end of the Papal State (1870) that also marked the recognition of freedom to non-Catholic Christians. In 1883, they opened their first church, and a second church was opened in 1914. Today, there are approximately 1,000 members in Rome's community, plus there exists an important Waldensian Faculty of Theology.

Immigration

Today, Rome is becoming more and more a pluralistic city from a religious point of view. Migration is now a structural phenomenon, with 290,000 immigrants in the municipality of Rome and 141,500 in other municipalities of the surrounding province (January 2007 estimate). The religious and national origins of the migrants in Rome are various. The most numerous are 58,000 Muslims (Moroccans, Algerians, Tunisians, Egyptians, Somalians, Iranians, Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, etc.), 52,000 Orthodox Christians (including Romanians, Ukrainians, Moldavians, Russians, Serbians, Greeks, Egyptians, Eritreans, and Ethiopians), more than 18,000 Protestant Christians of various nationalities (Filipinos, Nigerians, Congolese, Brasilians, Peruvians, Chinese, and others), 8,500 Buddhists (Sinhalese, Japanese, and Koreans), 8,000 Hindus (Indians and Sinhalese), about 5,000 Sikhs (Indians), and about 3,000 animists from different African countries. Furthermore, the adherents of Roman Catholicism have become more diversified: 103,000 migrants of the Catholic faith come from the Philippines, Poland, Peru, Ecuador, Brazil, Colombia, Romania, Cape Verde, and Moldavia. These communities celebrate the Mass in their mother tongue and according to their own traditions. An incremental number of Catholic migrants can be seen in the autochthonous parishes; the phenomenon is even more significant among the second generation of immigrants.

Pluralism

The institution of the Advisory Council of the Religions of the City of Rome (within the special Councilor to the Mayor for Multiethnic Policy Bureau) is a significant index of dialogue and a pacific coexistence. The following communities participate in this Advisory Council: the Jewish Community of Rome, Cultural Islamic Centre of Italy, Orthodox Ethiopian Confession, Adventist Christian Church, Rome Baptist Church, Methodist Church, Waldensian Church, Lutheran Community, Pentecostal Evangelical Association, Salvation Army, Christian Science, Baha'i Centre, Italian Soka Gakkai Buddhist Institute, Italian Buddhist Union, and Italian Hindus Union Sanatana Dharma Sangha.

Within the Catholic Church can also be found people committed to interreligious dialogue and to solidarity among citizens of different faiths. Caritas of Rome is emblematic of this commitment, and among its latest publications is the fourth edition of its guide to places of worship in the city. For immigrants to Rome and the surrounding province, places of worship now number 233, of which 148 are Catholic churches, 35 Protestant churches, 28 Orthodox churches, 12 Muslim mosques, 5 Jewish synagogues, 5 Buddhist temples, 1 Hindu temple, and 1 Sikh temple.

Annalisa Frisina

See also Italy; Pilgrimage; Roman Catholicism; Vatican City State and the Holy See

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RUDOLPH, ERIC ROBERT (B. 1966)

Eric Robert Rudolph, the convicted bomber of Atlanta's Olympic Park, provides an interesting example of the Christian justification for violence as a response to globalization and multiculturalism. Like many Muslim terrorists who are members of isolated groups that do not represent the Islamic tradition as a whole, Roberts expresses an extreme position in Christianity that is not embraced by most other Christians.

On April 13, 2005, Rudolph pleaded guilty to the Olympic bombing in Centennial Park on July 27, 1996; bombings of abortion clinics in Atlanta and Birmingham; as well as the bombing of a gay and lesbian nightclub in Atlanta. He was sentenced to four consecutive life terms. Born in 1966 in Merritt Island, Florida, he served in the 101st Airborne Division of the army and trained at the Air Assault School. Rudolph has ties to Protestant anti-abortion activists and perhaps the Christian Identity movement, though he considers himself a Catholic.

Rudolph continues to develop and disseminate his critique of contemporary American civil society and American government through his writings from prison and publications on the web. "Eric Rudolph's Homepage" is hosted by The Army of God, known for its religious justification of violence in the fight over abortion, as well as for its secrecy: "Members" remain anonymous in their writings.

Rudolph made sentencing statements in both Atlanta and Birmingham. The Atlanta statement asserts that his ineptitude and poor planning resulted in "innocent civilians" being hurt and killed. He claims that his goal was to disrupt the

Olympics, costing multinational corporations huge sums of money and embarrassing the U.S. government. He also claims that he had intended to give sufficient warnings to ensure that people would be evacuated but in the confusion failed to do so. While asserting that he still believes in the "justice of [his] cause," he concludes with an apology, saying that he "would do anything to take back that night." In the Birmingham statement, Rudolph develops his justification of violence against persons by elaborating the category of "innocent civilian." He explains that the deaths of two abortion clinic employees were the legitimate result of their own actions and that abortion being murder, "deadly force is indeed justified to stop it."

More broadly speaking, Rudolph's various essays include an assertion that he is not an anarchist opposed to government in general but, rather, a critic of the current U.S. government. His hope is for a government in line with what he regards as the virtues of a Christian society. He details some of his survivalist exploits while in hiding and discusses his essentialist views of gender and feminism, which he claims are the basis for a stable civil society.

Many will dismiss Rudolph's views, claiming that they are the views of one man, an example of a rarefied combination of Christianity and conspiratorialism, which finds no place in "authentic" Christianity. It is therefore perhaps most interesting that he evaded capture for 5 years, living in the Appalachian wilderness around North Carolina, relying on, it is suspected, a rather broad network of supportive sympathizers.

Julie Ingersoll

See also Abortion; Christian Identity; McVeigh, Timothy; Roman Catholicism; Terrorism; Tolerance; Violence

Website

Eric Rudolph's Homepage: <http://www.armyofgod.com/EricRudolphHomepage.html>

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Fifteen years after the collapse of the atheist Soviet state, the Russian Federation is a country with a

diverse and dynamic religious profile, in which religion has become an important factor in the creation of a new, post-Soviet national identity. But the role of religion in Russia is highly contested, as a resurgent Russian Orthodox Church seeks to secure a dominant cultural and social position in the face of competition from other faiths, both indigenous to Russia and imported from the West and Asia after the fall of communism.

In two important ways, the religious situation in the Russian Federation is conditioned by globalization. First, globalization has facilitated the growth of non-Orthodox faith communities across the country, contributing to the increased diversification of religious choice while provoking a protectionist reaction from the Russian Orthodox Church. Second, the Russian Orthodox Church is working out its own theological position in regard to the social effects of globalization in Russia while functioning as a global actor itself with parishes—catering primarily though not exclusively to the Russian diaspora—in more than 50 countries around the world.

Throughout this entry, the distinction is made between the “Russian Orthodox Church,” as the community of faith that encompasses millions of believers in the Russian Federation, and the “Moscow Patriarchate,” which is a term referring narrowly to the church’s administrative structures.

The Religious “Map” of the Russian Federation in a Globalized World

The Moscow Patriarchate lists 27,393 parishes under its jurisdiction; of these, approximately half are in the Russian Federation. Various Protestant groups have the second largest number of registered communities, at approximately 5,000; of these, the Baptist and Pentecostal communities constitute at least half. By far the largest growth can be seen in the number of registered Pentecostal parishes: Between 1991 and 2003, they expanded at an astonishing rate of 2,000%. There are perhaps 3,500 Islamic communities; the Jewish, Buddhist, Old Believer, and Roman Catholic communities number in the hundreds.

Even though the Russian Orthodox Church appears to dominate, the reality speaks otherwise. Most Russians identify themselves as “Orthodox”—through the 1990s and 2000s, this number has

vacillated between 60% and 80% of respondents. However, of this same majority, nearly 20% do not believe in God. Surprising numbers are not aware of the basic tenets of Orthodox Christianity. Even more significantly, even the most optimistic assessments acknowledge that only at most 10% of Russia’s population actually attend Orthodox services on a regular basis (most estimates place this number at 3%–5%). Ostensibly, most of the Russian Orthodox population attends at parishes under the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate, but even here, the numbers are questionable. Even assuming that each of the approximately 15,000 parishes in the Russian Federation were able to accommodate 10,000 people at a liturgy (which, given the size of Russia’s churches, is extremely unlikely) and were full to capacity each Sunday (again an unlikely scenario), this would account for at most 1,500,000 active Orthodox Christians.

Thus, the reality on the ground in the Russian Federation does not fit the image of a predominantly Orthodox country. This is further underscored by the fact that in the other religious communities, self-identification appears to more clearly correspond to actual practice; thus, it has been said that in Russia the majority of practicing Christians are not Orthodox but rather Protestant. Though not usually interpreted as such in the literature on the subject, the expansion of religious missions—from the United States, Europe, Asia, and the Middle East—in the Russian Federation throughout the 1990s can be considered to fit into the broader globalization process, in the sense of transnational movement of people and ideas. While some of the Protestant communities trace their roots to the pre-*perestroika* and even pre-Revolution era, many of them—in particular the Mormons, Jehovah’s Witnesses, and Pentecostals—arrived in the Russian Federation primarily after 1991. Especially in the beginning, Protestant missionaries brought with them the full material and moral support of their home organizations (this concerns, e.g., the Mormons and the Methodists). Across the North Caucasus, Islamic communities dealt with the lack of educated clergy by either sending their own members to the Middle East to study or inviting Islamic teachers from outside countries such as Saudi Arabia. Many of the new religious

movements that flourished across Russia during this time period—for example, Scientology—had discernible foreign sponsorship.

The backlash was not long in coming. In the context of the Soviet collapse, the arrival of missionaries, their material support from foreign religious organizations, and their apparent immediate success was interpreted by the Russian Orthodox Church as unfair competition, part and parcel of the package of Western ills that poured across the suddenly open Russian border. This led the Moscow Patriarchate to lobby for a federal law restricting the ability of “nontraditional” religions to register on Russian territory; such a law was passed in 1997, assisted in no small measure by the nationalist majority in the Duma and the widespread sentiments against foreign missionaries within Russian society at the time. The 1997 law has had an ironic effect, in the sense that many communities prefer simply not to be registered, in order to avoid the onerous process; this, in turn, contributes to the difficulties of accurately describing the religious demography of the Russian Federation. At the same time, some of the religious organizations with long historical roots in Russia (e.g., the Baptists) have retreated from their international ties, preferring to present themselves as indigenously Russian, national communities.

Theological Approach of Russian Orthodoxy to Globalization

Given the role of the Russian Orthodox Church in restricting the activities of “non-Russian” religious groups, which were associated in Russia with the diminishing salience of national borders, it might be tempting to conclude that the Moscow Patriarchate is in principle antiglobalist. This is not the case, however. In August 2000, the Bishops’ Council of the Russian Orthodox Church published a document titled “The Basis of the Social Concept of the Orthodox Church,” in which the prelates expressed their consensus view of a number of contemporary social, political, and economic issues. Among other things, the “social concept” presents the Moscow Patriarchate’s normative assessment of globalization. This position is relatively neutral in its formulation. For example, while viewing sovereignty and territorial integrity

as central to the protection of the interests of specific nations, the document recognizes that, in the Christian worldview, any human constructions—including the sovereign power of the state—are relative in the face of God’s omnipotence. Moreover, the “social concept” acknowledges the economic, political, and security benefits that may arise from international integration, whether through the creation of a common economic space, the unification of political structures, or both. For example, deepening globalization—in the form of the creation of institutions of international governance—is seen as positive if it contributes to the resolution of conflicts between states.

On the other hand, these same international institutions (presumably the United Nations and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization [NATO]) may become a tool used by powerful countries to dominate the weak, an aspect decidedly condemned by the “social concept.” Moreover, in the view of the Moscow Patriarchate, globalization is accompanied by attempts to establish the dominance of certain cultures and worldviews over others (the subtext here referring to the United States and the West in general); in the Orthodox view, this is a negative phenomenon since it is equivalent to the building of the Tower of Babylon. And yet, for the Russian Orthodox Church, the response to globalization does not lie in isolationism: According to the “social concept,” the response must be to “remain ourselves” and at the same time actively cooperate with the outside world, bringing to it the spiritual richness of the Russian people. In particular, recognizing the spread of Islamist terrorism as a product of globalization threatening humanity in general, the leadership of the Russian Orthodoxy has been consistent over the years in calling for international cooperation and in insisting that the Russian Federation can and should serve as a bridge between East and West because of its centuries-long positive experience with the coexistence of various cultures. In any event, the official attitude toward globalization of the Russian Orthodox Church, as expressed by its Council of Bishops, may be summarized as follows: acknowledgment of the phenomenon’s positive effects, concern about its excesses, and willingness to critically engage the process in order to mitigate its negative social effects on the Russian population.

Russian Orthodox Antiglobalism

At the same time, despite the inherently hierarchical nature of the Orthodox Christian religion, the pronouncements of bishops often have very little effect on the worldviews of the Russian Orthodox laity. Despite the evenhanded approach of the hierarchy toward globalization, a significant segment of the flock is quite actively antiglobalist, a tendency that has been growing in intensity over the past decade. In this case, antiglobalism is tightly woven with anti-Westernism—that is, the perception that the collapse of the Soviet Union and the subsequent economic and social turmoil were part of a larger pattern of Western (American and Jewish, primarily) conspiracy against Holy Russia. “Globalization” is, for the Russian Orthodox antiglobalists, particularly pernicious since it is presumably aimed at destroying Russia’s unique culture through the import of Western mass culture and, simultaneously, at economically enslaving the country’s population.

Furthermore, antiglobalist sentiments among this part of the Russian Orthodox population are reinforced by an apocalyptic interpretation of reality. In this perception, the Antichrist is either about to appear or, in some more extreme versions of the ideology, has already done so; terms such as *global governance* and *economic integration* are viewed in light of St. John the Theologian’s prophecy in his Book of Revelation that under the Antichrist’s rule the planet’s population will be under complete state control. Orthodox Russia stands as the last bastion of Truth in the oncoming onslaught of apocalyptic evil; globalization is therefore to be resisted at all costs.

Such an understanding of the globalization process has direct consequences both for Russian politics and for the internal cohesion of the Russian Orthodox Church as a whole. For example, at the turn of the millennium, the government of the Russian Federation decided to introduce electronic taxpayer numbers (equivalent to U.S. social security numbers) in order to facilitate tax collection. Known in Russian as *individual’nyi nalogovyi nomer* (INN), the electronic codification process set off a chain reaction across strongly antiglobalist segments of the Orthodox population, which interpreted the INN as being the proverbial “mark of the Antichrist.” Numerous important monasteries

across the country declared their opposition to the INN, in effect proclaiming what observers in Russia termed an “anti-INN jihad.” The monasteries were seconded by many priests who forbade their parishioners from adopting the INN on pain of excommunication. Church kiosks were filled with anti-INN—and more generally antiglobalist—pamphlets and cassette tapes.

In the meantime, the ecclesiastical leadership refused to declare officially that the INN was the mark of the Antichrist, since this would be inconsistent with the general official position that globalization is a neutral phenomenon. In response, the Orthodox antiglobalists began to openly assert that the bishops were apostates who had sold out to the globalist West and, ultimately, to the Antichrist himself. For 3 years—between 1999 and 2001—the Russian Orthodox Church found itself perilously close to a schism over the issue. The problem was resolved, at least for the time being, only after a series of diplomatic maneuvers on the part of the Moscow Patriarchate, which involved the convocation of a Theological Commission that studied the issue and declared once again that the Church’s position on globalization is neutral and that the electronic numbers are not the mark of the Antichrist prophesied by St. John. Perhaps more important, the Moscow Patriarchate had to turn to the Russian government for help, specifically to the Tax Ministry, which ended up promising that those citizens who did not want to adopt the INN for religious reasons would be provided with an alternative method of registering with the tax authorities. The hierarchy’s inability to handle a significant internal problem without outside assistance only served to underline the severity of the division of the Russian Orthodox population along increasingly incompatible ideological lines, with globalization as the lightning-rod issue.

Even though in 2001 the Russian Orthodox Church was able to avoid a schism, antiglobalism exacerbated by apocalyptic expectations continues to pervade many parishes, particularly in the regions far from Moscow. To some extent, these sentiments are stoked by literature from monasteries in Greece, particularly Mount Athos, and Romania and Moldova, where the monastic communities are exporting their own apocalyptic

vision to receptive Russian antiglobalists. While a significant portion of this movement has not cut official ties with the Moscow Patriarchate, preferring to remain as a highly vocal opposition to the hierarchy, some priests and laity have drifted into what is known in Russia as “Alternative Orthodoxy.” Briefly, this term refers to about half a dozen splinter groups that have presented themselves as a purer version of Orthodoxy than the Moscow Patriarchate, which is seen as corrupt because of its association with the communist past and, more recently, with globalization. While numerically marginal in the overall picture of Russian religiosity, these groups have been increasingly in the focus of the secular media as their zeal for the faith has led to unusual and disturbing episodes. In 2008 in the Penza region, a group of 30 people claiming to belong to the True Orthodox Church barricaded themselves inside a system of caves, where they intended to sit out the arrival of the Antichrist. (A partial collapse of the cave forced their emergence 6 months later.) Reports of similar episodes across the Russian Federation support the picture of a religious community subject to the excesses of antiglobalist fears and apocalyptic expectations.

Global Russian Orthodoxy

Finally, a central reason why the Moscow Patriarchate has trodden carefully in articulating its attitude toward globalization lies in the fact that the Patriarchate itself is an organization with global reach. Prior to the collapse of the former USSR, all of the Orthodox parishes in the Soviet Union fell under the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate; the creation of 14 new countries outside the Russian Federation meant that the Russian Orthodox Church was now international, as many of the parishes continue to owe ecclesiastical loyalty to Moscow. Crucially in this respect, more than 50% of the parishes of the Russian Orthodox Church are actually to be found in the Ukraine. Thus, the Moscow Patriarchate has positioned itself as the spiritual home of thousands, if not millions, of ethnic Russians stranded outside the Federation borders; the picture is complicated by the fact that by far not all of the Patriarchate’s parishioners in these countries are ethnic Russians.

Moreover, the migration of Russians around the world over the past 100 years has been accompanied by the foundation of Orthodox parishes as far away from the Russian Federation as Brazil and Australia; currently, most of these parishes are jurisdictionally subject in ecclesiastical matters to the Moscow Patriarchate. Here again, however, the situation is complex since many of these parishes have attracted non-Russian converts, thus making it difficult to associate the Moscow Patriarchate’s interests abroad solely with the specific concerns of the ethnic Russian diaspora.

In the final analysis, then, globalization has conditioned the religious landscape of the Russian Federation in several related ways. First, the relative openness of Russia’s borders after the collapse of the former USSR led to the proliferation of foreign missionary groups with financial and other material ties abroad; as a result, the dominant confession in the country, the Russian Orthodox Church, found itself unexpectedly facing serious competition. This, in turn, led to a backlash in the form of legislation restricting “nontraditional” religious activity; paradoxically, to survive in the new environment many religious communities have sought to disassociate from foreign organizations and present themselves as indigenous and part of the Russian national narrative. In the meantime, the Russian Orthodox Church has had itself to struggle with a theological assessment of globalization. In this regard, the Moscow Patriarchate has developed a relatively neutral attitude, praising globalization’s positive aspects and expressing the need for critical engagement to mitigate the phenomenon’s negative excesses, particularly in the realm of social and economic justice. However, a vocal fundamentalist portion of the Orthodox flock has reacted extremely negatively toward globalization, interpreting it in apocalyptic terms; the issue continues to be of concern to the Russian Orthodox Church as a possible cause of a schism. Finally, the Moscow Patriarchate’s neutral stance toward globalization may be understood to reflect the Patriarchate’s acknowledgment of the fact that it is itself a transnational religious organization with thousands of non-Russian parishioners.

Irina Andre Papkova

See also Apocalypticism; Diaspora; Eastern Orthodox Christianity; Fundamentalism; Globalization; Marxism; Missions and Missionaries; Pluralism

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RWANDA

The population of Rwanda, a small landlocked state in East Africa, is more than 90% Christian and 2%–4% Muslim. Many people simultaneously continue to practice aspects of Rwandan indigenous religion, particularly veneration of ancestors and traditional healing practices. A small percentage of the population observe Kubandwa, the worship of the heroic figures Nyabingi and Lyangombe.

Catholic missionaries arrived in Rwanda in 1900. Focusing on proselytizing the elite, they were highly successful at winning converts and gaining political influence. The missionaries favored the minority Tutsi, who dominated the political system, and their policies helped solidify ethnic identity and consolidate Tutsi power. In the 1950s, however, the missionaries switched sympathy to the Hutu majority. Many people blame the Catholic Church for instigating the 1959 uprising, which drove the Tutsi king and chiefs from power and drove thousands of Tutsi into exile in neighboring countries.

German Protestant missionaries began work in Rwanda in 1907, but their efforts were disrupted by World War I. Seventh-Day Adventist missionaries next came to Rwanda in 1919, and Belgian Protestants took over the abandoned German mission stations in 1920, establishing the Presbyterian Church of Rwanda. Anglicans arrived when the eastern region of Gisaka was incorporated into Rwanda in 1932, and Anglicanism quickly became the predominant Protestant denomination in Rwanda. Both Danish Baptists and American Free Methodists expanded mission work into southern Rwanda in the 1930s from Burundi. Swedish Pentecostal missionaries arrived in Rwanda from Congo in 1940. The Protestant presence in Rwanda gradually grew, so that in the 1991 census, 27.2% of the population was Protestant compared with 62.6% Catholic.

After independence in 1962, the new government had close ties with the Catholic Church. The first president, Grégoire Kayibanda, had served as editor of a Catholic newspaper and directed a church consumers' cooperative. After the 1973 coup, the new president, Juvénal Habyarimana, maintained a close relationship with the Church. Although some Protestant and Catholic groups were in opposition to the Habyarimana regime that emerged in the early 1990s, both Catholic and Protestant leaders supported the regime.

In April 1994, after President Habyarimana was assassinated in a plane crash, a policy of ethnic scapegoating the minority Tutsi culminated in genocide. The Christian churches became deeply implicated in the violence, as church leaders urged the population to support the government even as it was massacring civilians. Churches became

Rwanda's primary killing fields, as Tutsis were lured to church buildings with promises of sanctuary and then systematically slaughtered.

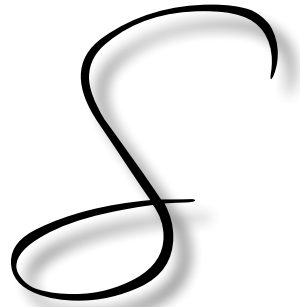
Rwanda's religious landscape evolved significantly after the Rwandan Patriotic Front, a mostly Tutsi rebel army, took control of the country in July 1994 and ended the genocide. Because of their culpability in the violence, the established Catholic and Protestant churches lost much of their influence and many of their members. Tutsi refugees who returned to Rwanda after 1994 brought a diversity of new denominations to the country, and many new independent evangelical and

Pentecostal churches emerged. Islam also became more public and prominent.

Timothy Longman

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SACRED PLACES

Sacred places are locations that give religious meaning and identity to communities and individuals. While some have been constructed as ritual arenas, others have been selected from nature and are associated with the history and myths of a religion. Indeed, the great religious traditions display a wide variety of sacred places, varying in shape, location, and purpose. A sacred place can be an entire land, such as India, or a city such as Jerusalem; or it can be a sanctified structure such as the Kaabah in Mecca; or it can be a natural site such as a mountain, lake, or river, such as the Ganges, that is believed to have special qualities. Sacred places concretize a religion, giving it a material and earthbound feature. Although many sacred places are ancient and historical religious shrines, others such as the Mormon Temple in Salt Lake City are of more recent existence. This entry discusses the functions of sacred places; institutionalization, protection, and access to sacred places; and conflict over sacred places.

According to the historian of religion Mircea Eliade, sacred places fulfill three primary functions for believers: first, they act as places in which worshippers can communicate with the divine, whether through prayer, ritual, or contact with an image of God. Second, sacred places contain a permanent divine presence that draws people, with the expectation of receiving blessings, healing, forgiveness, spiritual merit, or salvation. Third, the layout and design of sacred

places in terms of the art, architecture, music, and drama represent an ideal of a particular religion in its purest form. In identifying these functions, Eliade's theory brings out three different attributes of sacred places: behaviors attributed to gods, the behavior of the worshippers at these sites, and the physical design of these sites. From this angle, sacred spaces can be defined as religious centers at which the heavenly and earthly meet, where sites act as bridges between the human and divine worlds.

Sacred places provide the opportunity for worshippers to communicate with the divine, receive gifts, and gain insight into greater meanings and, as such, become religious centers for many believers. The Himalayan Mountains and Ganges River, for example, are sacred to Hindus. Mount Kailash in the Himalayas is sacred to Hindus, Buddhists, and Jains. It lies near the source of several of the most sacred rivers in the region and is believed to be the home of the God Shiva and his consort Parvati. Mount Kailash is believed to be too sacred to climb, but the area around it is a major site for a holy pilgrimage. Similarly, Mount Gerizim is sacred to the Samaritans, and the Temple Mount in Jerusalem is holy to the Jews. These are all historical, spiritual, and cosmological centers and are associated with the act of creation, the beginning of time, or the end of days. Pilgrims who journey to such sacred places therefore travel toward the center, seeking in the sacred space the microcosm both of the universe and of the specific religion it represents.

Places of worship, such as temples for Hindus and Buddhists, gurdwaras for Sikhs, synagogues

for Jews, churches for Christians, and mosques for Muslims, are considered sacred places. Yet these places of worship are often not the primary sacred places of a religion. In fact, many sacred sites that constitute a central aspect or component of the religion stress links with the founder or other important figure in the history of the religion. At such sacred sites, believers hope for the clearest and most direct exchange with God. Mecca (Makkah), for instance, is a historically significant sacred place for Muslims, whereas the mosques where they worship on a day-to-day basis have a different level of significance, despite the fact that all worship takes place facing Mecca. Mecca, in Saudi Arabia, is the birthplace of Prophet Muhammad. It houses the great Masjid al-Haram and is the holiest city in Islam and a place of pilgrimage for Muslims all over the world. The Jewish tradition of placing notes with prayers between the stones of the Western Wall in Jerusalem rests on the belief that this wall, which is a retaining wall of the former temple, contains remnants of the *shekhinah*, which is the divine presence that once resided in the temple. The construction of the Sikh shrine in Amritsar is believed to have been started by Guru Amar Das. The pool in Amritsar has been a sacred place from antiquity and is believed to have been visited by the Buddha; it is also believed that the Hindu deity Ram and his sons fought at this site. Such sacred places carry a much higher level of reverence than other places of worship that have been consecrated in more recent times.

Reports of a prior revelation as well as healing and miracles at a sacred site provide a high degree of support for the centrality of the site, especially if there is physical evidence for that revelation. For example, Muslims worship at the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem because they believe that Prophet Muhammad prayed on that rock and ascended from it to the heavens. Believers point to his footprint and headprint in the rock as confirmation of that event. In Kashmir, the Hazratbal Mosque is considered to be the most central Muslim shrine because it holds the *Moe-e-Muqqdas*, which is the Sacred Hair of Prophet Muhammad. In Sri Lanka, the Dalada Maligawa temple in Kandy contains what is believed to be the Buddha's tooth. In India, Gaya is sacred to devotees of the Lord Vishnu as he is believed to have visited and left a large footprint at the site.

Christians also revere the footprint of Christ in the Church of the Ascension in Jerusalem, whereas Buddhists venerate Buddha's footprints across Asia. Other sacred places and shrines have become places of mass pilgrimage due to the apparition of God or other divine forms. The apparition of the Virgin Mary in a number of locations around the planet has led to these areas being designated as sacred places and shrines being built at these locations. Examples include the Basilica of Nuestra Senora de Guadalupe in Mexico City, Lourdes in France, the Shrine of our Lady of Fatima in Portugal, and the Shrine of the Holy House in Loreto, Italy.

Institutionalization, Protection, and Access to Sacred Places

Sacred places are attractive and coveted because they offer access to the divine; however, at the same time, they pose the risk of desecration. A sacred site therefore carries with it a whole range of rules and regulations regarding access and people's behavior in relation to it. Such restrictions or prohibitions on behavior become necessary as these sites are often prone to destruction. Moreover, they define the relationship between god or gods and the people, and offending deities is believed to carry danger. In Judaism and Sikhism, for example, people are required to cover their heads when entering sacred places; in Islam, Hinduism, and Sikhism, shoes need to be removed before entering places of worship; and Muslims are required to wash their feet and faces and Hindus must bathe before entering a place of worship or a shrine.

Control of access to and behavior toward sacred places has resulted in these places being managed by priests and the religious community, leading to the institutionalization of sacred places. Some sacred places have been consequently transformed into shrines by religious authorities. A permanent structure, in the form of a place of worship, is erected on or in the immediate vicinity of the sacred place. For example, the monastery of St. Catherine in Sinai is the oldest Christian monastery and is believed to enclose a shrub claimed to be the burning bush through which God spoke to Moses. The presence of a formal structure and place of worship also formalizes the presence of

religious actors at sacred sites in a permanent way. In British India, the government helped establish a board of control in which Sikhs could manage their own religious sites; members of the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee are selected by the general population in an election overseen by the state government. The control of sacred places by religious figures is intricately linked to gender, status, and role, as different ranks of people have been given differential access to sacred sites. In many traditional cultures, women were believed to be impure but with great capacities for creation and destruction and were therefore subject to a wide range of taboos restricting their behavior. Moreover, in India, only men of the Brahman caste could be priests, and access to sacred places was often denied to the lower caste groups. In the Babukusu shrines and burial sites in Kenya, all Babukusu graves are venerated, but men's graves are revered more than those of women. Many sacred places have been controlled or managed by men because of gender prejudices in religious beliefs and practice. Access to certain sacred places is also denied on grounds of religion. Only Muslims are allowed to visit Mecca and Medina. In the Mormon Temple in Utah, only members in good standing of the church are permitted to enter the temple. Historically, access to sacred places has been controlled based on a number of social factors, and such control still exists.

Conflict Over Sacred Places

Some sacred places not only have religious significance but also carry historical or political importance. In Poland, for example, religious sanctuaries served as sanctuaries for people fleeing from political persecution. Sacred sites offer believers the possibility of communing with the divine and achieving deeper insight into their faith. However, the spiritual and cultural importance of these sites has led to competition, as religious groups have tried to exclude rivals from practicing potentially sacrilegious rituals in this revered space and tried to assert their own claims. Holy spaces therefore create the potential for military, theological, or political clashes, not only between competing religious groups but also between religious groups and secular actors. Around the globe, disputes have erupted over the ownership of sacred sites;

the desecration or destruction of tombs, temples, churches, mosques, and shrines; and demands for freedom to perform controversial rituals on pilgrim routes or in burial grounds. These disputes afflict sacred places irrespective of location and religious traditions.

Sacred sites are still at the source of bitter conflicts not just between but sometimes within religious groups—for example, the destruction of the Ayodhya mosque by Hindu fundamentalists in India and the competition for the sacred site of Jerusalem, an ongoing dispute not only among Jews, Christians, and Muslims but also between various Christian churches. However, conflict over sacred spaces is not generally recognized as a separate category of disputes requiring specific attention. Such conflicts are unfortunately difficult to resolve because these sites pose an indivisibility problem. In fact, they are indivisible because the religious prerequisites for safeguarding these sites from desecration require believers to have complete and exclusive control over them. Also, the more central the space in the religious landscape of the community, the greater is the divine power vested in the place, and the community has a bigger obligation to defend the sanctity of the sacred place. The risk that foreign presence or conduct will be interpreted as an offensive act will be even greater. As such, competing groups resort to violence to gain control of such sites. The mitigation of conflicts over sacred places requires consultation between political leaders and religious experts who can shed light on how the religious meaning, value, and parameters of a sacred site affect the political needs of a religious community.

Because believers place high value on sacred sites, they become attractive targets for politicians as the latter try to control believers, their religious movements and leadership, and assets through control of sacred places. Political leaders and rulers have barred access, desecrated and destroyed sacred sites, and have also funded the construction or restoration of sacred sites as a means for either penalizing or rewarding subjects. In 2001, for example, the Taliban regime in Afghanistan destroyed the 2,000-year old Buddha statue carvings in the central province of Bamiyan in their endeavor to establish a true Islamic state. Political control over sacred shrines and spaces is highest when these shrines attract mass pilgrimage and

carry great historical value. Pilgrimage in fact offers the host regime opportunities to sanction rival regimes or to demonstrate widespread generosity and hospitality. The Chinese political control of Tibet, for example, has led to the decline of Tibet as the world center of Tibetan Buddhism. Tibetan Buddhism is now more focused on the person of the Dalai Lama himself as he helps define and constitute the sacred element of this religion.

Native American and Australian Aboriginal cultures have different beliefs about the sacred. These native people believe that all natural parts of the world contain a life force and are therefore living entities. Such belief systems consider plants, animals, rocks, and all of nature to be conscious and willful and as entities that need to be treated with respect. They consider all land to be sacred. The Mescalero Apache, for example, consider plants, animals, and earth materials to be powerful and sacred. They consider the land itself to be sacred. Examples of such natural sacred places include the Grand Canyon, Devils Tower, Kasha-Katuwe, and Crater Lake in the United States. In Australia, one finds sites such as Uluru/Ayers Rock and the Katajuna/the Olgas among others. However, Eurocentric beliefs and perceptions of true sacred places as those that are associated with Christian belief often work against the understanding and conservation of sacred sites of other cultures, especially those of indigenous people. The Aboriginal people of Australia, Native Americans, Maori, Saami, Inuit, and other indigenous population groups are deeply concerned about the destruction of and intrusion into their sacred places. However, the protection of sacred places is often part of the larger issue of environmental conservation, especially since many sacred sites are historical sites or natural places. Yet population growth, commercial development, technological development, and the ever-growing demand for mineral and other resources threaten the existence of many sacred places. Mining at important archaeological and sacred sites has been practiced on Hopi traditional homelands in Arizona despite knowledge of the fact that the Hopi have a spiritual covenant to take care of their desert environment. The beliefs and spiritual and religious practices of native people are thus under increasing challenge from national parks, private property boundaries, and the demands for resources.

Sacred places therefore have different levels of meaning to people, depending on historical factors and the presence of great saints, miracles, and healings at these places. Moreover, different religions and beliefs employ different and distinct definitions of sacred places. This has led to conflicts in different countries between native people and other sections of the population over resources, especially over land that natives believe is sacred. Sacred places have thus been at the core of conflict between different religious groups, and such conflict is still ongoing in many parts of the world, fueled by unscrupulous actions of political leaders. A fine balance in perspectives and respect for and deep appreciation of sacredness are crucial for the preservation of sacred places and for peace in the world.

Ramola Ramtohol

See also Ayodhya Mosque Attack; Churches; Ganga; Hajj; India; Israel; *Kumbha Mela*; Mecca; Mosques; Our Lady of Guadalupe; Pilgrimage

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SAINT LUCIA

Saint Lucia is a small island country in the eastern Caribbean. It has fewer than 200,000 inhabitants, many of them descendants of slaves brought by the British to work in sugar plantations in the 19th century. The French were the first European colonizers; they made a pact with the native Carib people in 1660 and soon thereafter began to cultivate sugarcane for export. For the next 150 years, the control of the island changed hands between

the French and British until the war of 1814, when the island became firmly a part of the British Empire. It remained in the empire until Saint Lucia's independence in 1979. It is still part of the British Commonwealth.

The native Carib people died off, largely due to their susceptibility to diseases brought by the Europeans. In their place, the British imported enslaved Africans to work on the sugar plantations. Most of the present-day inhabitants of Saint Lucia are descendents of these African laborers.

The French left their mark on the culture of the island. Though the official language is English, most people speak a form of Creole that is based on French. Because of the French influence, the majority of residents are Roman Catholic.

About 70% of the population is Roman Catholic, and most of the rest are Protestant Christians, including Anglicans, Baptists, Seventh-Day Adventists, and evangelical Protestants. A few record their religion as Rastafarian, and a small number of East Indian immigrants are Hindu and Muslim.

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See also Anglicans; Caribbean; Native Latin American Religion; Roman Catholicism

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SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

The religious history of the island nation of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines in the eastern Caribbean Sea is complex and indelibly linked to

issues of migration, displacement, colonization, slavery, and the search for nationhood and freedom. The first inhabitants were the Taintos (Arawaks), a group of agricultural people who originated from the Orinoco Basin in South America. They were replaced by the Callinagoes (Caribs) who also migrated from South America. The religious beliefs of both the Taintos and the Callinagoes are characterized as Amerindian shamanism: having a Supreme Being, who did not directly interact with the people; lesser divine being(s), who exerted power over their daily lives; and priests, who functioned as spiritual intermediaries between the deity and humans.

With the arrival of the Europeans and Africans, the religious terrain of the islands began to undergo dramatic changes. First, there was the introduction of Christianity in the form of Roman Catholicism. For many Spaniards and the French who followed them, the servitude or enslavement of the Amerindians and Africans was justified in the context of civilizing and evangelizing them. As a result, their Christianization efforts took the form of making sure that the Amerindians and slaves received Catholic instruction and were baptized. However, this baptism was to have no bearing on their subordinate status as part of the *encomienda*. They were laborers or slaves in this labor system that the Spaniards implemented during their colonization of the Americas.

Second, there was an emergence of indigenous religious expressions. Throughout much of the 17th and the 18th centuries, St. Vincent remained a site where Callinagoes actively resisted European colonization. However, it also functioned as a refuge for African slaves who had either been shipwrecked or escaped from the islands of Barbados, St. Lucia, and Grenada. The offspring of the miscegenation between African slaves and Callinago women was a group called the Black Caribs. For some of these offspring, their religious beliefs are the product of the syncretism of various aspects of their African and Callinago religious heritage.

When the British gained ownership over the islands in 1763 and again in 1783, another phase in the religious history of the islands of St. Vincent and the Grenadines was inaugurated—the coming of Protestant Christianity and emergence of Afro-Christianity. Unlike their Roman

Catholic predecessors, the established Protestant churches made very little attempt to Christianize the slaves. Thus, the work of evangelizing the slaves did not become a priority until the arrival of nonconformist denominations—primarily the Methodists. The century and a half of inattention, however, created an environment in which the slaves continued to practice their African religions—albeit in a modified form that suited their current environment. When the slaves eventually interacted with Christianity, they found a religious faith that resonated on several levels with their modified African religious heritage in terms of the veneration of saints, style of worship, and other beliefs. As a result of this resonance, they were able to use the interpretive framework of their previous religious experience to decode and understand the Christian message; the result of this process was the emergence of Afro-Christian religious traditions such as Spiritual Baptist.

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See also Anglicans; Caribbean; Grenada; Native Latin American Religion; Shamanism

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shrines are built for their enduring veneration. In Christianity, these holy people are called saints; for this reason, this entry will focus on the Christian veneration of saintliness.

Christians around the world have prayed to saints, deceased humans who have been posthumously deemed holy by church authorities and lay persons alike, since the early days of Christianity. Saints function as intercessors and mediators who deliver the faithful's prayers and requests to God in heaven. They are seen as role models for humans on earth to look to and to emulate. Christians, especially Roman Catholics and the Eastern Orthodox, have forged intimate relationships with saints for centuries, turning to them in times of need and distress. Whether these saints are officially recognized by religious authorities does not always matter, as the faithful forge relationships with those saints declared holy by church hierarchies as well as those they unofficially deem to be saints. From the earliest cult of the saints in Western Christendom to more contemporary devotions to saints, believers have looked to saints as special mediators between their earthly selves and heaven. Since the days of early Christianity, saints have been thought to have extraordinary qualities and are beseeched by the faithful and are asked to help them in their lives on earth. Yet saints are also believed to be human and to have lived human lives not always free from sin. Saints have extraordinary qualities as well as human ones. Since the early days of Christianity, men and women have turned to saints for guidance and protection, and today, with increasing globalization, transnationalism, and all the challenges associated with these lived realities, women and men around the world are turning to saints for help.

The Institutionalization of Sainthood

The earliest saints were popularly declared as such; women and men unofficially canonized by Christians who took it upon themselves to venerate men and women they believed to embody heroism. Thus, the earliest devotions to saints were popular and lay run rather than institutionally directed. Always alert to an imbalance of lay-official church power and seeking to assert clerical authority, clerics moved to institutionalize the process of making a man or woman a saint. The institutionalization of

SAINTS

Virtually every religious tradition has the custom of venerating the spiritually adept, holy men and women whose memory and spirit live on within the community's sacred memory. In Buddhism, there are *boddisattvas*; in Hinduism, there are medieval *sants*, the poet-saints who have fostered religious movements of their own; and in Islam, there are Sufis and other holy men for whom

sainthood began in 1170, when Pope Alexander III declared that it was the pope, not the people, who would control the process of canonization as well as the devotions to the saints. Thereafter, in the Roman Catholic Church, from the 12th century to the present, the path to sainthood includes a three-step process of discernment:

1. *Examination*: This is the preliminary process, during which a commission examines the candidate's life on earth and determines if she or he is a worthy candidate.
2. *Beatification*: If the candidate is shown to have one miracle attributed to her or him, the church beatifies the individual, in effect recognizing the saint in question as blessed.
3. *Canonization*: If the candidate in question is shown to have one additional miracle attributed to her or him, the person is officially made a saint and recognized to reside in heaven.

The Catholic Church sees its saints as those who possess heroic virtue and who are special in the eyes of God. Both Roman Catholic and Orthodox Church hierarchies recognize saints as humans who are not exempt from sin but who have led overwhelmingly holy lives. The saint's lifetime of good deeds, heroic virtue, and special holiness distinguishes him or her from mere mortals. The process of institutionalizing devotions to saints continues to evolve. Since 1588, the Vatican has had a specially designated department for saint candidates—the Congregation for Causes of the Saints—which sorts through the documents that have been submitted. The Roman Catholic Church hierarchy's definition of who should be canonized as a saint has changed with the times, sometimes paralleling public opinion and at other times diverging from it.

In the earliest days of Christianity, saints were those who endured intense amounts of bodily suffering, of the self-inflicted or external variety. Some of these early saints were martyrs, and the bloodier the martyrdom the better. Take for instance St. Stephen, considered the first Christian martyr who was stoned to death, or Perpetua and Felicitas, two North African women who were gored by wild animals in the year 202 before being stabbed by soldiers in the town's amphitheater.

Like Stephen, Perpetua and her slave Felicitas were known for enduring incredible amounts of torture, pain, and bodily anguish. Yet another famous early Christian martyr, Polycarp, was burned alive in 155. Early Christian martyrs' bodies were bloodied, burned, stretched, racked, and torn. Their anguish and refusal to renounce their faith in the midst of incredible amounts of pain and agony is honored by Christians today, who see them as exemplars of faith. Other early Christian saints renounced their bodies and suffered, fasting to diminish the flesh for a higher, ascetic purpose. These men and women were able to transcend the evils of their flesh, as viewed by Christian theology, and served as models of discipline and piety. Their sufferings could be internalized by the devout, who honored the saints' sufferings and saw them as idealized versions of themselves. And it was the saint's body—fragments of bones, hair, flesh—that captivated the faithful, who saw these remnants as markers of divinity. It was through sensory engagement—touching, smelling, and seeing the saints' relics—that the early Christians felt a deep connection to God.

By the time we get to the 14th century, clerics and everyday Christians alike wanted their saints to perform miracles as evidence of special extratemporal powers and connectedness with the divine. Unlike the average believer, a saint possessed a special ability to carry believers' requests and prayers to God, and this belief in a saint's intercessory powers resulted in intense devotionism to saints. Private and publicized prayers to saints had an end in mind—that the saint would intercede on the believer's behalf and perform a special request for the individual, a family member, or other loved one. The concept of reciprocity flourished—that the devotee would make a promise of sacrifice to the saint if the saint granted the devotee's wish. The cult of patron saints flourished in medieval Catholicism; believers prayed to and petitioned saints they deemed especially efficacious.

Yet not all Christians have nurtured relationships with saints. Martin Luther and other Protestant Reformers of the 16th century did away with invocations and devotions to saints, which they regarded as detracting from devotion to Jesus Christ. Throughout medieval and modern church history, Protestants were adamantly opposed to the invocation and veneration of saints, reflecting

their reformation goals of rooting out what they viewed as the man-made excesses of religion. Today, many Protestants are open to the idea of saints. Since the late 1980s and the rise of ecumenicism, many Protestant denominations have adopted a more open stance toward the veneration of saints, seeing them as role models and as visible signs of the Holy Spirit. Episcopalians, for example, honor saints and do not require miracles as does the Roman Catholic Church. Examples of saints named by the Episcopal Church in the United States and honored in their calendar include the Italian Catholic saint Catherine of Siena, the Underground Railroad pioneer Harriet Tubman, the civil rights leader Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., and the Civil War nurse and social reformer Florence Nightingale. The Episcopal calendar includes a wide range of men and women who may or may not have performed miracles. The common denominator is that they led exemplary lives and are worthy of emulation. And even Lutherans, not known for their devotion to saints for historical reasons dating back to the Reformation, have their own patron saint. Every December, Swedish and American Lutherans in churches across the United States and Sweden merge Swedish folklore and fourth-century Sicilian devotions to Lucy, creating a Protestant veneration of a female saint known for her piety, suffering, and generosity.

Other Protestant Christians see themselves as saints on earth, as specially designated by God himself. Since the early 20th century Pentecostals, fundamentalist Protestants, have striven to live as saints on earth, in some ways akin to the 17th-century Puritans, who emphasized living lives of visible sainthood. Pentecostals who are saved are called saints, visible signs of the Holy Spirit and God's grace. Pentecostals, whether they are members of the Assemblies of God or the Church of God in Christ, see all believers as possessing divine virtue and have no formal process of canonization, in contrast to Roman Catholics and Orthodox Christians. Pentecostal Christians see the process of sanctification—the process of becoming holy—as an intimate relationship between them and God. They do not believe in the theology that surrounds saints, preferring to believe that men and women can be saints on earth and live in a community of saints.

Pentecostalism is primarily a Third World phenomenon, and its emphasis on healing and renewal

and deliverance from the sufferings of this world make it especially attractive to men and women gripped by poverty, the transition from a rural to an urban economy, and social problems exacerbated by swift changes and dislocations, especially in Zimbabwe and Nigeria. Pentecostal theology offers a chance for men and women, particularly those who are poor and oppressed, to be saints on earth and to live empowered, fulfilled lives. As saints on earth, Pentecostals are equipped with the theological tools to cope with the changes and disruptions of the 21st-century world and seize on the opportunity to find salvation in this life. Unlike official Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic saints, Pentecostal saints are not necessarily heroic or virtuous but are everyday men and women who have been anointed by the Holy Spirit in this life. Pentecostals around the world need no other authority than God to deem them saints.

Mormons, members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, believe that they are saints on earth, linking themselves to New Testament tradition that followers of Christ were saints. Mormons call themselves latter-day saints to denote that they are living in the latter days of Christ's second coming. Like Pentecostals, Mormons refer to themselves as saints and embrace a theology of Christian empowerment in which men, women, and children on this earth are living saints.

The Orthodox Church, like the Roman Catholic Church, has a formal process of canonization that dates back to the ninth century and that is organized by the territorial synod. While the Roman Catholic Church's process of sainthood is handled by a special Vatican office, Orthodox Christians have a more localized process. Orthodox Christians acknowledge that their saints may not have always been perfect but that it was the striving toward perfection that matters most. In Orthodox Christianity, canonization does not make a person a saint; rather, it recognizes that a man or woman was a saint on this earth. Like Roman Catholics, Orthodox Christians are given saint names at confirmation, thus signifying a relationship between the temporal and heavenly realms and their occupiers.

Unofficial, Popular Saints

Saints who have been canonized by the Roman Catholic Church or Orthodox Church are granted

official legitimation, and devotions are institutionally supported and encouraged. Many countries, particularly those in Latin America, can boast their own national saint and host annual celebrations in honor of their patron saint. The Virgin of Guadalupe, Mexico's national saint, is celebrated on December 13 each year in Mexico and in Mexican American communities throughout the United States. Another national Virgin, the Virgin of El Cobre/Our Lady of Charity, is celebrated in Cuba and among the Cuban American diaspora in Miami, Florida, each September 18.

In addition to these larger national celebrations, more locally held devotions are celebrated in churches and backyard shrines throughout the world. While officially recognized saints can have strong devotions, not all canonized saints do: For example, while officially recognized saints such as Juan Diego and the Virgin of Guadalupe have strong followings in Mexico and on the U.S.-Mexico border and in places with large numbers of Mexican residents, other canonized saints such as Josemaria Escriva de Balaguer, the founder of the conservative Roman Catholic group Opus Dei, have more limited followings. Time will tell if another recently designated Roman Catholic saint, Gianna Beretta Molla, who died in childbirth knowing that she had terminal cancer, will attract a large following. Others who are on the path to sainthood, such as Mother Theresa, have not yet been canonized but have a large following among Catholic and non-Catholic devotees who have unofficially deemed her a saint and who anticipate her canonization.

Other saints have been officially canonized by the church and unofficially by the people.

St. Thérèse de Lisieux, the 19th-century officially canonized French Carmelite nun, also happens to be one of the most popular saints in the world. Fondly called "The Little Flower" by the Roman Catholic Church as well as the devout, the 1997 to 2002 world tour of her remains was met enthusiastically by millions of devotees.

While the canonization of a saint most certainly helps increase devotions, it does not always serve as the final legitimator as there are hundreds, if not thousands, of unofficial saints—saints of the people, for the people, and by the people. These popularly proclaimed saints tend to flourish among men and women who are oppressed, marginalized, and experiencing the pains of social dislocations and

upheaval around the world. These unofficial, syncretic saints live among the poor and in the homes of those whose lives are not marked by empowerment and privilege. Haitians, for example, have merged *vodou lwa* ("spirits") with official Catholic saints to form syncretic saints that are deeply informed by two or more religious traditions. Ogou, the warrior *vodou lwa*, is merged with the Catholic Saint James to form a distinctive cultural deity that embodies cultural and religious identities and that reflects the social situatedness of its believers. The Vodou spirit Gede is especially important in immigrant Haitian communities as he is seen as a "survival artist," according to Karen McCarthy Brown, one who can help them adjust to life in a new country. Gede, an immigrant himself, helps followers of Vodou maintain ties to Haiti and even farther back to Vodou's origins in Africa (Brown, 2001, p. 379).

Like practitioners of Vodou, who merge Catholic and Vodou cosmologies to form syncretic saints, practitioners of Santería and Candomblé, two syncretic religions that draw on African and Caribbean belief systems, merge Catholic belief in saints with indigenous spirits. In African Cuban Santería, *orishas* are merged with Catholic saints much like *lwa* are merged with Catholic saints in Haitian Vodou, and spirits are merged with Catholic saints in African Brazilian Candomblé or, as it is also called, Macumba.

Like other places in the world where we find social dislocation, poverty, and the stresses of urban living, the U.S.-Mexico border is home to active devotions to unofficial, popular saints such as Juan Soldado, Don Pedrito Jaramillo, and Jesus Malverde. These men do not meet the Catholic Church's requirements for holiness, but institutional legitimation does not matter to the faithful who have deemed these men saints. Soldado, convicted and killed by a Mexican firing squad for his alleged rape of a young girl, is revered by Tijuanaenses and Mexicans along the border who believe that he was wrongly convicted and that he is a martyr who intercedes on their behalf. Men and women pin slips of papers and photographs, along with their hopes and dreams, inside the walls of Soldado's shrine, praying to him to intercede on their behalf. Soldado's lack of official Church canonization has done nothing to dampen popular devotion to this saint, and the Tijuana cemetery

where he is buried is a pilgrimage destination for Mexicans.

Like Soldado, Jaramillo and Malverde are unofficial borderland saints. Jaramillo, a South Texas *curandero*, a healer, is considered a saint to those men and women living on the Mexico-Texas border. Up to his death in 1909, thousands of Mexicans and Anglo Americans sought his curative powers. For his part, Malverde, a Sinaloa Robin Hood character, is believed to have robbed rich hacienda owners to give the money to the poor. He is believed to have been killed, or martyred by the state, in 1909, and a shrine was built by devotees in his honor not long after his death.

Heavenly and Human Intercessors

Devotion to saints has been around for centuries. Whether the saint has been officially canonized by the church does not always matter as men and women have forged relationships with these human and divine intercessors since the beginning of Christianity. While popular and official devotions may indeed overlap, as they do for countless saints deemed holy by the Church and by the devout, the U.S.-Mexican borderlands saints show that this is not always the case.

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See also Anglicans; Candomblé; Christianity; Haiti; Our Lady of Guadalupe; Pentecostal Movements; Pilgrimage; Popular Religion; Roman Catholicism; Vatican Council, Second; Vodou

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SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH

See Mormons

SAMOA (AMERICAN AND INDEPENDENT STATE OF)

The islands of Samoa in the central Pacific Ocean are divided between an independent state of Samoa and the American territory of Samoa. Their religious cultures, however, are similar. God is prominent in the Samoan way, a culture known as Fa'a Samoa. The Samoan way has three key elements, including the village chief, the extended family, and Christianity. Christianity was adopted in the 20th century into this ancient code of Samoan conduct. Samoans are typically Christian and believe that Sunday is for worship and family. The public seal for Samoa states that "God be the Foundation of Samoa" (*Fa'avae i le Atua Samoa*). Many Samoans begin public speeches and written communications by thanking God and recognizing His influence in their life (*Muamua ona si'i le fa'afetai i le Atua*). On

Sundays, most businesses are closed, and Samoans in Sunday dress are seen parading down the streets to services.

Today, Samoans are divided between American Samoa and the Independent State of Samoa (formerly Western Samoa), but they share a common heritage. The German protectorate of Western Samoa was occupied by New Zealand at the outbreak of World War I in 1914. Germany continued to rule the islands until 1962. Western Samoa was the first Polynesian nation to establish independence in modern times. In 1997, the country dropped the term *Western*. American Samoa is an unincorporated territory of the United States. The constitutional preamble reads that Samoa is “an independent State based on Christian principles and Samoan custom and traditions.” There is, however, no official state religion.

People of the Samoan Island chains share a common religious history. The Samoan Islands were originally inhabited as early as 1000 BCE. Before Christian missionaries arrived in the early 1800s, the Samoan Islanders worshipped in a polytheistic manner. They differentiated between nonhuman (*Atua*) and human (*Aitu*) gods and incorporated ancestral spirits in their religion. The Samoan people worshipped animals, earth, stone, oceans, and rivers as their gods. These early Samoans had no external signs or symbols of religion, and outsiders may have considered them as godless. According to legend, the war goddess Nafanua prophesied about a new religion to end the rule of the old gods. Some consider that this prophecy enabled the early Christian missionaries to convert many followers.

In the late 1700s, the first European sailors arrived and shared Christianity. In 1828, Peter Turner, a Methodist missionary, visited Samoa and discovered that there were already Methodists in the islands. The Methodists had established a Tongan mission, and family ties between Samoa and Tonga spread the religion. In 1830, John Williams arrived, representing the London Missionary Society. When he departed in the same year, he left several missionaries. He returned to Samoa in 1832 and found that the missionaries had converted a high-ranking king, Malietoa, to Christianity. The first Samoan version of the New Testament was printed in 1848. In 1848, Catholic priests arrived and established a foothold on the

island. In 1857, a Methodist mission was opened. In 1863, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints missionaries began their ministry in Samoa. By 1885, all islanders were considered nominally Christians as indicated by a news article in the *Te Aroha News*.

Today, the religions of Samoa encompass a range of denominations, with nearly the entire population professing Christianity. According to the World Christian Database, more than 98% of the population of American Samoa, a territory of the United States, is Christian. As of 2010, the *CIA Factbook* indicated a total population of about 66,000, with 50% being Christian Congregationalist and 20% being Roman Catholic. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints website claims a membership of 23%.

The Independent State of Samoa, the former colony of New Zealand that became an independent country in 1962, is also overwhelmingly Christian; according to the World Christian Database, more than 98% of its population is Christian. As of 2010, the *CIA Factbook* indicated that the country has an area of 1,133 square miles (1 mile = 1.609344 kilometers) and a population of 192,000. The major religious groups are Protestants (45%), Mormons (28%), and Roman Catholics (20%).

Wm. Camron Casper

See also Indigenous Religions; Missions and Missionaries; Pacific Islands/Oceania; Protestant Christianity; United States of America

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SAN MARINO

In this tiny republic nestled between Emilia Romagna and the Marche regions of Italy off the Adriatic Coast, the religious situation is not very different from that of the Italian society that surrounds it, with 95% of the population belonging to the Catholic Church. Yet myth and history have created a distinctive situation characterized by a close connection between faith and freedom, and religion and politics, which is not, however, immune to the growing pluralism and secularization of society.

San Marino is the oldest and second smallest republic in the world, with a territory of 60 square kilometers and a population of 24,000. Legend has it that it was founded around 300 on Mount Titano by Marinus, a stonecutter from Dalmatia and a group of early Christians fleeing persecution for their faith. Protected by its geographical isolation and the strong faith of its inhabitants, San Marino developed over the centuries as a self-reliant community convinced that its freedom had been bequeathed by the founder whose motto *Nemi Teneri* (“not dependent on anyone”) successive generations strove to implement against feudal lords, popes, emperors, and neighboring Italian states. In 1600, San Marino declared itself a republic, claiming that its sovereignty and liberty were guaranteed by the presence of the relics of its patron saint.

Each year on September 3, the Sammarinesi celebrate together the death of their saint and the foundation of their republic, and most official ceremonies are held in the Basilica and opened by a homily by the Catholic bishop of the Diocese of San Marino-Montefeltro. Yet Roman Catholicism is not the country’s official religion, and the law guarantees freedom of conscience and religion and prohibits discrimination based on religion. Roman Catholicism is, however, the religion of the majority of the population, with only 5% belonging to other faith groups, among whom are Jehovah’s Witnesses, members of the Waldesian Church, and small numbers of Baha’is, Muslims, and Jews. Under the law, citizens may allocate 0.3% of their income tax to Catholic Charities, and in 1992, this privilege was extended to the Jehovah’s Witnesses and the Waldesian Church.

The close integration of religion and politics is no longer as universally accepted as in the past. In *Buscarini & Others v. San Marino* (ECHR 7, February 1999), the European Court of Human Rights ruled in favor of three newly elected members of parliament who refused to make the required reference to the Gospels in taking the oath of office in 1993. The Court found that “requiring elected representatives of the people to swear allegiance to a particular religion was not compatible with article 9 of the European Convention,” which guarantees freedom of thought, conscience, and religion. Since then, the law has been amended to include a choice between the traditional oath and one in which the reference to the Gospels has been replaced by the words “on my honor.”

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See also European Court of Human Rights; Italy; Politics and Religion; Roman Catholicism

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SANGHA

The sangha is a monastic organization that has been an integral part of Buddhist and Jain traditions throughout recorded history. As Buddhist and Jain traditions spread across the world, so did their monasticism. One of the sanghas of the Mahayana Buddhist tradition traces its migration from India to China, China to Korea, Korea to Japan, and most recently Japan to the United States and Brazil. In contemporary times, the largest sangha is of the Thai Theravada Buddhist tradition and has members in more than 28 countries. Overall, ordained sangha members in the Buddhist and Jain traditions number more than 1.5 million

worldwide. Jain and Buddhist traditions contain different definitions for the term *sangha*. For some of the more liberal minded, *sangha* simply implies its direct Sanskrit translation, “community.” In this broad definition, the scope of *sangha* is representative of globalization. As technology pulls people together, the term *community* becomes broader in context than that of a specific physical locality. In other definitions, *sangha* is meant contextually as a Buddhist or Jain community. However, most commonly, *sangha* is used as a referent for a monastic organization.

The founders of Buddhist and Jain traditions in the fifth century BCE formed *sanghas* to assist people in their spiritual development. Both the Buddha and Mahavira were princes before they embarked on their religious paths. As a result, each could draw on his experience with statecraft. *Sanghas* were styled after the *gana-sanghas*, regional oligarchies that were endemic to the politics of South Asia. In both Jain and Buddhist traditions, people renounce their householder lifestyle and ordain into the familial ascetic environment of a monastery. Traditionally, newly ordained members of a *sangha* shave their heads and relinquish all ties to their former lifestyle as a symbol of devotion to their new calling. Jain monks (Sanskrit *muni*) and nuns (Sanskrit *sadhvi*) are known for adhering to ascetic guidelines that are stricter than those in the Buddhist *sanghas*. Both Jains and Buddhist monks (Sanskrit *bhikṣu*) and nuns (Sanskrit *bhikṣuṇī*) follow a set of rules that dictate their livelihood. In this manner, *sangha* members act as role models for their communities. In Buddhist traditions, the *sangha* is considered one of its three most sacred elements, the other two being Buddha and Dharma (teachings). The monastic organization is the bearer of the Buddhist teachings, and Buddhist laws derive from the monastic order called the *vinaya*. Historically, *sanghas* have legitimated different states and rulers, and more recently, Buddhist *sanghas* were involved in nation building.

Sanghas in the 21st century include a greater diversity and number of peoples than ever before. This diversity reflects the growth and change within communities worldwide. Thus, *sanghas* are a global infrastructure for Buddhist and Jain diasporas around the world.

Michael Jerryson

See also Buddhist Law; Gautama, Siddhartha; Jainism; Mahayana Buddhism; Soka Gakkai; Theravada Buddhism; Vajrayana, Tibetan

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SANSKRIT

Sanskrit is a member of the Indo-Iranian branch of the Indo-European language tree. Although commonly associated with ancient India, Sanskrit represents a global language, historically appearing in diverse contexts and scripts across a wide range of regions. It continues to be an important liturgical language for Hindu and Buddhist practitioners across Asia.

Origins

Two prevailing theories have been proposed to explain the origins of Sanskrit. First, proponents of the Aryan invasion (also referred to as the Aryan myth) argue that Sanskrit, along with other elements of Indian culture, entered India during the invasion of the Aryan people, sometime between the second and first millennium BCE. Regarding Sanskrit nomenclature, they point out that the lexis found in the earliest Vedic texts overlaps considerably with Iranian sources, most notably the Zoroastrian Avesta. Throughout the Vedic corpus, a number of Iranian loan words have been identified as well as terms that can be traced to the broader Indo-European branch.

The second theory holds that Sanskrit arose from within the Indian subcontinent and subsequently was exported to other Asian regions. Supporters of this theory argue that a large portion of vocabulary in Sanskrit texts is indigenous to India and not attested elsewhere.

In reality, both theories have some truth to them. It is clear that there has been, beginning with

the ancient period, continuous contact and exchange between India and Iranian regions. This contact and exchange did not end in the Vedic period but can be found in almost every major historical period and political dynasty. The exchange was not unidirectional or a one-way diffusion either from some “Aryan” civilization to India or from India outward. Rather, Sanskrit, like most cultural phenomena, developed over time through a joint process of cross-fertilization and regional innovations.

Regardless of the origin, the Sanskrit language clearly was not limited to the Indian subcontinent but, rather, extended across a wide geographical area.

Sanskrit Manuscripts

The earliest known form of Sanskrit, Vedic, can be traced to the Vedas, with portions of the Rig Veda being dated to approximately 1500 BCE. The Vedas include a vast corpus of manuscripts, including the *Sambitās* (“hymns”), *Brāhmanas* and *Āranyakas* (“ritual commentaries”), and the Upanishads (philosophical speculations). The four Vedic schools, *Rig*, *Sāma*, *Yajur*, and *Atharva*, are far from homogeneous and collectively record a diverse range of beliefs and practices. The Vedic manuscripts were composed by multiple authors and in various geographical, historical, and cultural contexts.

In the fourth century BCE, Pānini, a grammarian from the Indo-Iranian region of Gandhāra, marked a transition between Vedic and classical Sanskrit. Pānini is best known for his voluminous work on Sanskrit grammar and morphology titled *Ashtadhyayi*. Auxiliary texts include the *Shiva Sūtras*, *Dhatupatha*, and *Ganapatha*. Although similar to Vedic Sanskrit, classical Sanskrit differs significantly in nomenclature, grammar, and syntax.

Sanskrit manuscripts, both Vedic and classical, typically have been associated with the Hindu traditions of India. However, it is important to note that a large number of East Asian Buddhist manuscripts were originally composed in Sanskrit before being translated into Chinese and subsequently transmitted to other regions of East Asia. Though translators claimed that the Sanskrit texts originated in India, significant portions of these

Buddhist texts were composed in the Inner Asian regions of Kashmir, Gandhāra, and the Swāt Valley and written in scripts found most prominently in Central Asia, not in India. Given the early dates attributed to some Chinese translations, combined with the absence of extant Sanskrit originals, it is probable that some manuscripts were not only written in Inner Asia, but that they came to India only after they were translated in China.

Sanskrit Scripts

Sanskrit manuscripts were strictly transmitted orally for several centuries. Written sources from ancient India are extremely rare, and in fact, the earliest Sanskrit writings are primarily found outside India, in Inner Asian regions. The absence of manuscripts alone is not enough proof to assert that they did not exist, however. First, the palm leaf material easily deteriorated in the climate of India. Second, it is commonly accepted that Indian scholars have long preferred memorization and oral transmission of texts over the written word (a precise and effective method still employed in Sanskrit instruction today).

Beginning around the third century BCE, examples of written Sanskrit appear in multiple geographical locations and in variant scripts. The first-known form of written Sanskrit appears in the Brāmī script, recorded in Asokan inscriptions left on pillars and monuments across India and Central Asia. Ironically, Brāhmī was originally used for Prakrit, a linguistic descendent of Sanskrit, before being used as the first Sanskrit script. During the first centuries of the Common Era, Sanskrit appeared in diverse contexts, often alongside other languages. As an example, coins found in Central Asia have legends written in three scripts—Greek, Brāhmī, and Kharosthī. This is further evidence of the eclectic and widespread nature of Sanskrit during this time.

The Brāhmī script itself was not a singular or consistent script. Rather, it is a general term used to describe scripts that have yet to be classified systematically. Some refer to a threefold classification—early, middle, and late Brāhmī—while others name the scripts after political dynasties, such as Gupta or Kushāna. Certain scholars, such as Richard Salomon, have argued that the dynastic categorization is misleading and that the scripts

instead should be categorized based on regional differentiations.

The Kharosthī script represents another important Sanskrit script used for epigraphic, administrative, and literary purposes beginning around the third century CE. A significant number of Kharosthī documents have been unearthed in regions extending from Afghanistan to the Tarim Basin. Kharosthī, the only Sanskrit script written from right to left, is derived from Aramaic and likely originated in the eastern parts of the Achaemenid Empire around Gandhāra. There exist some commonalities between Kharosthī and Brāhmī, but this could be due to a common parent prototype, such as the Aramaic script, rather than a direct historical connection.

Beginning around the sixth century, the late Brāhmī script evolved into a form most commonly referred to as Siddamātrikā, or simply Siddham. Siddham represents a common script for Buddhist manuscripts that were transmitted to China, and many original Siddham mantras have been preserved within the translations. After being translated into Chinese, the texts were subsequently transmitted to Japan and throughout East Asia. Since there exists no extant Sanskrit original for most of these manuscripts, Chinese serves as the linguistic bridge between Sanskrit and other East Asian languages.

In northern India, Siddamātrikā evolved over the next few centuries into Devanāgarī, the script most commonly associated with Sanskrit today. The preference for Devanāgarī during the colonial period has led to a common assumption that Devanāgarī is the only Sanskrit script. However, prior to the 19th century, Sanskrit writing was far from consistent and tended to be regionally specific.

Sanskrit continues to be an important global language and is primarily used today in liturgical settings, though the usage varies contextually. East Asian traditions emphasize the written form of the language. The bulk of Sanskrit texts brought to China were written in the Siddham script. Given the difficulty with translating Sanskrit into Chinese dialects, translators emphasized the written form of the Siddham over the correct pronunciation of Sanskrit mantras. Thus, Siddham in East Asia gained prominence as a form of sacred calligraphy. This usage of Sanskrit is evident in contemporary Japanese temples, where Siddham mantras are often written on implements used in ritual practice.

In contrast, correct pronunciation of Sanskrit mantras is of utmost importance in Indian traditions. Comparatively little importance is afforded to written Sanskrit and, in fact, it is often consciously deemphasized.

Sanskrit has had, and continues to have, wide global significance. Though typically associated with Indian religious traditions, it has been employed for multiple purposes—including religious, administrative, epigraphical, and political—and in various regions throughout Central, South, and East Asia.

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See also Aryans; Hinduism; India; Indo-European Religion; South Asia; Theravada Buddhism; Veda

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SANTERÍA

Santería, also called *Regla de ocha* or *Lucumí* religion, is a Cuban initiatic religion of African

Yoruba origin. Central features of this religion are the worship of divinities called *orichas* and the regular dialogue with these entities through different techniques. The practice of Santería is connected, in a complementary but also hierarchical way, with other local religious practices (popular Catholicism, Spiritualism, *palo monte*). The Spanish term *santería* refers to the identification between *orichas* and Catholic saints.

Originally practiced by Yoruba slaves from West Africa, locally known as Lucumí, Santería has progressively spread among the whole population. It is now widely practiced not only by Cubans from all socioprofessional and ethnic categories but also by an increasing number of foreigners in and out of Cuba.

Santería constitutes, among other religious expressions (Haitian Vodou, Brazilian Candomblé, Trinidadian *Shango*), an emblematic instance of African American syncretism stemming from slave trade and colonial history. For a long time, scholars have tried to identify continuities and discontinuities between African and African American religious manifestations, but it is now clear that the latter must be understood as a unique phenomenon. In Cuba, this dimension has long been recognized within the frame of specific discourses on national identity. Here, we will focus on Santería's historical, theological-ritual, and sociological dimensions.

Historical and National Context

Santería's ritual and mythical system developed in the second half of the 19th century, initially in the western part of the island and probably in connection with legal associations (*cabildos de nación*) that gathered slaves and freed them according to their regional origins.

Progressively, Yoruba initiatic traditions, separated from their territorial and community roots, underwent a deep process of adaptation to the new sociocultural environment: Ceremonies were altered and condensed. In addition, they integrated elements of other African and European religious traditions (e.g., before the initiation, neophytes must be baptized and "spiritualist masses" must be performed). Equally, the mythological corpus and the sacerdotal system were, to a certain extent, remodeled. This process of adaptation and syncretism,

also driven by divergent tendencies, contradictions, and dynamics of power that still endure, shaped the pattern of "modern" Santería or Santería *criolla* (Creole).

During the Cuban "pseudo-republic" (1902–1959) and the first decades of the Castro Revolution, the practice of Santería was frequently stigmatized and sometimes even criminalized. However, some of its choreographic-musical rituals were studied by local intellectuals and progressively folklorized, aestheticized, and theatricalized. Since the 1990s and the ideological reorientations adopted in post-Soviet Cuba, Santería has gained great prestige and important visibility. Today, definitely conceived as a specific manifestation of a whole historical national process, it has finally become a symbol of national identity, an element that probably plays a part in its contemporary popularity and diffusion among certain foreigners and the public.

Cosmology and Initiatic System

Santería's pantheon consists of a creator god, who allocates the *aché* (a mystic and sacred energy circulating in the cosmos), and about 20 *orichas* (deified ancestors) who have several avatars. *Orichas*, the main figures of mythological narratives, are respectively associated with elements of the social and natural world, and every human being is considered to be the "child" of one of them. Santería's cosmology and rituals also attach specific importance to *eggún* ("deceased's spirits").

The initiatic system includes different levels. During the central one, usually called *asiento*, the neophyte embodies this tutelary *oricha*, also called "guardian angel." The latter is then personalized and "fixed" in the neophyte's head and in a receptacle. This receptacle, along with others, will later constitute the initiates' personal altar.

Consecration ceremonies, which are particularly complex in their details, are based on ritual invocations sung in Lucumí (the Cuban ritual language derived from ancient Yoruba), on the manipulation of specific elements such as stones (*otá*) and plants (*ewé*) considered as powerful vehicles of *aché*, and on animal sacrifices.

The symbolic logic of *asiento* is based on the double trope of royal coronation and the most classic one of (re)birth. Indeed, people generally

get involved in the initiatic system to solve physical and/or social dysfunctions or unbalances, and initiation ideally marks a significant change in their life. In their everyday ritual practices, initiates constantly actualize the alliances sealed with the *orichas* during the different levels of initiation.

Communication Between Men and Gods

The dialogue with divine entities is a pillar of the practice of Santería, in and out of initiatic cycles. To achieve this, several divinatory techniques are widely mobilized. The basic oracle of *obi* (coconuts) marks all stages of the initiatic cycles and guarantees the consent of *orichas/leggún* to the pursuit of ritual activity. Divination sessions are also performed at each level with the oracle of *dilogún* (cowries). Through the cowries and the mediation of the diviners' interpretation and exegesis, initiates are told about their destiny and collect a set of personalized rules supposed to help them conduct their life in a well-balanced and harmonious way. Depending on the ritual tradition of the initiator, the more complex *Ifá* oracle, also of Yoruba origin but exclusively used by *Ifá* initiates, may also be mobilized. *Dilogún* and *Ifá* both rest on an extended mythological corpus and are also often consulted during private sessions held by specialized diviners. Both always result in propitiatory actions (*ebbó*) consisting of simple offerings or animal sacrifices.

Another method of communication lies in trance of possession. This may happen during the *asiento* (ratifying then the embodiment of the *oricha*) and, above all, during public ceremonies commonly called *tambor(es)*. Ritual rhythms, chants, and dances then performed to pay homage to the *orichas* also aim to provoke trance of possession and to allow *orichas* to converse directly with the assistant, giving advice or demanding offerings through the words of the "possessed" initiate(s).

In a pragmatic way, all these media of communication aim to confirm the efficacy of ritual actions or to collect personalized prescriptions and rely on a principle of permanent exchange and reciprocity between human and nonhuman beings. Ultimately, this is also reflected in the initiates' everyday practices (interpretation of specific dreams, visions, or everyday events perceived as signs) and in the care they lavish on their altars.

Ritual Kinship and Priesthoods

Initiation not only creates alliances between human and divine realms but also within the social world itself, according to the logic of godparenthood and ritual kinship. New initiates contract a filial relation with their initiator and a fraternal bond with the latter's other godchildren. All form a "religious family" gathered around and led by this single priest, called *babalocha* (for men) and *iyalocha* (for women). Religious families are organized on a basic hierarchical principle of seniority: Prestige and authority stem from initiatic age and are the privilege of the *babalocha/iyalocha*. However, in theory, every initiate can become an initiator after the fulfillment of specific ritual obligations and form his/her own religious family.

Depending on their religious destiny (*camino*), men may also specialize in more prestigious priesthoods, according to a second hierarchical principle that guides the eventual progression between initiations and ritual charges. The most important from that perspective are the priesthoods of *oriaté* (the highest specialist in initiations and *dilogún*) and *babalao* (the specialist in *Ifá* divination). The apprenticeship of any priesthood is generally based on an oral transmission of ritual knowledge and, to a certain extent, on the consultation of written sources redacted by some initiates themselves.

From a sociological perspective, the exercise of priesthood always provides individuals with spiritual and symbolic advantages but also economic benefits because of the ritual retribution prescribed by mythological narratives. In more general terms, the exercise of priesthood thus implies the acquisition of a real social capital.

Social Organization and Contemporary Developments

Santería has always evolved in a noninstitutionalized context and presents an acephalous and segmentary organization. Practitioners do not have, for instance, collective places of worship ("temples" are their own homes, with domestic space serving in fact as ritual space). Though initiates refer to a unitary notion of tradition, and despite the existence of shared common principles, ritual practice may thus vary in its details. Furthermore, religious families work in a relatively autonomous way. Ritual lineages are linked by horizontal and

sometimes competing relations, reinforced by their logic of reproduction, which implies their exponential growth.

Since the early 1990s, some attempts at institutionalization have merged and tried to modify this configuration, but in vain. All profess competing wills of unification based on the model of the organization of world religions (some of them also advocate the “reafrikanization” of the worship), but they only achieve a qualified success.

The noncentralized organization and the importance of personal accomplishment, key to the plasticity and relative flexibility of practices, seem in fact to have favored the early expansion and success of Santería outside the island. Indeed, as a result of the periods of emigration that have marked the last 50 years in Cuba, Santería has conquered new adepts in the Americas (United States, Mexico, Colombia, Venezuela, etc.). More recently, through new migrations and the emergence of mass tourism in post-Soviet Cuba, its practice has also been implanted in western European countries (Spain, Italy, France, Germany, Switzerland, etc.).

This process, which works today in parallel with the expansion of other African American and African (mostly Nigerian) religions, is now prompting increasing empirical studies and supplying theoretical debates about “transnationalization” and “globalization” in social and religious anthropology.

Emma Gobin

See also Africa; Candomblé; Cuba; Native Latin American Religion; New Religions in South America; Nigeria; Roman Catholicism; Saints; Shamanism; Symbol; Syncretism; Vodou

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SÃO TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE

Lying off the Atlantic coast from Gabon in West Africa, the islands of São Tomé and Príncipe house a largely Catholic population, with approximately 95% of the country's people residing on the larger São Tomé. The overwhelmingly West African population are largely Roman Catholic, with the church claiming 80% of the inhabitants. Evangelical Protestants along with Seventh-Day Adventists account for 15% of residents—a number that is growing due to continued missionary work on the island—and 2% of the remaining people are Muslim—mostly migrants from Nigeria and Cameroon. Many São Toméans continue to engage in indigenous spiritual practices, but that engagement does not preclude adherence to Christian faiths, and there is likely syncretism evident on the islands. Spiritist beliefs that inform syncretic practices stem mostly from African coastal societies and revolve around ancestral spirits and spirits that inhabit sacred spaces.

Although there were many claims of “discovery” by Europeans, São Tomé and Príncipe were in fact uninhabited when Portuguese explorers sighted the islands in 1471. Disease and the hardships of life soon claimed the first settlers, and in response, the Portuguese king, Joao II, gave control of the island to Alvaro de Caminha. De Caminha populated the islands with around 2,000 Jewish children, who had been removed from their homes and forcefully converted to Christianity, along with many convicts and prostitutes (called *degradados*) whom the Portuguese were happy to have on far-off shores. The Royal Charter that directed life on the island commanded that Jewish inhabitants and *degradados* marry slave women to create the future population. That decree resulted in the lack of slave trade on the islands, which in turn resulted in the Creole population extant in the country today, though the Portuguese legacy reverberates in the official language of the country. The country served as a trading post for many years

and was well regarded for its strategic location by both sides involved in the Cold War; it was only in 1975 that the islands gained their independence. Since then, the islands have become increasingly urbanized, and the majority of the population lives in urban centers; however, the small towns outside the main population centers are important spiritual centers of São Tomé and Príncipe.

At the beginning of the 21st century, the growing adherence to a Western consumer culture has resulted in a reduced status for traditional religious societies that were previously held in high regard. Most residents belong to local religious brotherhoods/sisterhoods that aid in the social control of the country and in the organizing of the festivals of the towns and parishes, usually around patron saints. The importance of local brotherhoods notwithstanding, most of the clergy on the island are “imported” from Europe. Religious organizations have to register with the government, and religious beliefs and rituals are heavily enmeshed with the society. Ritual specialists were still accepted and active on the islands at the beginning of the 21st century, and *Forros* (a term that means “freed slave” and designates the largest ethnic group of the country) continued to hold *djambí*, where spiritual possession was conjured by drumming and dancing. Christianity can claim the majority of the population as adherents, but traditional forms of spirituality remain largely active on the island.

John Soboslai

See also Africa; Gabon; Guinea; Indigenous Religions; Roman Catholicism; Syncretism

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SĀRNĀTH

Located in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, 10 kilometers north of Varanasi, Sārnāth is the place where Buddha gave his first sermon and is a major pilgrimage site for Buddhists around the world.

The name Sārnāth comes from *Saraṅganātha*, meaning “Lord of the Deer.” An ancient Buddhist story, *Nigrodhamiga Jātaka* (“Tale About Banyan Deer”), describes how once in a previous life Buddha was a deer king who offered his life to the local king to save a pregnant doe from slaughter. Inspired by this act of compassion, the king created a deer sanctuary called *Mṛgadāva* (“deer forest”). In Buddhist texts, this area is also called *Ṛṣipātana* (“raining sages”) since it was a gathering place of 500 sages (*ṛṣi*), who all attained nirvana, rose into the air, and let their relics rain on earth.

Following his enlightenment in Bodh Gaya, Buddha is said to have traveled to *Ṛṣipātana* to teach five mendicants who accompanied him in austerities. In his first discourse, the Dharmachakra-pravartana Sutra, or “Turning the Wheel of Dharma,” Buddha explained the nature of suffering through the teachings on the Four Noble Truths. The Four Noble Truths define suffering, its origin, its cessation, and the Noble Eightfold Path that leads to liberation from suffering. One by one, his companions became transformed through the realization of these teachings and formed the first community of Buddhist practitioners called *sangha*. Sārnāth became the place where Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, the three essential elements of Buddhism, or Three Jewels, came together for the first time.

The ancient town of Sārnāth grew around the place of Buddha’s first teachings with numerous stupas, temples, and monasteries built by Buddhist patrons throughout the centuries. In the third century BCE, Emperor Asoka built the Dharmarājika stupa, of which only the foundation remains. He also erected a pillar with the lion capital, which has become the state emblem of modern India. The Dhamekh stupa, built possibly in the third century CE with exquisite stone ornaments, still stands on the spot where Buddha gave his first discourse. The Chaukhaṇḍī stupa, dating back to the fifth century, commemorates the spot where the Buddha met his former companions. During the Gupta

period (the fourth to sixth centuries), Sārnāth became the center of Indian art, producing refined and elegant sculptures, some of which are preserved at the local archaeological museum. Sārnāth was destroyed by Turkish invaders at the beginning of the 11th century, partially rebuilt, and finally demolished at the end of the 12th century.

Contemporary Sārnāth has been revived as one of the main sites of Buddhist pilgrimage. A large number of temples and monasteries have been erected reflecting the styles of diverse Buddhist cultures. Foremost among these is the Mūlagandhakuṭī Vihāra, built in 1931 by Anagarika Dharmapāla and the Mahābodhi Society, where every evening, the Dharmachakrapravartana Sutra is chanted by monks and pilgrims. The town is also home to the Central University for Higher Tibetan Studies, a major research institute dedicated to educating young Tibetans in exile from their country.

Zoran Lazovic

See also Bodh Gaya; Gautama, Siddhartha; India; Mahayana Buddhism; Stupa; Theravada Buddhism

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SARVODAYA MOVEMENT

The term for the social movement called *Sarvodaya* is a compound, formed from two Sanskrit words, meaning the uplift (*udaya*) of all (*sarva*). The term was first used by Mahatma Gandhi and later taken up by reform movements in India and Sri Lanka. The Sri Lankan movement, Sarvodaya Shramadana, has developed a broad international reputation in recent years.

The term *Sarvodaya* was coined and popularized by Mahatma Gandhi in his 1908 translation of John Ruskin's critique of the Industrial Revolution, *Unto This Last* of 1860. Gandhi translated the work using the title *Sarvodaya*, a term that he felt Indian readers would associate with the spirit of

the text: a call for political, moral, and economic development from the ground up, focusing especially on the uplift of rural populations. Gandhi further developed the ideas he laid out in *Sarvodaya* in *Hind Swaraj* of 1909, where he further specified uplift as cultivating political independence (*swaraj*) and moral power (*satyagraha*) through creating an independent, local, village-based industry (*swadeshi*) not reliant on British consumer goods or modern, industrial techniques.

The Sarvodaya movement refers to those organizations worldwide that have taken up Gandhi's call for "the uplift of all" by means of rural development. In India, Vinoba Bhave and Jayaprakash Narayan sought to carry out Gandhi's program through land reform and social and political change. In Sri Lanka, Sarvodaya gained even greater prominence through the work of a Buddhist rural development organization started by a Sinhalese college teacher from Colombo, A. T. Ariyaratne, called *Sarvodaya Shramadana*. Ariyaratne's movement began in 1958 as a program that sent college students to rural work camps to help with various development projects, such as constructing roads, digging latrines, and building homes. These camps were originally called *Shramadanas*, meaning "gifts of work." The group adopted the name Sarvodaya in 1961 to highlight their connection to the Gandhian legacy. Yet Sarvodaya Shramadana inflects the term with a slightly different meaning to Gandhi's, translating it as "the awakening of all," a phrase meant to foreground the moral and spiritual aspect of their development projects. Ariyaratne's group understands rural development in terms of Buddhist principles and seeks to foster moral rectitude (*sīla*) and spiritual awareness (*samādhi*, *pañña*) as well as economic self-sufficiency.

Although not without critics, since the 1980s, Sarvodaya Shramadana has been regarded by many as a model grassroots nongovernmental organization. Ariyaratne has received several international awards for his work, and the group has received a steady stream of financial assistance from donors overseas. In addition, Sarvodaya Shramadana has opened offices throughout Sri Lanka and has established an international presence in the United States, where it currently runs an office in Madison, Wisconsin.

Benjamin Schonthal

See also Gandhi, Mohandas; Hinduism; India; Sanskrit; Social Justice; Sri Lanka

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SATAN

The word *satan* appears first in the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) as a common noun for someone or something that obstructs one's way. In the Book of Job, it is given as a name for the fierce angel who persuades God to test Job. The figure of Satan as a powerful force of evil bent on destruction derives from the combination of two ideas: the *banim* ("sons of the Lord"), who were the wicked "watcher angels" of Genesis 6, and *malakim* ("powers") who were agents of the Lord—or manifestations of the Lord—in his relationship with humans. When the Hebrew scriptures were translated into Greek about 200 BCE, *satan* was translated as *diabolos* (from which the term *Devil* is derived), meaning "adversary." The concept of a Devil, vague and marginal in the Old Testament, became much more vivid and terrifying in the period from 100 BCE to 150 CE, when many writings that were accepted neither by Jewish nor by Christian authorities nonetheless circulated widely. These works, known as *pseudepigrapha* (materials falsely claimed to have been written by ancient biblical figures such as Enoch) made the Devil a single spirit of evil whose function is to oppose the will of the good God by perverting humans. In these writings, the Devil appears under many different names, such as Mastema, Beelzeboul, Azazel, Satan, and others. The social condition for the rise of the concept of a single, huge power of evil was the fearsome

oppression of the Jews under Syrian and Roman rule in that period. There may also have been mutual influence between Jewish and Zoroastrian thought, which posited the existence of two separate gods, one of good and the other of evil.

This period is when Christianity arose, and the power attributed to Satan in the New Testament made him the source of all opposition and threat to Christ, to the Christian community, and to Christian individuals. He is tempter, accuser, tormentor, and jailer of the damned in hell. In addition to the canonical Christian writings, a number of allegedly Christian but actually Gnostic texts, mainly from about 150 to 300 CE, presented the cosmos as a battleground between the God of spirit on the one hand and the Devil, lord of matter, on the other. Thus, the Gnostics created a matter/spirit dichotomy, which they melded with the Zoroastrian good spirit/evil spirit dichotomy. Such a dichotomy was explicitly and firmly denied by orthodox Christianity, in which the Devil's power, though great and fearful, was always weaker than that of Christ. Anyone calling on Christ against the Devil would be saved, and at the end of the world, Christ would cast Satan and his fellow demons forever into hell. Belief in the existence of a Devil as the personification of evil has never been a necessary Christian dogma, but tradition, based on the New Testament, assumed his reality.

The Muslim Qur'an, believed to have been dictated word by word by an angel of God to Muhammad, affirmed the existence of Satan (*Iblis* or *Shaytan*). However, Islam differs from Judaism and Christianity in that the will of Allah prevails in every place throughout all time. This means that opposition to Allah either by humans or by spirits was limited entirely to what God wills to allow. As opposed to monotheism and Zoroastrian dualism, most religions recognize no single spirit of evil.

Belief in Satan within Judaism declined throughout the Christian Era, largely being replaced by the *yetser ha-ra*, the internal inclination to evil in each person; within Islam, his power is in every moment checked by Allah; Zoroastrianism declined and has almost disappeared. Christian belief took a middle road between the monism of Judaism and Islam, on the one hand, and the dualism of Gnosticism, on the other. The Christian Satan is a

monstrously powerful spirit who roams the world seeking the frustration of God's plan for the cosmos and the ruin and destruction of human souls; still, Christ is always the higher power, who will protect those who call on him.

In the earliest Christian communities, the social role of Satan was to support the power of pagan Rome and its persecution and execution of Christians. Once the persecutions declined, notably in the fourth century onward, there were fewer martyrs, and a sort of voluntary martyrdom arose in the form of hermits and monks who went into the wilderness (as Christ had done) to battle the Devil. In early monastic literature, Satan has huge and immediate powers. The monks believed that the evil of the pagan society had been replaced by the evil of the prosperous, lukewarm society, and they prayed, taught, and meditated for the freedom of that society from the Devil's temptations.

The monastic impulse continued, and continues today, but from the seventh and eighth centuries onward, general belief in the power of the Devil waned, and during the Middle Ages, he often became a target of mockery or mirth in legends, folklore, and theater, his foolishness and weakness against the power of Christ dominating thought. Then, in the 16th and 17th centuries, when western Europe was racked by religious and political tensions, especially those between Catholics and Protestants, Satan once again became a terrific threat. Catholics regarded Protestants as doing the Devil's work in splitting the church; Protestants regarded the pope as the Antichrist and Catholics as subjects of Satan. Both Protestants and Catholics, about equally, projected their terror of Satan onto individuals whom they persecuted as witches. In Eastern Orthodox Europe, where religious rivalry was not intense, there were virtually no such persecutions. In recent years, the figures for the witch craze have been preposterously inflated by propagandists; nonetheless, about 60,000 (an average of nearly one a day) perished in the course of two centuries.

In the 18th century, disgust with the witch craze and with the previous century of religious wars, along with the rationalism of the Enlightenment, reduced Satan to a marginal role in Christian thought. In the Romantic movement of the 19th and early 20th centuries, Satan even became a hero

symbolizing the revolt of the human spirit against secular and religious authority.

Much more dominant in the 20th century was the growth of physicalism, pragmatism, and deconstruction, which considered evil itself as only an outdated metaphor for antisocial behavior caused by genetic, hormonal, and even molecular malfunctions. Psychoanalysis, which dominated the mid-20th century, held that evil sprang from the repression of sexual and other strong feelings into the unconscious, though Jungian analytical psychology took the Devil more seriously as one of the archetypes that the universal human mind invented (or perhaps inherited) as a way of understanding evil.

The concept of Satan thus played a limited social role in the 20th century: Even churches that took his existence seriously seldom mentioned him. Toward the end of the century, partly in response to horror novels and films, but perhaps more profoundly as the symptom of a society whose values were blurring, Satan once again attracted attention. The heroic Satan of Romanticism reemerged in the late 20th century in Satanism, a cult whose followers tended not to take their beliefs seriously; those who did take Satan seriously held the meaningless view that a being whose concept was *invented* to represent evil is actually good. Although Satanism was never more than the tiniest sliver in society, a minicraze developed in the 1980s in which the public wildly overestimated the reach of Satanism. In events reminiscent of the witch craze, many people were accused of Satanism, and a few were even unjustly imprisoned. This hysteria stemmed from horror films, conspiracy beliefs, and the psychological fad of "recovery of memories," which led many children and young people to lodge false and often preposterous accusations of sexual and physical abuse against family and friends.

The first decade of the 21st century saw a broad religious revival in many parts of the world, and Christians and Muslims, true to their theological traditions, took Satan seriously as a supernatural entity or at least as a powerful metaphor of the existence of radical evil.

Jeffrey Burton Russell

See also Christianity; Enlightenment; God; Islam; Zoroastrianism (and Parsis)

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SATYA SAI MOVEMENT

The Satya Sai movement (also Sathya Sai movement) is a transnational, charismatic religious movement with its roots in a Hindu-Muslim syncretic faith of the Indian subcontinent. It was about 70 years old at the time of the death of its charismatic leader—Sri (honorific) Satya Sai Baba (1926–2011), called Bhagawan (“God”), Swami (“Lord”), or Baba (“Father”). He had a distinctive halo of hair and wore a long saffron robe; he was known to magically materialize healing *vibhuti* (“sacred ash”) and sacred gifts during a twice-daily *darshan* (“sacred audience”), where he received devotional petitions and seemingly effected cures.

Sai Baba’s personal prefix *Satya* (“truth”) referred both to his given name of Satyanarayana and to the sacred truth he supposedly embodied, as when he stated (at age 14) that he was an incarnation of the Hindu god Shiva and his female consort Shakti. In the apostolic literature, his religious ancestry is ecumenical: a colonial Sufi Islamic mystical sect (Shirdi Sai Baba), Advaita Hindu philosophical discourses, and contemporary Hindu and Christian liturgical practices.

The news magazine *India Today* estimated Sai devotion at 20 million in 137 countries, with one half to one third of his followers being from India. The Sai movement earned approximately 881.8 million Indian rupees (approximately US\$5 million) in 2002 to 2003 and has a net worth of US\$6 billion. Devotees come from the professional, technocratic middle classes. The spatial center of the movement is *Prasanthi Nilayam* (“Abode of Eternal Peace”) ashram in the village of Puttaparthi, South India, with subsidiary ashrams in Bangalore, Kodaikanal, and Mumbai.

The movement has a global institutional structure, active through various branches of the International Sai Organization (or ISO). The activities of the ISO are divided into three wings, all engaged in *seva* (“charitable work”): the educational, spiritual, and service wings, which distribute aid to the poor, establish educational institutions, and support medical facilities. The ISO also projects the Sai mission abroad, through a network of Sai Centers. The movement is globally mediated; audio/video sermons play on the radio (Sai Global Harmony) and on the Internet (Heart 2 Heart).

The rise of the movement has not been without critics. Accusations of corruption, pedophilia, and murder have been made by a group of disaffected “former devotees” self-titled “JuST”—Just Seekers for Truth—and have attracted global publicity, but Sai Baba himself has never been accused in an Indian court of law.

Tulasi Srinivas

See also Hinduism; Syncretism

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Website

Sai Central Council of America: sathyasai.org

SAUDI ARABIA

Situated between the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf on the Arabian Peninsula, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is the birthplace of Islam and home to two of its holiest cities, Mecca (Makkah) and Medina. Deriving its name from the regnant Al-Sa'ud family, Saudi Arabia was founded in September 1932, but the ruling family's legitimacy dates back to an alliance brokered in 1744 with the Sunnī theologian Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab (1703–1792). al-Wahhab's sociomoral revivalist form of Islam continues to inform governance, culture, and commerce in the predominantly Sunnī Muslim kingdom.

Conjoining temporal and religious authority, the modern Kingdom of Saudi Arabia represents the third state formed by the Sa'ud family. The first state (1744–1818) cemented the Sa'ud's partnership with al-Wahhab and his adherents, the *Muwahhidun*. The first Saudi-Wahhabi state collapsed in September 1818 after capitulating to the Pasha Muhammad Ali's Egyptian army (backed the Ottoman sultan Mahmud II), but a second state was reestablished shortly thereafter (1824–1891). Beset with internecine struggles and local opposition (from the Ottoman-supported Rashidi family), the Sa'ud Dynasty could not sustain political control during the second state beyond the Ottoman *eyalet* of Nejd.

By 1902, 'Abd al-'Aziz ibn 'Abd al-Rahman Al Sa'ud, or Ibn Sa'ud (1880–1953) rallied Bedouin tribes and Wahhabi *Ikhwan* soldiers, and over the next 30 years, he consolidated territories and spread Wahhabi doctrine across the Arabian Peninsula. By the 1920s, restive *Ikhwan*, who sought a more aggressive campaign of proselytizing, fomented rebellion, which Ibn Sa'ud eventually quelled with British assistance.

From its inception in 1932, Saudi Arabia integrated Wahhabi clerics into government institutions. The most powerful Wahhabi consultative body, Council of Senior Ulama, continues to vet the monarchy's policies for adherence to Shari'a law. Moreover, the Saudi state invests clerical police, *Mutawwa*, with legal authority for ensuring the promotion of virtue and prevention of vices.

Since the discovery of oil in 1938, the kingdom has balanced economic interests and concomitant

geopolitical implications as the world's leading petroleum exporter with historical commitments to Wahhabi devotional strictures. Complicated by petroleum's strategic importance, this equipoise has conflicted with political and religious fidelities to the kingdom's citizens as well as Muslims residing outside Saudi Arabia. During the 1990 Gulf War with Iraq, the government was criticized by clerics and citizenry for allowing the United States to station troops in Islam's birthplace. In response, the government reaffirmed its obligations to Islam in the Basic Law (1992). To emphasize the king's role as *fidei defensor*, Saudi monarchs since 1986 have taken the honorific "Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques," thereby accenting the kingdom's historic importance for Islam.

Bobby L. Smiley

See also al Qaeda; Hajj; Islam; Islamism (Political Islam); Mecca; Medina; September 11, 2001; Sunnī Islam; Wahhabis

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SCAPEGOATING

Scapegoating is a process by which blame for an in-group's misfortunes is transferred to a "goat": a person, animal, inanimate object, or an out-group, which is then eliminated. Through it the in-group "escapes" from its woes and is rejuvenated. The term itself is derived from the central rite in the Jewish feast of Yom Kippur, described in the Bible (Leviticus 16). In this, a priest confesses the sins of Israel over the head of a goat, which is then led outside the city gates to wander in exile, carrying with it those sins.

Comparable ceremonies have been reported elsewhere. Ancient Babylonians celebrated an annual *kippuru*, involving the transfer of guilt

onto, and subsequent murder of, a so-called Year King, followed by an orgy in celebration of the community's redemption. During the feast of Thargelia in Greek antiquity, the ritual murder of a human victim known as a *katharma* was believed symbolically to "kill death." In the Roman Saturnalia, a human effigy of the vegetative god, Mamurius Veturius, was killed, ensuring a bountiful harvest.

To defuse the violence of the scapegoating impulse, Christian mythology replaced the goat with a so-called perfect victim, the unblemished lamb, Jesus. Now, the sacrifice of God Himself was said to cancel the world's sins, presumably rendering further efforts at symbolic riddance unnecessary (Hebrews 10). Nevertheless, scapegoating persists in Christian nations. René Girard has concluded from this that scapegoating is an unavoidable, elemental engine of social and psychological order.

The scapegoat *complex* refers to how scapegoater and goat feed off each other's "shadows." These are the psychic energies that neither can permit to come to consciousness: lust, vengeance, envy, greed, slovenliness, and so on. The scapegoater represents the righteous partner in the complex. It eliminates what is forbidden and experiences catharsis after being cleansed of its own toxicity. Scapegoats take in the refuse of the scapegoater. They "eat crow." They become "people of the crow," as the untouchables of India are known: the black-skinned speakers of "caw-caw" (*cakka*), who labor in sewers and in garbage pits, consume beef, and have sex during menstruation.

The persecution of untouchables helps sustain the Hindu caste (purity) order. Other goats serve comparable functions. This is why they are occasionally lauded as heroes, as was the Maize Goddess of ancient Mexico or the adolescent boy chosen to dress in plumes and play the sacrificial victim, Tezcatlipoca. (The "sacred nectar" from their still-beating hearts was believed to nourish the gods in their cosmic struggle against chaos.) Or, like Christ, the goat may be worshipped as a god himself, whose death is said to redeem the entire human race. It is precisely the negative celebrity accorded them that sometimes attracts volunteers to serve as scapegoats. In this role, they are the *pharmakon* (Greek for "scapegoat"), the poison whose elimination from the body politic magically heals it.

The pernicious qualities of scapegoats are typically experienced as inherently given. However, in reality, scapegoats are social artifacts. They are manufactured through a four-step process that uses the standard tools of defamation: pulpit, pamphlet, and pep talk.

1. *Labeling*: A person or group is identified as an instance of a blameworthy category. Lest their subsequent murder incite in-group tensions, which would undermine the purpose of scapegoating in the first place, these are typically drawn from an out-group.
2. *Myth making*: Defamatory tales are devised to justify the assignment of the label. Here, the goat's pathology is attributed to a combination of its nature and/or nurture. In this way, the scapegoater's complicity in the goat's production becomes veiled to the producers.
3. *Public degradation*: Acting only out of concern for the group's interest, not for themselves, accusers testify to the goat's iniquity. Often the indictment described involves transgressions of the in-group's symbolic zones of vulnerability—that is, its members' bodily orifices: bestiality, homosexuality, race mixing, cannibalism, evil intoxicants, and alien music. Everything in the goat's life, including suggestions of its piety, intelligence, and sanity, is reinterpreted as an indicator of its "actual" impiety, stupidity, and madness.
4. *Embedment*: The labels, myths, and judicial findings are passed on to the next generation in the form of school lessons, sermons, and family chats. Being absent at the moments of identification, legend making, and public hearings, children experience scapegoats naively.

Azazel, the deity to whom the scapegoat in Yom Kippur is offered, was originally honored as a god of small herdsmen in the ancient Semitic pantheon. Under the influence of Zoroastrianism, however, during the period of Israel's exile (587–458 BCE), Azazel was transformed into a demon. He became a fallen angel, the cloven-hoofed "hairy one," Satan. As this occurred, his alter ego, Yahweh, was shorn of his wildness and came to stand for the communal virtues of justice and righteousness. This mythical bifurcation eventually became part of the cultural

inheritance of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Today, in a perverse and deadly ménage à trois, each of these religions uses the other two as scapegoats.

Breaking through the enchantment of the scapegoat complex requires binding the split that preconditions it. Insights into how this can happen are found in epic tales of shocking, humiliating recognitions by scapegoaters of their kinship with their scapegoats. In the Hindu *Mahabharata*, after the white-skinned Pandus use evil means to subdue the dark-skinned Other, the Kurus, they awaken to the fact that they and the Kurus are in reality step brothers. In the medieval story of the Fisher King and his quest for the Holy Grail, a similar thing happens. While locked in a death grip with an Arab Muslim—this genre was composed during the Crusades—both are made aware that they are first cousins. With these insights, tearful reconciliation becomes possible.

James Aho

See also Bible; Christianity; Ethics; Girard, René; Hinduism; Islam; Judaism; Manichaeism; Other (The Other)

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SCHLEIERMACHER, FRIEDRICH (1768–1834)

Theologian Friedrich Daniel Ernst Schleiermacher was born in Breslau, a city located in the Prussian province of Silesia (today known as the Polish city of Wrocław). After having been educated in the Protestant pietistic tradition of a Moravian sect, Schleiermacher studied theology at the University of Halle. As a preacher and theologian, he contributed to the organization of the Prussian church

and to the reformation of Protestant theology but also took part in the consolidation of the independent new University of Berlin, a model for future universities. He is considered to be one of the precursors of comparative studies of religion.

In 1799, *On Religion: Speeches to Its Cultured Despisers*, was published. In this book, Schleiermacher postulates the autonomy of religion and defends it from the skepticism of the enlightenment. Schleiermacher states that religion must be released from theoretical reason and also from practical reason to show its particular shape. Beyond knowledge and behavior, religion is based on feeling, and its horizon is broader than the perspective of morals, science, and metaphysics.

Rather than a person, God is the one and all. This totality can be reached by the individual through nature and humanity, which lets the self overcome its own limits to reach eternity in the present. In this sense, religion is the subjective participation of the human being in God's life, an embedding of the finite in the Infinite.

In 1821, his major theological work, *The Christian Faith*, was published, which presents faith in God as the certainty about the feeling of absolute dependence of the believer on a superior being posited beyond the believer himself. At the same time, faith is the relationship to that eternal being. From this perspective, sin and redemption are conscious experiences that enable the communication between human beings and God.

Against the rationalism of natural religion, Schleiermacher showed that religion comes from the intuition of the universe and the feeling of absolute dependence. The ideas of God and immortality become inessential because religious experience is unmediated by concepts. Religion is closer to aesthetics than to knowledge.

For Christian believers, self-consciousness of being redeemed by Christ is an incentive to act in favor of his kingdom, though all human beings have a natural tendency to religiosity. Such a tendency assumes many forms. While Schleiermacher conceived the existence of different churches as the fragmentation of one single Church, religious diversity is for him a necessary consequence of the historical shapes taken by the internal pious fire.

The essence of religion must be found in the diversity of positive religions. For Schleiermacher, the range of valid sorts of religion is endless

because it is culturally conditioned. Fighting among particular religions is contrary to the genuine spirit of religion and makes evident their degeneration.

This German promoter of toleration and religious pluralism died of pneumonia in Berlin.

Edgar Antonio López

See also Christianity; Germany; Liberal Protestantism; Natural Law; Pluralism; Poland; Protestant Christianity

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SCIENTOLOGY

Scientology, the faith of the Church of Scientology International, is a new religious movement founded in 1954 by L. Ron Hubbard (1911–1986). Spreading from the United States around the globe, it claimed membership in the millions worldwide in the early 21st century. Scientology has also attracted considerable controversy globally.

In 1950, L. Ron Hubbard, science fiction writer and explorer, published *Dianetics*, a bestselling book presenting the basic ideas underlying Scientology. Mental and behavioral problems are created by “engrams” implanted in the mind as a result of shock in this or previous lives. They can be released by a process called “auditing,” which enables the client to go “Clear.” Later developments, based on a Gnostic-type mythology, offer to free the “Clear” individual to become an Operating Thetan, or spiritual being.

Moving up the bridge “to total freedom,” as Scientology describes it, requires substantial commitments of time and money. At the same time, Scientologists, many of whom are young adults, enjoy opportunities in church centers for a full social life, including parties, entertainment, and even the hope of meeting one of the celebrities whose names are prominently associated with the movement.

The unimpressed charge the church with practicing a fraudulent form of psychotherapy, alleging that it is actually a commercial activity posing as religion, extortionate in its monetary demands, and excessively harassing critics and defectors. Scientology has not been slow to answer with countercharges and lawsuits, including contentious court and administrative cases regarding its right to be recognized as a tax-exempt religious organization under a number of jurisdictions. Recognition was eventually won in the United States (1993), the United Kingdom (2000), Australia (1983, in what is considered that nation’s landmark religious freedom case), New Zealand (2002), Spain (2007), Russia (2007, in the European Court of Human Rights), and Italy (1997, in a decision important for its legal definition of religion) but has been more problematic in France, in the wake of the government’s strict “anticult” policies, and in Germany, where Scientology has been severely criticized.

These highly publicized disputes have done much to test popular and governmental attitudes toward new religious movements and to clarify meanings of religious freedom—indeed the definition of religion itself—on a global basis. Overall, recognition appears to be feasible where freedom of religion is taken to cover religious organizations as such, despite turpitude on the part of a religion’s individual representatives or agencies, and more difficult when the government considers it has a legitimate duty to protect citizens from purveyors of religious beliefs and practices that it judges to be psychologically or materially dangerous. Scientology has had a significant role in illuminating these issues.

Robert Ellwood

See also France; Germany; Global Religion; New Religions; New Religions in the United States

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SCOTLAND

Religion has played a central role in the history and politics of Scotland, a region in the northern section of the United Kingdom, and has been a dominant influence in the shaping of a distinct Scottish cultural identity and society throughout the ages. Celtic Christianity as established in Scotland by Irish monk St. Columba during the mid-sixth century evolved in many ways distinctly from the general pattern of Western Roman Christianity. The peculiarities of Scottish religious life continued until the 11th century and the advent of Queen Margaret, who opened Scottish Christianity to southern European influences.

The claim that Scotland is a special nation, called by God, can be found in many epochs and in several key episodes of Scottish history—for instance, the declaration of Arbroath (1320), in the political context of the assertion of independence from England. The rise of Protestantism during the 16th century and the Reformation provided other evidence of Scotland's "obsession" with religious quest as well as of an ethos distinct from its southern neighbor.

Following the principles expressed by John Knox, Scotland has developed alongside its own variety of Protestantism—Presbyterianism. The signing of the National Covenant (1638), stating the claims of the reformed Presbyterian church against the King's Anglicanism, demonstrated both the extent of the religious enthusiasm in Scotland and its sense of a special destiny. Scotland's religious specificity was officially recognized by the Act of Union (1707) between England and Scotland, with Scotland keeping its established Presbyterian Church as one of its key national institutions despite the political incorporation of Scotland within the United Kingdom.

During the 19th century, religion in Scotland was marked by two great events. The first was the Disruption of the Church of Scotland (1843) when the Established Church split in two, leading to the restoration of the ancient democracy of the Kirk. Religious fractiousness within the Protestant umbrella has been on the Scottish agenda since then. The other process was the great immigration of Irish Catholics, which reinstated the ancient Roman Catholic hierarchy to Rome's "special daughter"

and brought with it a kind of Orange/Green sectarianism that has affected Scottish society.

During the late 19th and 20th centuries, waves of Italian, Lithuanian, Jewish, Polish, Indian, Pakistani, Chinese, and English immigrants also contributed to enriching Scotland's religious fabric. After World War I, although the authority of the churches in Scottish society declined, religion remained a major social, cultural, and political force, as demonstrated by the leading role of the annual General Assembly of the Church of Scotland or by the influence of the Roman Catholic Church via the separate and state-subsidized system of Catholic education.

In the 21st century, despite the process of secularization that has affected all developed societies over the past decades, a majority of people—nearly 6 in 10—continue to see themselves as belonging to a religion. Around one third belong to the Church of Scotland, 1 in 9 to the Catholic Church, 1 in 10 to another Christian religion, and only 1 in 100 to another religion. Around a quarter of the population goes to church at least once a week or more, and religious attendance as a whole is still higher than in England.

In the early 21st century, as regards religion, Scotland is more and more a diverse and appeased society. If the Kirk is the official church, it has no monopoly on Presbyterianism. And although it is the dominant form of Protestantism, Presbyterianism is not the only one. The Episcopalian Church is also influential. The Roman Catholic Church, the oldest religious community in Scotland, is by far the second largest one. However, like other pluralistic societies, Scotland also has its share of non-Christian faiths, including small Buddhist, Hindu, and Sikh groups; a well-established Jewish community; and a growing Muslim one.

Gilles Leydier

See also Anglicans; England; Liberal Protestantism; Protestant Christianity; Roman Catholicism; United Kingdom

SCRIPTURE

The academic study of scripture from the 19th century until the 1980s was almost exclusively the

domain of biblical and orientalist scholars who focused on the content and form of particular religious texts and on questions of the history of origins, the history of causes, and conditions that produced specific texts. In recent decades, historians of religions such as Wilfred Cantwell Smith and William A. Graham have advanced an alternative model of scriptural study that gives priority instead to the concept and functions of scripture as a cross-cultural religious category. Scripture as a concept in the history of religions is primarily a relational category that refers not simply to a text but to a text in its relationship to a religious community for whom it is sacred and authoritative. The term *scripture* can be defined in this context as a sacred text, transmitted in oral or written form, that has been canonized or otherwise recognized as sacrosanct and authoritative for a particular religious community.

The “human propensity to scripturalize,” as Wilfred Cantwell Smith terms it, is a global phenomenon that appears to be almost universal among the world’s literate religious traditions. Hindus, Buddhists, Jains, Sikhs, Parsis, Confucians, Daoists, Jews, Christians, and Muslims all have their sacred texts. Nonliterate traditions, such as Native American and African traditions, also generally have a circumscribed corpus of oral lore that is revered as sacred and authoritative for the community. This entry will begin with some general reflections on scripture as a relational category and then will discuss five examples of sacred texts that have been ascribed canonical authority in their respective communities: the Veda, the Tipiṭaka, the Torah, the Christian Bible, and the Qur’ān.

Scripture as a Relational Category

The relational approach to the study of scripture advocated by historians of religions provides a model that challenges in significant ways the dominant paradigms of scriptural study advocated by biblical studies scholars. The paradigms of biblical studies are “nonscriptural” in their respective approaches, in that they treat the biblical texts not as religious documents but rather as historical documents, in the case of historical criticism; or as literary creations, in the case of literary criticism; or as sociocultural products, in the case of sociocultural criticism and ideological criticism. Such

approaches, as Wilfred Cantwell Smith has emphasized, are primarily concerned with the biblical texts in their “prescriptural phase” or “postscrip-tural phase” and consequently give little emphasis to the functions of the Hebrew Bible or Christian Bible as scripture. The relational approach to the study of scripture, in contrast, focuses on the concept and functions of scripture as a religious category and a relational category and is concerned with the question of what it means for a text such as the Hebrew Bible to be regarded as scripture by a religious community. What does it mean for religious communities to “scripturalize”?

The study of scripture as a relational category focuses on a number of important issues, including issues of canonical authority, modes of oral and written transmission, reception histories of particular scriptures, and cultural modes of appropriation. The history with which this approach is concerned is not a history of origins (*Entstehungsgeschichte*) but rather a history of effects (*Wirkungsgeschichte*) understood as the tradition of interpretations and appropriations of a sacred text in the cumulative histories of the various communities that revere the text as scripture. In the study of scripture qua scripture, the primary concern is not to determine the sociohistorical conditions that produced a religious text but rather to excavate the multilayered and multivocal reception histories that the text itself has produced in the ongoing lives of religious communities in different historical periods, in different cultural contexts, and in different social locations. Such an approach is concerned with the ways in which a sacred text has been appropriated, engaged, experienced, embodied, and performed by the religious communities that cherish it as scripture, transforming it from a fixed, bounded text into a fluid, open-ended language world that finds expression in a variety of cultural forms—in ritual performances and liturgies; in sermons, orations, and exhortations; in songs, devotional hymns, and ritual recitations; in dance, drama, and film; in music, literature, and the visual arts; in educational initiatives and social reforms; in political movements and ideologies; and in various forms of popular culture.

Canonical Authority

Religious communities employ a variety of mechanisms by means of which they circumscribe a

corpus of texts and set it apart from other texts as a sacred and authoritative canon. In discussing the category of canon in the history of religions, Jonathan Z. Smith has suggested that “canon is best seen as one form of a basic cultural process of limitation and overcoming that limitation through ingenuity” (Smith, 1982, p. 52). He further suggests that the task of overcoming the limitation posed by a closed canon is accomplished through the exegetical enterprise. Smith’s model of canon will provide a starting point for our discussion of the manner in which Hindus, Buddhists, Jews, Christians, and Muslims have ascribed canonical authority to their respective sacred texts.

Veda

The Veda, which is revered by many Hindus as the paradigmatic scripture, conforms to at least one aspect of Smith’s model of canon, in that it functions within the Brahmanical Hindu tradition as a category that is simultaneously delimited and potentially unlimited. At the center of the canon is a fixed corpus of mantras that have been meticulously preserved through oral tradition in strictly unaltered form, syllable for syllable, accent for accent, for more than 3,000 years: the Vedic Saṃhitās. The canonical authority of the mantras collected in the Saṃhitās is ascribed to their sacred status as *śruti*, “that which was heard,” in which they are revered as the primordial expressions of transcendent knowledge that exist eternally as the blueprint of creation through which the creator manifests the material realm of forms. The Vedic “seers” (*ṛṣis*) are represented as enlightened sages who at the beginning of creation stationed their awareness on the transcendent level where they directly cognized—“saw” and “heard”—the primordial vibrations of pure knowledge and preserved them in the form of recited hymns through the agency of their own speech.

The domain of *śruti* is subsequently extended beyond the Saṃhitās to include the Brāhmaṇas, sacrificial manuals that are concerned with correct performance of the Vedic fire sacrifices (*yajñas*); the Āraṇyakas, “forest books” that reflect on the inner meaning of the sacrificial rituals; and the Upaniṣads, the latest portions of the Vedas that contain metaphysical speculations concerned

with knowledge (*jñāna*) of ultimate reality. While remaining delimited, the Veda is extended even further, beyond the circumscribed corpus of *śruti* texts, and through a process of “vedacization” comes to include within its purview a secondary category of sacred texts that are held to have been composed by personal authors and are therefore designated as *smṛti*, “that which was remembered,” rather than “that which was heard.” While the domain of *śruti* is technically closed, *smṛti* functions as a dynamic, open-ended category that includes the Itihāsas, or epics, the Mahābhārata, and the Rāmāyaṇa of Vālmīki; the Purāṇas, encyclopedic mythological works; and the Dharma-Śāstras, Brahmanical legal codes, along with a variety of other texts that have been recognized as authoritative by different groups in different historical periods.

Tipiṭaka

The Tipiṭaka (Sanskrit Tripiṭaka, “three baskets”), the Pāli canon of the Theravada Buddhists, is generally held to be the earliest extant, complete canon and derives its authority from its claim to be *buddha-vacana*, the “word of the Buddha,” and the repository of the *Dhamma* (Sanskrit *Dharma*), the teachings of the Buddha. The *Suttas* (Sanskrit *Sūtras*), which form the second of the three *piṭakas*, authenticate their claim to have been “heard” from the Buddha through the opening phrase, *evam me sutam* (Sanskrit *evam mayā śrutam*), “Thus I have heard.” However, the *Suttas* are not thereby ascribed a status comparable to that of *śruti*, “that which was heard” by the Vedic *ṛṣis*. In contrast to the Vedic mantras, the *Suttas* are not represented as the record of the eternal expressions of transcendent knowledge through which the creation was brought forth; they are rather revered as the record of the words of the Buddha through which the message of enlightenment was proclaimed. Indeed, the very notions of a cosmic blueprint and a primordial language are rejected, for according to the Dhamma, the world is an ever-changing flow of processes, and there are no permanent patterns or structures of reality to be encoded in language. Even if a primordial language of the gods existed, the words of the Buddha would be granted a higher, “supradivine” status, for the Buddha, as an enlightened human sage, is

held by the Theravadins to have achieved a level of spiritual attainment that surpasses that of the gods.

The Theravadins ascribe to the Buddha a conventional view of language in which language is valued for its communicative power and not for any intrinsic ontological status. The didactic content of the *Dhamma* as a universal teaching intended to enlighten human beings and gods alike, took precedence over a single linguistic form. The Buddha is said to have eschewed the use of Sanskrit, the sacred language of the Brahmanical elite in which the Vedic texts are preserved, and instead encouraged his disciples to learn and spread the *Dhamma* in their own dialects, in languages that would be accessible to the general populace. Moreover, in contrast to the Brahmanical preoccupation with accurate preservation of the Vedic sounds with little regard for their discursive meaning, the Buddha is represented as chiding those disciples who focus solely on memorizing the *Dhamma* and do not understand the meaning of the texts they recite.

Torah

The Jewish conception of Torah, like the Veda, accords with Smith's model of canon, in that it functions within the classical rabbinic tradition as a delimited corpus of texts that is also potentially unlimited. At the center of the canon is a fixed corpus of written texts that has been scrupulously preserved in unaltered form by the Jewish scribal tradition: the Sefer Torah (Book of the Torah), which comprises the Five Books of Moses, or the Pentateuch. The canonical authority of the Sefer Torah is ascribed to its sacred status as the Word of God that was revealed at Mount Sinai through the agency of the prophet Moses. Every word of the Sefer Torah is held to have been directly dictated by God to Moses, who acted as a scribe and recorded the words of God verbatim in the Book of the Torah.

The domain of Torah and its divinely sanctioned authority is subsequently extended to encompass the entire Hebrew Bible, the Tanakh, including not only the Pentateuch but also the Nevi'im (Prophets) and the Ketuvim (Writings). While remaining delimited as the Hebrew Bible, which is designated as the Written Torah (*tôrāh še bi-ktāb*), the Torah

is expanded even further to incorporate the Oral Torah (*tôrāh še be-'al peh*), the oral tradition of interpretation of the written text. The Oral Torah functions as a fluid, open-ended category that includes the halakhic (legal) and aggadic (nonlegal) teachings contained in the Mishnah, Talmud, and Midrash, along with potentially all texts, teachings, and practices authorized by the rabbinic elite. The rabbinic sages claim that the distinction between Written Torah and Oral Torah derives from the original revelation at Mount Sinai, in which God revealed to Moses two Torahs: a written text, comprising the Sefer Torah, Nevi'im, and Ketuvim, and an oral tradition of interpretation of the written text that has been preserved in the authoritative teachings of the rabbis.

Christian Bible

The canon of Christian scriptures consists of two parts, the Old Testament and the New Testament, which together constitute the Christian Bible. The process of canon formation was gradual, taking place over several centuries. The authoritative scriptures for the early Christian community were the Hebrew scriptures, which were eventually incorporated into the Christian canon as the Old Testament. By the middle of the second century, the formal public reading of scripture, the liturgy of the Word, constituted a fundamental part of Christian worship and included readings not only from the Hebrew scriptures but also from the Gospels and the letters of Paul, which formed the basis of the still fluid corpus of New Testament writings. The boundaries of the New Testament canon were debated until the fourth century, culminating in the first official list of the 27 books of the New Testament in the Easter Letter of Athanasius in 367. The canonical authority of the Old Testament and New Testament writings is held to derive from their sacrosanct status as divinely inspired writings. While God's central revelation to Christians is in the person of Jesus Christ himself, who is celebrated as the Word of God incarnate, the Christian Bible, and particularly the New Testament, is revered as the record of the revelation and hence is also ascribed the status of the Word of God.

Alongside the category of scripture, the Roman Catholic Church upholds a second category,

“tradition,” comprising the official creeds, dogmas, doctrines, and practices sanctioned by the hierarchy of church authorities headed by the pope. Scripture and tradition together constitute the principal sources of authority for the church. Like the Jewish category of Oral Torah, the category of tradition serves as a means of interpreting, applying, and extending the teachings of the Bible. By the Middle Ages in Western Christendom, the imposing edifice of church tradition had begun to take precedence over the scriptural foundation on which it was based.

The Protestant Reformation in Europe in the 16th century sought to counter the Roman Catholic Church’s emphasis on the authority of ecclesiastical tradition and to establish the Bible alone—*sola scriptura*—as the source of authority for the church. Against the hierarchy of priests founded on the ideal of celibacy, Luther, Calvin, and the other reformers championed the “priesthood of all believers” founded on the ideal of holy matrimony. In attempting to close the gap between the clergy and the laity, they placed new emphasis on lay education, on the oral proclamation of the Word of God through preaching and teaching, and on making the biblical texts accessible to the general populace through vernacular translations.

Qur'an

Islam has been characterized as preeminently a “religion of the book,” which centers on the Qur’an as the quintessential scripture. The Qur’an is celebrated as the eternal, uncreated Word of God, which is an attribute of God. This eternal Word is held to have entered into history in the form of an “Arabic recitation (*qur'an*),” which was directly revealed by God through the agency of the prophet Muhammad. Islamic notions of the Qur’an are embedded in a broader conception of successive divine revelations, in which each nation has a prophet or apostle who transmits the revelation in the form of a scripture. Thus, God has sent down not one but multiple scriptural revelations, including not only the Arabic Qur’an but also the scriptures of the Jews and Christians—the Torah of Moses and the Gospel of Jesus. The Qur’an is ascribed the unique status of the final, culminating scriptural revelation that authenticates and

completes all earlier revelations. In contrast to Jewish and Christian conceptions of scripture, in which the process of canon formation took place over several centuries, the revelations to Muhammad were compiled in book form during and immediately after his prophetic career and were invested from the outset with the authoritative status of scripture.

The delimited nature of the Qur’an is illustrated by the Sunnī schools of jurisprudence (*fiqh*), which in determining the principal sources of *fiqh* establish a hierarchy that clearly distinguishes between the Qur’an, which is the authoritative Word of God; the Sunnah (custom) of Muhammad, which includes the words, deeds, and gestures of the exemplary human being who was singled out to be the prophet of Allah; and *ijmā‘*, the consensus of the community, in particular of the *ulamā*, the legal scholars. While the Sunnah of Muhammad ranks second to the Qur’an as the most authoritative source of Islamic law, it is not granted the status of divine revelation. Moreover, the science of jurisprudence itself, including the books of *fiqh* that classify, interpret, and apply the law, is considered the product of human intelligence. In contrast to rabbinic conceptions of the Oral Torah, the interpretations of the *ulamā* are not represented as extensions of the divine revelation. The Qur’an is a closed category, and Allah alone has the power to reopen the Book that was sealed with the last revelation to the “seal of the prophets.”

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See also Bible; Christianity; Hinduism; Islam; Judaism; Mahayana Buddhism; Qur’an; Sikhism; Torah; Veda

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SECULARISM

Secularism may indicate a nonreligious worldview, an ideology, a political doctrine, a form of political governance, a type of moral philosophy, or a belief that the scientific method is solely sufficient to understand the world in which we live. While George Jacob Holyoke introduced the term *secularism* only in 1851, the structural reality of secularism has a longer history and has always embraced a spectrum of ideas: the emphasis on what is moral as opposed to what is miraculous in religion (Immanuel Kant); the view that the church is the caretaker of souls and ought to be separated from the state that is concerned with worldly matters (John Locke); the anticipation (often inseparable from advocacy) of a radical transformation of religions with progress (Thomas Jefferson); the call for replacing traditional religions with the new religion of humanity (Auguste Comte); the critique or rejection of traditional

religions, especially Christianity, as obstacles to human freedom and power (Friedrich Nietzsche); the predictions as well as concerns about the disenchantment of modern societies (Émile Durkheim and Max Weber); and the prophecies about the disappearance of religion at the end of history (Karl Marx).

Secularism has been a source of marginalization and sometimes even a hostile negation of religions, but it cannot be reduced to antireligiousness. It is also a moral orientation *toward* the world and *in* the world, often guided by a vision of a just society for all or developed as a strategy that should mitigate the challenges of religious pluralism. For both theoretical and empirical purposes, therefore, secularism should be thought of in the plural rather than in the singular. Defining *secularism* is additionally complicated because of its proximity to the notion of *secularization*. These terms have distinct analytic meanings and purposes but are also closely related. *Secularization* refers to processes that accompany modernization—gradual decline of religious contents and institutions or their sudden (and at times state-enforced) removal from the political, educational, or economic realms. But secularization is not some neutral and unavoidable progression toward less religious societies. It involves the intellectual and social history that brings together variables and actors as diverse as the unintended consequences of the medieval religious reforms and the Protestant Reformation, the birth of the modern nation-state, Enlightenment philosophy, and agents whose goal was to institutionalize secularity and the ideas of secularism in law, education, politics, and economics.

While secularism has origins in the West, it has long ceased to be its property. This is today a global phenomenon with an equally global crisis. Political secularism, which refers to the separation between politics and religion and between the state and religious institutions, faces challenges in almost every corner of the globe. The most immediate among these challenges are empirical—the revival of public religions, the strength of religious fundamentalisms, and the religious pluralization that accompanies new waves of immigration. They give rise to important questions about the relationship between secularisms and democracies: Is some type of secularism a necessary precondition for democratic pluralistic societies? If political secularism is

not a universal paradigm but a fragile doctrine that needs constant renegotiation, how are we to institutionalize the porous and changing boundaries between the religious and the secular? Indeed, despite an important democratic impulse of many political secularisms—the creation of a public sphere open to all individuals as equal citizens, regardless of their particular identities—the meanings, goals, and forms of institutionalization of secularism reveal much less democratic features as well. From the societies of western Europe to the United States, India, Syria, and Turkey, one traces the importance of secularism for the creation of powerful nation-states that are both homogeneous and homogenizing, for example, or the attempts to marginalize and control religions and religious institutions.

Contemporary secularisms are also contested by anthropologists, philosophers, theologians, and social theorists. Michael Sandel describes secularism as a principle that claims neutrality while in fact affirming the very particular, liberal notions of the good. Similarly, Saba Mahmood points to the impoverished understanding of human subjectivity and the parochial ideas of agency and authority that underlie liberal secular worldviews. For Talal Asad, secularism is a doctrine that claims to solve the problem of conflict while only replacing one type of violence (religious) with another (that of the nation-state and imperial wars). In many ways, the critique of secularism is an extended critique of modernity. It is also an invitation for a greater reflexivity about the politics of secularism that shapes the very foundation of the social scientific understanding of religion in the contemporary world. Some scholars propose that we should reject the secular-religious framework altogether; others suggest that we should work to develop a more dialogical and constructive approach to it. The very conversation about such questions is an indication that we are moving beyond the mere critique of secularism and beyond the dominant focus on its clashes with religions. Scholars continue to rethink the multiple faces of secularism in the context of a global world while being attentive to both its interconnectedness and its heterogeneity.

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See also Atheism; Enlightenment; Global Religion; Modernism; Multiple Modernities; Postmodernism; Secularization

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SECULARIZATION

Secularization as a notion indicating the decline of religion has a long tradition as a subject of study, with its earliest expressions to be found in 18th-century philosophy. In recent years, secularization has also been the subject of intense scholarly debate. There is debate around the term itself (How do we define secularization?) as well as around the theory—or thesis, depending on one's point of view—of secularization (Is it really happening and, if so, universally?). Both areas of scholarship flourish today, and the debates continue unresolved. An examination of the latter is instructive as regards the trajectory/trajectories of secularization and of the sociological study thereof.

Defining Secularization

The etymology of the term is worth considering. Secularization derives from the word *saeculum*, used in Latin Christendom to indicate profane time as opposed to eternal, “higher” time and synonymous with century or age—markers of time outside the sacred realm. In its earliest uses, secularization meant the transfer of certain functions from the church to the control of lay persons.

Sociologists of religion, however, are by no means bound by etymology. Some scholars define secularization as the institutional differentiation of church and state, others as the privatization of religious faith and practice, and yet others as the decline and eventual disappearance altogether of religious belief and practice. Notably, the related terms of *secular*, *secularity*, and *secularism* are likewise muddled and debated concepts.

It is useful to distinguish the multiple meanings of the term before addressing their potential

relevance to theories of secularization. Secularization is understood to mean any one, or a combination, of the following:

- A decline of religious practice (e.g., churchgoing)
- A decline of religious belief and practice
- A decline of church/religious authority over belief and practice
- Privatization, and perhaps marginalization or even complete absence, of religious belief and practice
- Division between the spheres of influence of religious institutions and the state (church-state separation)
- Absence or disappearance of religion from the public sphere

Theories of Secularization

The sociological study of religion features many shades of a general thesis or theory of secularization. That thesis assumes a decline of religion accompanying the spread of modernity. The founding fathers of sociology, including Auguste Comte, Herbert Spencer, Émile Durkheim, Max Weber, Karl Marx, Georg Simmel, and Sigmund Freud, all took for granted this inverted relationship between religion and modernity. In the 1960s, more empirically grounded studies were produced to support the secularization thesis. One of the most influential articulations came from Peter Berger in his 1967 book, *The Sacred Canopy*. Here, he describes religion's role as a kind of canopy, a social construction that projected a sacred cosmos and in so doing served to shelter individuals and society from a seemingly meaningless existence. This canopy began to fall apart with modernization, which brought secularization in a dialectical relationship with pluralism. Put simply, modernization led to the increased exposure to religious creeds different from one's own, which, in turn, undermined exclusive truth claims and, ultimately, faith itself. Other leading expressions of secularization theory in that period came from Brian Wilson and Thomas Luckmann.

David Martin was among the first to critique the secularization thesis by introducing critical nuance, first in 1969 with his *The Sacred and the Secular* and then in 1978 with his *General Theory of Secularization*. Martin focuses on the distinctions within Europe in terms of the pace and nature of secularization across different cultural contexts.

He describes a set of “universal processes” of secularization that tend to occur, other things being equal. But given that things rarely are equal, Martin explores the various factors influencing different secularization patterns.

It was not until the 1980s that the theory of secularization was more broadly contested, following a series of events that provoked its questioning. This includes the Iranian revolution in 1979, the rise of the Solidarity movement in Poland and the Catholic Church's role in the eventual fall of communism there, the role of Catholicism in the Sandinista Revolution and in other political conflicts throughout Latin America, and the public reemergence of Protestant fundamentalism as a force in American politics. Increasingly, scholars began to acknowledge that the theory was generalized on the basis of European trends. Famously, Peter Berger professed that he (and other secularizationist scholars) had been wrong: Europe was to be seen as an exception to the secularization thesis (a concept elaborated by Grace Davie in her 2002 *Europe: The Exceptional Case*) and to what was otherwise, in Berger's words, a “furiously religious world” (this in his coedited text provocatively titled *The Desecularization of the World*).

Today, secularization theory remains a lively area of study, with social scientists largely divided into two camps: those who would like to scrap secularization theory altogether and those who seek to preserve parts of it. Among the staunchest remaining supporters of the secularization thesis are Karel Dobbelaere and Steve Bruce; the main tool of this camp is the quantitative data produced by surveys such as the World Values Survey and European Values Survey. Also based on data from the World Values Survey is the “revised version” of the secularization theory propounded by Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart, whereby critical determinants of secularization are the factors of human security and religious culture: Human vulnerability leads to increased levels of religiosity, as do national cultures in which the values of the mass populations are infused with religion. In relatively secure societies, they argue, the remnants of religion have not disappeared, but the importance and vitality of religion and its influence on peoples' daily lives have gradually eroded. The United States, from this perspective, is the exceptional case.

Meanwhile, the U.S. case is central to one of the most powerful and sustained critiques of secularization theory, the “supply-side” perspective, voiced especially by Rodney Stark, William Sims Bainbridge, Roger Finke, and Laurence Iannaccone. This perspective applies rational choice theory to the sociology of religion and posits that religious pluralism does not lead to a decline of religion but quite the opposite: Religious competition invigorates the market as “consumers” (individuals who, the argument goes, are naturally religious) seek out religious options and make choices that maximize “gain” for them. Certainly, the thesis is derived from and applies well to the American case. But its proponents argue that it also applies to the European situation: European secularization is due not to a lack of interest in religion on the part of Europeans (low demand) but rather to deficiencies in religious supply due, in turn, to Europe’s religious monopolies, which have bred “lazy” churches and, hence, empty pews.

Several scholars, in fact, question the account of European secularity. Danièle Hervieu-Léger, for example, argues that Christianity maintains a presence in Europe through a “chain of memory,” linking individuals to a community through memory of a shared past, with religion deeply rooted in tradition lived in the present. Through a process of bricolage (or tinkering), individuals pick and choose aspects of their faith, and religion is no longer simply embedded in culture. Grace Davie argues that people in Europe *believe* but in different ways that are not necessarily quantifiable through religious affiliation; rather, many in Europe “believe without belonging.” Many also experience religion vicariously, not participating directly themselves but still expecting their religious institutions to offer certain services (e.g., baptisms and funerals) and to play certain roles.

Other critiques of secularization theory highlight its normative nature, indicating that the theory has dominated the sociology of religion through the wishful thinking of secular-minded scholars whose rationalism seeks a world free of religious myths and mysticism. In other words, secularization theory has been criticized (e.g., by the sociologist of religion Jose Casanova) as not only descriptive but also normative enlightenment thinking with elements of a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Current Developments in Fact and Theory

Regardless of academic debates, clearly, a glance around the world today does not offer a picture of a secular and secularizing world: The continued intensity of churchgoing in the United States, the rapid growth of evangelical churches in Latin America, the spread of New Age spirituality through western Europe, the renewal of faith in postcommunist eastern Europe, and the rise in fundamentalist Islamist movements in the Middle East and beyond suggest a reenchantment of the world in some cases and/or a desecularization of the observer’s lens. All of the above have led to discussions of a postsecular world—discussions taking place in many different domains (political, media, education, etc.), in various academic disciplines, and involving a broad range of scholars, including Jürgen Habermas, John Rawls, Charles Taylor, Francis Fukuyama, and Talal Asad. A popular resistance front is held—via their best-seller books—by authors such as Richard Dawkins (*The God Delusion*) and Daniel Dennett (*Breaking the Spell*).

Just as the concept of multiple modernities has been increasingly taking root in modernization theory, so too has secularization theory been yielding to an acknowledgment of multiple secularizations, recognizing the different trends and forms of secularization in various contexts as well as countersecularization in others. Moving beyond what many consider not only a European but also Christian and, in fact, Protestant bias in the secularization thesis, today, scholars are exploring the characteristics of European Muslim, Jewish American, and Christian Orthodox secularizations.

Effie Fokas

See also Enlightenment; Modernism; Multiple Modernities; Postmodernism; Secularism

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SELF-REALIZATION FELLOWSHIP

The Self-Realization Fellowship (SRF) is a non-denominational, global religious organization founded in 1920 by Paramahansa Yogananda (born Mukunda Lal Ghosh). The SRF mission is to disseminate knowledge of scientific techniques for attaining direct personal experience of God as set forth by Paramahansa Yogananda. SRF emphasizes the practice of a particular technique called Kriya Yoga, which draws the practitioner's attention inward, away from outer stimuli, and can lead to the experience of cosmic consciousness. This Kriya Yoga technique has been handed down through a line of gurus from Mahavatar Babaji to Lahiri Mahasaya to Swami Sri Yukteshwar and to Paramahansa Yogananda, who brought it to the West. In *The Second Coming of Christ*, Yogananda discusses a link between Kriya Yoga and the teachings of Jesus Christ.

Yogananda was well suited to be a successful teacher and guide for Western culture, having been trained by his guru Swami Sri Yukteshwar as a young boy for the divine mission of bringing Kriya Yoga to the West. The International Congress of Religious Liberals invited Yogananda to serve as the delegate from India at its 1920 convention in Boston, and he delivered an address titled "The Science of Religion."

By 1925, the SRF had established a headquarters in Los Angeles on Mount Washington Estates. Yogananda traveled and lectured throughout the United States and initiated thousands of followers in the practice of Kriya Yoga.

Legally affiliated with SRF is the Yogoda Satsanga Society of India, founded by Yogananda in 1917 in Dakshineswar. One of the unique features of the fellowship are the printed lessons, which give detailed instructions in SRF energization, concentration, and meditation techniques that constitute the

preliminary practice for more advanced instruction in Kriya Yoga.

After Yogananda's passing, or *mahasamadhi* (the conscious exit of a yogi from his body), in 1952, Rajarsi Janakananda, born James Jesse Lynn, served as president of the organization. He was an American businessman and self-made millionaire who became a close disciple of Yogananda. Janakananda served as president of the SRF until his passing in 1955. Sri Daya Mata, born Faye Wright, was president of the SRF and Yogoda Satsanga Society from 1955 until her passing on November 30, 2010.

The Kriya Yoga technique is based on the science of the breath. All living creatures must perform *pran-kriya*, or the action of breathing. So the flow of the breath is intimately connected to the life force, without which no other bodily functions are possible. According to the Kriya technique, by focusing one's attention on the flow of the breath and ultimately controlling the breath, one can consciously connect to the life force itself. Because Kriya Yoga is a technique that anyone can practice, it has universal appeal. Indeed, SRF members come from every corner of the world and all the major religions.

Paramahansa Yogananda, along with other prominent figures from India, has had a profound influence on Western culture as well as religious and educational activities in the West, and though the exact number of SRF members is not known, a Harris Poll study revealed that by 2004, 7.5% of U.S. adults, or 16.5 million people, practice some type of yoga. Yogananda lived in the United States and taught his students and followers for more than 30 years, and his work has been carried on by his monastic disciples.

Steven H. Pollastrini

See also Hinduism; Meditation; New Religions; New Religions in the United States; Vedanta Society; Yoga

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SENEGAL

The westernmost country in Africa, situated on the Atlantic coast south of Mauritania, Senegal has contained a majority Muslim population since the 10th century. Approximately 94% of the populace are practitioners of Islam, with around 4% of the population reporting as Catholic or Protestant Christians. The remaining 2% or so of Senegalese practice some form of animism or traditional African religion. There is also a good deal of syncretism evident in both Islamic and Christian practices, and many ethnic groups engage in some form of ancestor worship.

Islam was introduced to Senegal by Arab and Berber traders in the 10th century who intermittently invaded the country looking for converts. The nation's colonial history began with the Portuguese, who set up a lucrative slave and gold trade on the coast in 1444. The French would establish settlements in 1638, and those settlements would serve as a launching point for most of the French activities in West Africa. Senegal was declared a permanent possession of the French government in 1840, and this led to the abolition of slavery in the country. Major wars against the colonial powers post-World War II helped precipitate the decolonization process, which resulted in Senegal merging with French Sudan into the independent Mali Federation. Soon after the merge occurred in 1959, however, the countries announced their individual independence, and Senegal was declared an independent nation in 1960. The first president of Senegal, poet president Léopold Sédar Senghor, was a Roman Catholic who was able to develop strong ties with the Sufi Muslim brotherhoods that continued to play a significant role in the country's governance into the 21st century. The three principal Sufi brotherhoods to which a majority of the population belong are the Murīdiyya, the Tijaniyya, and the Qadiriyya, with the Tijaniyya claiming dominance among the three.

Senegal is exceptional because its diverse ethnic groups and religions coexist in peace. It has not been without conflict, however, and the anti-Moor protests of the 1980s resulted in the mass exodus of the group in 1989. At the beginning of the 21st century, a separatist movement that began in 1982 in the forest area of Casamance continues. The movement is both ethnic and religious in character;

the Diola population, who seek separation, are less Islamic than the majority Wolof ethnic group, which comprises the bulk of citizens in the northern part of the nation.

The Senegalese government actively supports the religion of its populace, maintaining a fund to support religious festivals and the revitalization of places of worship, and sponsors the annual hajj pilgrimage for hundreds of Senegalese Muslims and annual journeys to the Holy See for its Catholic citizens. There was a noted growth in the popularity of religious schools at the end of the 20th century, and the government allowed up to 4 hours of religious education in its public schools. The steps the government takes to create an environment that is respectful of all religions has created a society that boasts of peace and harmony amid many other societies that have succumbed to ethnic strife.

John Soboslai

See also Africa; Islam; Islamism (Political Islam); North Africa; Postcolonialism; Religion and State; Sufism

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SEPTEMBER 11, 2001

The date of September 11, 2001, is largely recognized for a series of violent attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon

in Washington, D.C. The events of “9/11,” as it is often referred to, have changed the overall makeup of global and international relationships in virtually every segment of political, economic, and civil society. Moreover, a latent effect of 9/11 has created a greater global awareness of the intersection between religion and violence. On the surface, the attacks appeared to be driven by radical “Islamic fundamentalism”; yet a closer examination would hold that 9/11 was a mere instance of a particular form of religious extremism and was neither exclusive to nor representative of the larger Muslim community.

On that day, a total of 19 men hijacked four commercial airliners and rerouted them toward the World Trade Center towers, the Pentagon, and the White House. The first plane, American Airlines Flight 11, bound for Los Angeles, departed from Boston’s Logan International Airport at 7:59 a.m. After irregular communication between Flight 11 and Boston Center occurred, including a phone call from a flight attendant alerting American Airlines of a stabbing on board the plane, Boston Center notified Otis Air Force Base in Massachusetts and the Northeastern Air Defense Sector of the possible hijacking. Despite the scrambling of two F-15 fighter jets from Otis Air Force Base, Flight 11 was not intercepted, and at 8:46 a.m., it crashed into the North Tower of the World Trade Center.

The second plane, United Airlines Flight 175, also bound for Los Angeles, departed from Boston’s Logan International Airport at 8:14 a.m. At 8:52 a.m., United Airlines received a call from a Flight 175 attendant confirming that their plane had been hijacked, both pilots killed, and a flight attendant stabbed. At 8:58 a.m., Flight 175 flew off path toward New York City, where it crashed at 9:03 a.m. into the South Tower of the World Trade Center.

At 8:20 a.m., American Airlines Flight 77, again bound for Los Angeles, departed from Washington Dulles International Airport. Within 25 minutes of its departure, Flight 77 flew off course over Ohio, returning toward Washington D.C. At 9:37 a.m., Flight 77 crashed into a western portion of the Pentagon.

Just prior to the impact from American Airlines Flight 11 into the North Tower of the World Trade Center, United Airlines Flight 93 departed from Newark International Airport at 8:42 a.m. After a series of communications between Flight

93 passengers and their relatives on the ground, there was some speculation that these passengers might have known about the other three hijackings and may have acted on this information by trying to take control of their flight. Given this, it is believed that some of these passengers stormed the cockpit to divert the plane from crashing into the U.S. Capitol. The hijackers lost control of the aircraft, and Flight 93 crashed at 10:03 a.m. just outside Shanksville, Pennsylvania.

In the end, a total of 3,017 people died and an estimated 6,300 others were injured in the attacks. In New York City, the overall physical damage, inclusive of immediate and subsequent destruction, consisted of damage to six World Trade Center buildings, a Marriot Hotel, a Greek Orthodox Church, and a Deutsche Bank, and collateral damage to the surrounding buildings. In Arlington, Virginia, a portion of the west side of the Pentagon was destroyed.

The aftermath of 9/11 has led to at least two overseas conflicts, several dramatic changes in domestic and foreign policy legislation, controversial investigations, and conspiracy theories.

The conflicts that ensued after 9/11 were part of what U.S. President George W. Bush dubbed the “War on Terror.” After arriving at the conclusion that the Saudi Arabian-born militant Osama bin Laden and his al Qaeda fighters were behind the attacks of 9/11, the United States and its allies—the United Kingdom and Canada—and later NATO soldiers invaded Afghanistan, where bin Laden was believed to be in hiding among the Taliban. But the mission known as Operation Enduring Freedom, which began on October 7, 2001, did not manage to either capture or kill Osama bin Laden. However, this mission has led to regime changes at the national and local levels in Afghanistan, despite the ongoing conflicts in that region. (Osama bin Laden was finally killed in a U.S. military raid on his hideout in Abbottabad, Pakistan, on May 2, 2011.)

In the early months of 2003, the United States was also gearing up to invade the nation of Iraq. The justification for this invasion was based on at least two allegations that held that Iraqi President Saddam Hussein was concealing weapons of mass destruction as well as providing refuge and support for al Qaeda fighters. Although the justifications for preparing for an invasion were questioned, and

met with extensive international criticism and condemnation, on March 20, 2003, the United States, along with a coalition of military forces from the United Kingdom, Australia, and Poland, invaded Iraq. Notwithstanding the ongoing conflicts in Iraq through the spring of 2008, the defeat of Iraq's conventional military was declared by President Bush on May 1, 2003.

U.S. domestic and foreign policy legislation also went through several transformations. On October 26, 2001, the U.S. PATRIOT Act was signed into law. The purpose of the act was to increase the authority of law enforcement agencies in an effort to combat terrorism; however, critics of the act argued that such an increase in authority would serve to limit civil liberties. In addition to the PATRIOT Act, a new cabinet known as the Department of Homeland Security was established on November 25, 2002, to protect U.S. citizens from terrorism within and abroad. The Department of Homeland Security has also been met with criticism about its ineffectiveness and bureaucratic constraints.

Much of the evidence that influenced such U.S. responses was actually compiled through an investigation that was not completed until well after the two conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq had begun and the changes to legislation were implemented. In spite of calls for an independent investigation into the events of 9/11, on November 27, 2002, President Bush and the U.S. Congress created the "9/11 Commission on Terrorist Attacks." When the "Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States" was released on July 22, 2004, the general conclusion was that Khalid Shaykh Mohammad, not Osama bin Laden, was the chief organizer behind the attacks and that the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) could have prevented them. The 9/11 Commission also made 41 recommendations to the president and Congress to prevent future attacks on the U.S. homeland.

Though the commission report created an official narrative for the events of 9/11, skepticism and suspicion about such a report had already emerged years before the report was completed and distributed. Michael C. Ruppert, founder and editor of the newsletter *From the Wilderness*, may have been the first to publicly speak about the perceived anomalies of 9/11 in the fall of 2001 and was later

followed by David Ray Griffin in his 2004 book, *The New Pearl Harbor*. These authors—widely decried in the public media as conspiracy theorists—have given rise to a loosely connected network called "The 9/11 Truth Movement," contending that 9/11 was effectively an elaborate scheme designed by the U.S. government to justify future wars and secure oil interests within the Middle East. Much of this movement shares the following paraphrased contentions:

1. Certain U.S. officials had prior knowledge of the attacks of 9/11.
2. Several mock security training sessions took place on 9/11 that precluded timely decision making and competent responses on the part of the U.S. military.
3. The World Trade Center towers were brought down by a controlled demolition.
4. United Flight 93 was not brought down by a heroic struggle for control of the plane but rather was shot down by the U.S. military.
5. The Pentagon was struck by a missile, not an airplane.
6. The official story presented by the *9/11 Commission Report* was complicit at best.

None of these allegations has been proven convincingly, and ultimately, these conspiratorial charges are based on broad allegations about the hidden agenda of the United States to impose military influence within the global geopolitical arena as well as to control and profit from the oil markets of the Middle East region. Several of these accusations condemned the Project for the New Century, a neoconservative think tank made up of prominent political figures, Cabinet members, and advisors within President Bush's administration. Project for the New Century's overall mission was to promote U.S. presence on a global scale. While the latter mission is not itself without critique, the conspiratorial charges surrounding it have done little to clarify the situation.

Salvador Jiménez Murguía

See also Afghanistan; al Qaeda; Iraq; Islamism (Political Islam); Terrorism; Violence; War on Terrorism

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SERBIA

Serbia, in the heart of the southern European Balkan countries that once constituted Yugoslavia, has been at the crossroads of global religion since antiquity. Groups of Serbs and other Slavic people migrated from the northeast of the Carpathian Mountains to the Balkan Peninsula from the fifth to the seventh centuries and settled in Roman territories. The Roman Empire, centered in Constantinople, with Christianity as its state religion, attempted to domesticate intruders into imperial subjects. Although the Slavs adopted the political, cultural, and religious institutions of the Byzantines, they rejected and fought against imperial rule and established their own kingdoms and principalities.

Christianization of the Serbs occurred in the second half of the ninth century when two brothers from Thessalonica, Cyril and Methodius, began to preach in the Slavic vernacular, created the Cyrillic alphabet, and translated the Christian scriptures and liturgies into the Old Church Slavonic language. The early Serbian protostates of the 9th and 10th centuries coemerged with the hierarchical structure of organized Christianity.

The struggle for supremacy between the pope in Rome and the patriarch in Constantinople originated the schism between the Orthodox and Catholic churches in 1054 and was reflected in shifting ecclesiastical allegiances among the Serbs. However, in 1219, Saint Sava, the youngest son of the first ruler of the Serbian Nemanjić Dynasty, became the archbishop of the autocephalous Serbian Orthodox Church under the Constantinople patriarchy, sealing an enduring identity of Serbs as Orthodox Christians. Together with the rise of Serbian military power, conquest of Byzantine territories, and coronation of Tsar Dušan in 1346 as the Emperor of Serbs and Greeks, the Serbian archbishop was raised to the rank of patriarch. Between the 12th and 14th centuries, the Nemanjić Dynasty built numerous monasteries, giving birth to the Raška School of art, whose frescoes of secular authorities alongside Christian images adorned the walls of the churches. In turn, most of the Nemanjić kings were canonized by the Serbian church. All these events testify to the presence of state institutions pervaded by Christian religiosity and church institutions imbued with state power.

With the fall of the Serbian state to the Turks in the 1389 Kosovo battle and its incorporation into the Ottoman Empire after 1459, the monasteries, churches, and clergy became a sanctuary of Serbian cultural and social identity. Serbian priests led rebellions against the Turks and guided flows of refugees from Kosovo and Raška north into the Austrian territories. In the 1700s, the center of Serbian cultural life gradually moved to the town of Sremski Karlovci and monasteries in Srem, an area between the Sava and Danube rivers. For nearly 500 years under the Ottomans, to be a Serb meant to belong to the Serbian Orthodox Church, and this vested identity was carried over into the present.

Having regained its independence in the 19th century, Serbia managed to unify dispersed ethnic Serbs into the country of Yugoslavia following World War I and bring together fragmented eparchies under patriarchy in Belgrade. While marginalized after World War II by the Yugoslavian communist government, the Serbian Orthodox Church was once again called upon by the Serbian state in the 1990s to rouse national feelings and solidify national identity during the recent Balkan wars.

Zoran Lazovic

See also Belgrade; Christianity; Constantinople; Eastern Orthodox Christianity; Kosovo; Russian Federation; Yugoslavia

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SERRA, FATHER JUNÍPERO (1713–1784)

Born Miguel José Serra on November 24, 1713, at Petra on the island of Mallorca, Father Junípero Serra gained renown as a teacher of philosophy on his home island, as a missionary and *comisario* of the Inquisition in the Sierra Gorda in Mexico, and ultimately as founder and Father President of the California missions. In 1988, Pope John Paul II beatified him, and the international Serra Cause and massive documentation support his canonization. The outlines of his life are well-known, although there are large gaps in documentation concerning his experience in Mexico, and his reticence about self-revelation in his many letters and reports renders his life history incomplete. His legacy will always be controversial, his admirers applauding his efforts at Christianizing the Native Americans, others pointing to the devastation of their way of life.

At age 15, he left for Palma, where he began his studies for entry into the Franciscan Order. At first rebuffed, he reapplied, and at age 17, he joined the Franciscans and adopted the name *Junípero*, for a companion of Saint Francis of Assisi who was known for his humility and patience. The young Serra pursued the study of theology and philosophy, obtaining a doctorate in 1742 from Lullian University in Palma, where he then assumed the chair of Scotistic philosophy. However, academic life became unfulfilling, and as a result of this and other factors, he decided to resign his professorship in January 1849 in favor of evangelizing the Indians of the Americas. He sought to follow the example of the great 13th century Mallorcan, Ramón Llull, who preached to North African

Muslims. He was also influenced by the writings of María de Agreda, who had miraculously bilocated to New Mexico in the 1620s and told of the Indians' desire for evangelizing, and by his success as a *comisario* of the Inquisition in a place with a large *converso* population from whom Serra may have descended.

Serra arrived at the College of San Fernando in January 1750, after a walk of 250 miles (1 mile = 1.609344 kilometers) from Veracruz, on which he developed a foot infection that would plague him terribly the rest of his life. He and Francisco Palóu, a former student and his first biographer, soon responded to the call for volunteers and walked the 175 miles to the Sierra Gorda. Already missionized, the area around Jalpan suffered plagues and remnant pagan spirits and witchcraft, which Serra would battle as president (1751–1754) of the missions there and *comisario* of the Inquisition. Called back to Mexico City in 1758, he served at the college and as missionary to several places near the capital.

In 1767, he assumed the presidency of the missions of Baja California after the Jesuit expulsion. In early 1769, he enthusiastically heeded the call of Visitor General José de Gálvez to initiate the spiritual conquest of Alta California. Zealously Father President of the missions, Serra proceeded to found nine missions along the California coast, beginning with San Diego Alcalá in July 1769. In spite of the freshness of this frontier territory, his efforts were vexed by Indian resistance, often the consequence of soldier outrages and by vehement disputes with civil authorities, most notably with Captain and then Governor Pedro Fages, which belied any notion that Serra's demeanor was akin to that of his order's founder or his namesake.

Serra died in 1784 at the age of 70 at Mission San Carlos (Carmel). He is the most important, and now controversial, figure in early Californian history. His supporters laud his efforts to bring Christianity to the natives; his critics hold him responsible for initiating the devastation of the Indians of the California coast.

Douglas Monroy

See also Christianity; Indigenous Religions; Missions and Missionaries; Native North American Religion; Roman Catholicism

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SEXUALITY

Most religious traditions have been profoundly ambiguous about sexuality. At times, sexual acts are regarded as having almost a sacred quality, as the ancient Hindu temple architecture at Khajuraho illustrates. At other times, it is regarded as inherently sinful, as the Apostle Paul seems to imply and the early Christian bishop, Augustine, affirms. Codes of modesty (*tzniut*) in Orthodox Judaism are meant to diminish sexual desire. In Muslim mosques, women pray at the back of the room so that men will not be sexually distracted from the sight of women bending over in prostration during the prayers.

Though the subject of religion and sexuality is a topic different from that of gender roles and how they are treated within religious traditions, notions about sexuality can affect attitudes toward gender. Although there is no scriptural basis in any religious tradition for one gender being spiritually superior to the other, customs have developed within religious communities that at times have regarded women's sexuality as something to be controlled. In some African communities, this notion has become the basis for adopting practices of female genital mutilation (so-called female circumcision). It can also be a reason for enforcing codes of modesty more strictly among women than men. In Islam, for instance, the guidance given in the Qur'an for people to dress modestly is sometimes applied more strictly to women than to men and taken to extremes in the Wahhabi branch of Islam in Saudi Arabia, where women are fully covered in black cloth except for small portals for their eyes.

This entry will explore religious practices and ideas regarding sexuality in different traditions and in various parts of the world. These practices and ideas are global in two senses of the word. The phenomenon of sexuality is universal, and every

religious tradition deals with it—though often in contradictory ways. Sexuality can also be global, in the sense that practices and ideas in one part of the globe can spread to other areas, often from one tradition to the other. When early Christians accepted the Greek idea of the separation of the spirit and the body, it enabled Christians to identify the bodily function of sex as something inferior. An example of the borrowing of attitudes toward homosexuality may be found among Israeli Jews in the last decades of the 20th century when some conservative Jewish activists went on tour in the United States with pro-Israeli right-wing Christian evangelists for whom opposition to homosexuality was a major theme and who became more stridently homophobic in their public comments at home.

Sexual Images

Perhaps paradoxically, the Christian idea of the separation of the spirit and the body can lead to an admiration for the body as “the temple of the Holy Spirit” (1 Corinthians 6: 19–20). In the *Song of Songs* in the Hebrew Bible (the Old Testament), descriptions of women's bodies are provided in appreciative detail, as they are in some of the devotional poetry of India's medieval poet-saints. The blind poet, Sur Das, for example, describes in handsome specificity the beauty of young Krishna's body and the erotic splendor of his female lovers.

The Shaivite tradition in Hinduism is represented by the image of the *lingam*, found in temples and in homes and in calendar art throughout India. Though many of the Hindu faithful deny that it has any specific sexual reference, it is undeniably phallic in presentation. It is usually thought to symbolize the male sexual energy manifest by the god Shiva, who is sometimes described as the “erotic ascetic” (as noted by Wendy O'Flaherty) since he was able to stir up sexual energy and maintain an erection for eons while not discharging his sexual potency. The Shiva lingam is often placed in the center of a flat base shaped like a vagina (the *yoni*), and the union of the two—lingam and yoni—is regarded as a symbol not only of sexual fulfillment but also of spiritual union (see Figure 1). The union of the male-female aspects is also in the figure of Shiva himself or herself, since the god is thought to embody both male and female characteristics, and some

iconography shows this in literal form with one side of his body complete with a breast and female genitalia and the other side with a male chest and genitals. The union of female-male principles is also a part of the Chinese religious tradition where the image of yin and yang—in Daoist, Confucian, and Buddhist images—provides the idea of balance in life between various oppositions, including dark and light, cold and hot, and female and male.

Actual sexual unions are part of the practices of some devotees of the Tantric traditions found in esoteric branches of Hinduism and Buddhism. Tantra involves a large body of spiritual texts and practices, few of which are specifically sexual, but it does include the notion that the body can channel spiritual energy and that seminal fluid is a concentrated form of the life force. The so-called left-handed Tantra (*Vamachara*) of Shaivite Hinduism sometimes involves actual sexual intercourse in the *maithuna* ritual, though often the intention is to provide a situation of sexual excitement without actually releasing sexual fluid through ejaculation in order to redirect the spiritual energy within the body to a high level. Some practitioners of

Tantra in Tibetan Buddhism are also said to take the image of the “jewel in the lotus” in a sexual sense and apply it to the integration of sexual intercourse with ritual practices.

Attitudes Toward Heterosexuality

Male-female sexuality is recognized as a positive aspect of life in most religious traditions, though for different reasons. At the most basic is the idea that marriage provides a controlled outlet for sexual expression. In early Christianity, the Apostle Paul regarded celibacy as the preferred choice, but for those who are unable to control their passions, “it is better to marry than burn” (1 Corinthians 7:9). Religious law in some traditions makes sexual activity one of the defining aspects of marriage, and Islamic law allows divorce on the grounds of the refusal or inability of one partner to have sexual relations with the other.

Within the Roman Catholic tradition, the purpose of marriage is not simply to have sexual relations but to provide for procreation. The Church’s opposition to birth control methods is often based



Figure 1 Lingam and Yoni of Lord Shiva

on the idea that it prevents sexual relations from producing offspring and the sheer pleasure of sexuality is an insufficient moral reason to engage in sex acts. The implication is that the sinfulness of sexual pleasure is mitigated only by the productive result of progeny. The scriptural basis for this position comes from the admonition in Genesis 1:28 to “be fruitful and multiply.” Jewish ethical codes are also based on this scriptural reference and accept sexual relations within marriage as a pleasurable obligation but without the limitation that only procreative sexual relations are morally justified.

The traditional Hindu attitude accepts sexual relations within marriage as part of the expectations of the householder stage of life. The Kama Sutra texts provide a sort of detailed manual of sexual activities, and the diversity and creativity of the sexual positions described indicate that the purpose is as much for pleasure as for simple procreation, if not more. Since *kama*, sexual pleasure, is regarded by Hindu texts as one of the four great goals of human activity, to have a healthy sexual life is a religious obligation. The ancient temple at Khajuraho displays the diversity of sexual positions between male and female partners, although sometimes assisted by other people.

The joining together of a man and woman in marriage—implicitly sexual and physical—is also regarded as being a spiritual union. The statement in the book of Genesis in the Bible that “a man leaves his father and mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh” (Genesis 2:24) is regarded as a basis for the sacramental aspect of marriage. In Hinduism, the bride and groom become like deities in a fire ritual that is reminiscent of ancient Vedic rites. In most Buddhist traditions, marriage itself is not regarded as a sacrament, but the couple may go to a temple priest after the civil ceremony to receive blessings for a happy married life. Buddhist prayers are also offered for a fertile marriage and for the union to be blessed with children. Approved marriage within most religious traditions assumes that the partners are one man and one woman, though the custom of polygamy is approved within the Qur’an and is common in some Arab societies, as it has been in traditional Chinese culture. The Mormon faith allowed polygamy early in the movement’s history but discontinued the practice when Utah became a state. Polyandry—the union of one

woman and two or more men—is seldom mentioned or authorized within religious traditions.

Romantic love between male and female gods or between gods and humans is a feature in the stories and iconography of several religious traditions. In Hinduism, for instance, Krishna is portrayed as a child who likes to steal butter and later as a young man who steals the hearts of maidens in his village. He plays tricks on the herder maidens, stealing their clothes while they are bathing in the river so that they have to come naked out of the water before him, and he is able to multiply himself, so that when the girls dance together in a circle, each of them thinks that only she is holding Krishna’s hand. The devotional genre of Hindu Vaisnavism is filled with stories and images of the romantic Krishna, and devotees think of themselves as Radha, his favorite lover, in their own expressions of devotional love.

In Christianity, medieval nuns thought of themselves as married to Jesus, and the initiation rites for women joining a monastic order were similar to marriage ceremonies. Medieval Christianity also witnessed the emergence of the Cathar or Albigensian movement of Christian purists, who emphasized love over sexuality. Some scholars have argued that the Albigensian movement popularized the idea of courtship, the asexual romantic love that became characteristic of premarital relationships within the Christian tradition, although the Albigensian movement itself was virtually exterminated by the Inquisition.

Extramarital sexuality is generally forbidden within most religious traditions. Adultery is banned in the Ten Commandments of the Hebrew Bible (the Old Testament) in Exodus 20:2–17 and Deuteronomy 5:6–21. Even lusting after a neighbor’s wife is forbidden. The Apostle Paul includes adulterers among those who will not inherit the Kingdom of God (1 Corinthians 6:9). In the strictest interpretations of Islamic law, adultery is punishable by death, though the man involved is often given a lesser sentence than the woman.

At the same time, some images of illicit love between gods or between god and humans have become a part of the religious imagination. In the Hindu devotional tradition, the cowherder maidens who fell in love with Krishna often abandoned their husbands to do so. Krishna himself was pictured as something of a rogue; he would return in

the morning to his consort, Radha, after a night of lovemaking with other women, his body scratched with their passionate nail marks. One of the best known female poets of 17th-century Hindu devotional poetry, Mirabai, refused to consummate her own marriage with the claim that she was already married—to Krishna. In the stories told about her, this announcement was not favorably received by either her family or her intended spouse, and she was banished.

Attitudes Toward Homosexuality

Considering the controversy over homosexuality in many religious communities in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, it is notable that homosexuality is scarcely discussed in the texts and teachings of most religious histories. Part of the reason for this is a matter of nomenclature. The modern word *homosexuality* (and for that matter, *heterosexuality*), which indicates that sexual attitudes are a part of one's identity, is an invention in European languages that does not appear in dictionaries until the late 19th century. Prior to that in European societies and in non-European cultures, there is no single term for homosexual identity, though there are words referring to transvestites, extremely effeminate men, some same-sex acts, and those who habitually play a particular role, such as the active or passive partner, in anal sexual acts.

Transvestites and very effeminate men have sometimes been ostracized and sometimes tolerated by religious communities. In the Buddhist Vinaya, a fourth-century BCE text for monastic orders, the *pandaka* are not allowed to be monks; the term seems to refer to transvestites, possibly transvestite prostitutes. Hermaphrodites are also excluded from Buddhist monastic orders. On the other hand, bands of transvestites in India, *hijra*, appear at weddings and the birth of children to provide ritual blessings. In the Native American tradition, *berdache*, transvestite men, were commonly accepted within the communities and often thought to have spiritual power.

In some Melanesian societies, ritualized homosexuality was required of all boys as part of maturation into manhood. In tribal communities in the Papua New Guinea highlands and the southeastern coast of Irian Jaya as well as areas of island Melanesia, such as Malakula in Vanuatu, religious rituals included the requirement that all

boys coming of age perform acts of oral sex on older boys and men. Part of the idea was that ingesting semen would make the boys physically stronger, and these initiation rites were a part of the male bonding that encouraged tribal solidarity.

Though transvestites and effeminate men were barred from Buddhist monastic orders, other forms of homosexual activity appear to have been tolerated at various times within Buddhist monastic communities, as they were within Christian and other religious monastic orders. The 15th-century Roman Catholic pope Sixtus IV and his nephew and successor, Julius II, were both alleged to have had male lovers. The suggestion by the American scholar Jeffrey Kripal that the Indian mystic Ramakrishnan was involved in sexual acts with his young male disciples produced a storm of protest in India when the book was published in 1995.

Throughout the histories of most religious traditions, same-sex relations have seldom been a matter of intense moral debate. In Islam, for instance, a rich heritage of Arabic love poetry written by men about boys derives from the early Ottoman Empire from the 16th to the 19th centuries. In some branches of Judaism, same-sex activities were tolerated as long as they were not acts of anal intercourse. According to the Yale historian, John Boswell, the history of Christianity has had mixed periods of tolerance and intolerance of homosexuality, though one of the most intolerant periods is the current one, beginning in the mid-20th century. The homophobia of recent decades can be explained in part by the emergence of the idea of homosexual and heterosexual identity in the early 20th century, with the implied notion that same-sex sexual acts create a different kind of person who is outside the pale of accepted normal behavior. The labeling of homosexuality as a psychological pathology helped reinforce this impression, though the labeling was lifted by the American Psychiatric Association in 1974. Nonetheless, some conservative religious communities persisted with the idea that same-sex acts were associated with unnatural and therefore immoral behavior.

Scriptural references have been used to make credible the assertions that homosexuals and homosexual acts are immoral and religiously inappropriate. The scriptural references in every religious tradition are scarce, however, and they are often ambiguous. The original meaning of the well-known

admonition in the book of Leviticus in the Hebrew Bible (the Old Testament) to “not lie with a man as one lies with a woman” (Leviticus 18:22) is a matter of some scholarly discussion. So is the statement of Paul in the New Testament book of Corinthians 1, which lists among those who will not inherit the Kingdom of God male prostitutes and effeminate men; yet the exact meaning of the Greek terms for these words is not certain. In the Holy Qur’an of the Muslim tradition, there are isolated sentences that appear to reject homosexual acts, such as this one: “Will you approach males, leaving those whom God has created for you to be your mates?” (Qur’an 26:166). The meaning of the passage, however, is not clear. At the same time, there are scriptural references to loving same-sex relationships, as in the youthful friendship between David and Jonathan in the book of Samuel in the Hebrew Bible, where it is said that “the soul of David was knit to the soul of Jonathan” (1 Samuel 18:1) and that David lamented at Jonathan’s funeral that “his love was more wonderful than the love of women” (1 Samuel 1:26). The scriptural references are mostly about men; very few of the textual references either for or against homosexual attraction or activity relate to same-sex relations between women.

The last decades of the 20th century witnessed the rise of antihomosexual attitudes within conservative religious communities in Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. Following the Islamic revolution in Iran in 1979, homosexuality was punished, sometimes by death. Conservative Jewish and Christian leaders regarded it as sinful, and candidates for religious leadership who were suspected of homosexuality were not allowed to be ordained. The worldwide Anglican community was torn apart by the resistance, especially from African branches of the church, to the American Episcopal Church’s openness to gay and lesbian clergy, including the installation of two bishops, one openly gay and the other lesbian. In the first decade of the 21st century, antihomosexual legislation in Uganda that prescribed punishment, including death sentences, was said to have been supported by right-wing Christian activists, including some from conservative churches in the United States. At the same time, liberal Christian congregations have been vocal in their support for gay and lesbian rights, and the Metropolitan Community Church established local congregations in many American

cities, especially for members of gay and lesbian communities.

Autoeroticism

Though references are made in scriptures for the maintenance of physical health and the appreciation of one’s own body as the temple of the spirit, this seldom goes so far as to encourage autoeroticism. Male masturbation may have been a part of ancient Egyptian religion, where the god Atum was thought to have created the world through self-induced ejaculation, and pharaohs were said to have ritually repeated this act by ejaculating into the Nile River. The Hindu text on sexuality, the Kama Sutra, provides instructions on masturbation, advising to “churn your instrument with a lion’s pounce.”

In other traditions, masturbation is regarded as wasting the body’s seed and is therefore discouraged. Onan, a character in the book of Genesis in the Hebrew Bible, is said to have withdrawn prematurely during sexual intercourse with his brother’s widow, Tamar, and “spilled his seed” on the ground (Genesis 38:8). In the 18th century, this incident was connected with the act of masturbation, which was thereby called “onanism.” In Hinduism, yogic practices often insist that men involved in them do not release their semen, reasoning that sexual energy retained within the body can be redirected toward a higher, spiritual purpose. Swami Sivananda taught that 1 drop of semen was equal to 40 drops of blood and therefore should be restrained as much as possible within the body.

Celibacy

Withholding from sexual activities for purposes of spiritual purification is a fairly common feature of religious practices in many traditions, either for a temporary period of time or as a lifetime vow. During the month of Ramadan, when Muslims fast, they are also expected to forgo sexual activity during the fast period. Muslim women are not allowed to have sex during menstruation, a restriction that is also found in Judaism. In Islam, women are also not allowed to have sex for 40 days after giving birth and for 3 months after the finalization of a divorce. In Judaism, sexual activities are banned during fast days and the time of Yom Kippur.

Celibacy is a condition of monastic orders in every religious tradition where there are ascetics or monks, including Hinduism, Buddhism, and Christianity. In Islam, only Sufi practitioners have practiced celibacy. In most religious traditions, the clergy and leadership are not required to be celibate. In Roman Catholic Christianity, priests were allowed to marry until 1139 CE, when a Church council made celibacy mandatory. One reason may have been the desire to keep church property from being inherited by the children of clergy, but the reasons for this decision were likely to have been for spiritual as well as practical purposes.

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See also Ethics; Gay and Lesbian Theology; Gender; Men's Roles; Monasticism; Women's Roles

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Africa and northeast of the island of Madagascar. Seychelles was a French colony until 1814, when the British took over. Settlement began in 1778. The Seychelles became independent in 1976. During the 19th century, Chinese and Indian tradesmen, together with former slaves, settled on the island. The islands of Seychelles had no indigenous population, and the Seychellois currently living in the islands are all descendents of migrants. The population of Seychelles is about 88,340 (U.S. Bureau of Census, July 2010). Seychelles does not have any state religion, and the constitution provides for freedom of religion. The government has respected this right and has granted all religions tax-free status.

A number of religions currently flourish in Seychelles. The 2002 census shows that 82.3% of the population is Roman Catholic, 6.4% Anglican, 1.1% Seventh-Day Adventist, 3.4% other Christian, 2.1% Hindu, 1.1% Muslim, 1.5% other non-Christian, 1.5% unspecified, and 0.6% having no religion. There are no restrictions on religious practice, and diverse beliefs are tolerated and respected. With the early settlement of the French who were Roman Catholics, Roman Catholicism became the dominant religion of the country. The British tried to establish Protestantism in the islands during the 19th century, but these efforts failed to dislodge the dominance of Roman Catholicism. Seychelles was a bishopric since 1890, and mission schools had a virtual monopoly on education until the government took over such schools in 1944. Most of the Anglicans are from families that were converted by British missionaries who arrived in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The other Christian groups include Baptists, Assemblies of God, the Pentecostal Church, the Pentecostal Assembly, Nazarites, and Jehovah's Witnesses. Evangelical Protestant churches such as the Pentacostals and Seventh-Day Adventists are very active in the Seychelles. Non-Christian groups include those of the Baha'i Faith and Buddhists. Given the large Roman Catholic population, one will find more Roman Catholic churches in the Seychelles than other churches. Sunday masses are well attended, and religious holidays, which are mainly Christian, are celebrated throughout the nation both as opportunities for the devout to practice their faith and as social events. The country also has places of worship for other religious

SEYCHELLES

The Republic of Seychelles is an archipelago of 115 islands in the Indian Ocean. It lies about 1,500 kilometers (932 miles) east of mainland

groups, including a Hindu temple and a mosque, and Muslims are also allowed to participate in the Friday prayer.

Apart from their official religions and in spite of disapproval from religious and civil authorities, many Seychellois also believe in magic, witchcraft, and sorcery. Sorcery was outlawed in 1958, but Seychellois still consult the seer, also known as *bonom di bwa*, for fortune telling, to obtain protective amulets or charms, or even to bring harm to enemies.

Ramola Ramtohol

See also Africa; Anglicans; Immigration; Roman Catholicism

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SHAIVISM

Shaivism (or Āivism) is one of several branches of the Hindu religious traditions, centered on the worship of the god Shiva (the “auspicious” one). Together with Vaishnavism (worship of the god Vishnu) and Shaktism (worship of the goddess or Shakti), it constitutes one of the three largest sectarian traditions within Hinduism. The deity Shiva has antecedents in the Vedic god Rudra, the “roarer” or “howler,” a fierce deity associated with storms and disease, dating back to the oldest period of the Vedas (1500 BCE). In one of the latest parts of the Vedas, the *Shvetashvatara Upanishad* (400–200 BCE), Rudra is elevated to the position of a supreme deity, identified as the one, omniscient lord—attributes that would later be ascribed to the classical Hindu deity Shiva.

In classical Hindu mythological literature and iconography, Shiva is traditionally portrayed as the supreme lord of yoga, an ascetic with long matted dreadlocks, covered in ash, and seated in a meditative posture with a water pot and trident. However, he is also a paradoxical deity who embodies the extremes of renunciation and sensuality, described

by some scholars as the “erotic ascetic.” In Hindu mythology, Shiva is the “destroyer,” who annihilates the universe with fire at the end of each cosmic age, returning the universe to the primordial ocean from which it will be reborn in the next cosmic age. But he is also a deity associated with creative power whose primary symbol is the lingam, or phallus. Although a yogi and ascetic, he is also a family man, who has a wife, Parvati, and two children, the warrior god Skanda and the elephant-headed god Ganesha.

Under the large umbrella of Shaivism, there are numerous sectarian traditions that developed throughout South Asia from roughly the fourth century onward. The most important of these include the Pashupatas, the Shaiva Siddhanta, the Lingayats, the Kapalikas, the Aghoris, and the Kashmir Shaivite tradition. Some of these are devotional traditions centered on Shiva as the Lord (*pati*) of his devotees (*pashus*), while others center on Shiva as the radical ascetic without fear (*aghora*) beyond human worldly society. And still others such as the Kashmir Shaivite tradition are highly philosophical traditions centered on the ultimate identity between the individual self and the supreme consciousness of Shiva. Typically, Shaivite ascetics can be recognized by the three horizontal bars drawn on their foreheads, symbolizing Shiva’s trident. Many also wear long matted dreadlocks, carry a trident, and/or a skull begging bowl in imitation of Shiva.

Unlike the Vaishnava tradition, Shaivism does not typically have a concept of avatars or earthly “descents” and incarnations of the deity into the material world. However, in modern times, there have been some noteworthy exceptions. The most famous is Satya Sai Baba, a modern Indian holy man who claimed to be the human incarnation of Lord Shiva, descended in a unique form for the last age, the *Kali Yuga*, before the end of this cosmic era.

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See also God; Hinduism; India; New Religions; Sexuality; Symbol; Syncretism; Yoga

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SHAMANISM

Shamanism is a term, originally taken from a Russian word used to describe a phenomenon of the religions of Siberia, that has now become established in international usage. It means a form of culture that revolves around the central position of the shaman, a religious expert who acts as an intermediary between man in his environment and society and the forces and the spirits of the other world. The shaman of the central Siberian peoples may be either a man or a woman. Among the shamans there probably existed a division of tasks and a hierarchy that was manifested in a specialization in different shamanistic skills. The respect enjoyed by the shamans was not dependent on their sex but on what they knew and remembered. The *Saami noaidi* (in English, “nojd”) is a northern European equivalent of the Siberian shaman. Among the *Saami*, shamanism seems to have been a male institution; references to female shamans are found only in the late tradition.

The concept of shamanism became more generally known and its meanings broadened as a result of the book *Le Chamanisme et les techniques archaïques de l'écstase*, published by Mircea Eliade in 1951. According to Eliade, shamanism as an archaic technique of ecstasy is the most original form of religion. Because signs of shamanism are found in rock art, it has been considered to represent the religious culture of hunter-gatherer societies of the Paleolithic Age. A proof of its antiquity is the fact that the phenomenon is found both in the Old and the New Worlds.

The concept of shamanism is not, however, without problems. In the comparative study of religion, it is burdened by the scholarly tradition of the 19th-century Urrreligion hypothesis with its emphasis on evolution or diffusion. When the word *shaman(ism)* was translated from Russian into English and German, its meaning took on a nuance reflecting the point of view of the Christian missionaries who defined it. The expression of basic pagan religion was made into an *-ism*, a primitive belief, so that the missionary work might receive greater justification. Thus, the name of the phenomenon became established as *shaman-ism*, although this term is not found in the earliest documents, such as the diary of Avvakum Petrovitch, the Archpriest of the Old Believers, which describes the activities of the shamans that he witnessed among the Evenk people in the 1650s.

Shamans commonly used monotone drumming and frenzied dancing to attain a state of ecstasy. They also sometimes used narcotic substances: For example, the fly agaric fungus (*Amanita muscaria*) was used among northern Siberian peoples. Fasting was also one of their methods of preparation. In addition to dancing accompanied by drumming, the *Saami nojd* chanted shamanistic incantations (yoiking); this form of chanting was such an important part of shamanism that it was prohibited together with the shaman's drum during the missionary crusade to Lapland in the 18th century and in the preaching of the Laestadian revivalist preachers in the 19th century.

Basic Concepts: Saman, Shamanizing, Shamanism, Shamanhood

The concept of shaman comes from central and eastern Siberian indigenous peoples, most of whom are speakers of either Mandchu-Tungusic or Nivkh. The word *saman* means “someone who knows.” This “knowing” is the basic word to comprehend the whole phenomenon in its ecological cradle in northern Eurasia. The knowledge is oral and is described as a painful and responsible capacity, as a duty or vocation that is not easy to accept by someone “chosen by the spirits” and trained to his/her office by the elder shaman of the clan. This process is described in this entry on the basis of Siberian fieldwork by the author from 1988 until the present. The concept of shamanhood, instead

of shamanism, was suggested in 1994, since the latter term is *ism*-oriented, which is not true in its cultural context. Shamanhood (parallel to the older Russian word *samanstvo*) is a kind of cultural mother tongue rather than a religion in the languages lacking the concept of “religion” in the Western meaning of the word (from Latin *religio*).

Shamanizing (Russian *samaniit*) is a word that comprehends the special skills of the shaman: those of questioning and replying, divining, and foreseeing in trance or dream events success and fate in life, death, and afterlife. It is his or her heavy duty in front of and on behalf of his/her clan or people to remember the great narratives of his or her people, singing, narrating, and acting them in the rituals, so healing the pains of the people. The importance of oral and rhythmic memory is emphasized, since almost every one of the 60 Siberian shamans the author met are illiterate. Besides the drum, there are several other instruments used by the shaman in the rituals of healing and divination.

The conceptual history of shamanism will show how the word *shamanism* was created under the influence of the Christian worldview. Shaman(ism) was identified as the “old form of paganism” and shamanic peoples (Greek *ethnos*) as the “heathens” (*ethnikos*) to be converted by Christian missions. Shamanism as the culture in the circumpolar-subarctic belt from northern Europe to Central Asia may be characterized by features like these: It is practiced by relatively small and isolated populations, and it is oral/unwritten since it lacks any kind of holy scripts or books.

In spite of the fact that the majority of Siberian cultures do not know the concept *shaman*, they are shamanic. Some of the approximately 35 northern peoples who speak Uralic languages, a family of languages that also includes Finns and the Ob Ugrians, call their shamans *noita* (Finnish) or *nait* (Mansi). There are epic songs (Finnish *runo*, *Saami leudd*) telling about the trips of the souls. Their mythologies include a number of souls or spirits, which all have their own names. It was believed that the spirit of the shaman could depart from the shaman’s body to take trips to the kingdom of death, for example. The purpose of these trips was to find solutions to the problems encountered by the community or its members. These trips to the

kingdom of death were considered dangerous. The shaman did them on behalf of the community to retrieve a patient’s soul, to seek the knowledge needed for the healing rite, or to find solutions to problems. Finnish epic poetry includes examples of shaman trips: for example, the shaman travels to meet the people’s primitive wizard, Antero Vipunen, who died long ago and who was already decomposing with spruces growing on his temples.

Transformation powers are essential for a shaman. It is believed that shamans are able to control different levels of consciousness; they are able to fall into a state of ecstasy, change their gender during the rite, or transform themselves into different animal forms. Sometimes, the shamans use intoxicating hallucinogens for inspiration when they try to reach other states of consciousness. Shamans do not operate alone. They have a number of “auxiliary spirits” to help them. One of these is more important than the others; the Nanais at the Lower Amur, for instance, talk about special “nuptial spirits” that choose the shaman. The shamans meet these nuptial spirits in dreams, and sometimes, the shaman reveals that he or she has had sexual intercourse with a spirit, which may appear in the form of a bear, a tiger, or a sea lion, for example.

Shaman equipment, such as the drum, clothes, mask, bag, belt, musical instruments, and idols, portrays the figures that the shaman has learned to control on his transmigration trips. They describe the shaman’s travel route, “shaman’s road” as it is called, and they may also be a cognitive map of earthly topography as well. More important, however, the equipment conveys myths that delineate the topography of another, invisible world for both the shaman and the community.

When an aging shaman leaves on his or her final trip, he or she often tries to drown the drum, the shaman’s soul, in a swamp. The purpose of this is to ensure that nothing disturbs the shaman’s peace in the afterlife. The death of a shaman is arctic mythology: the departure of a lonely man to his own river and to the abode of the dead to join the other dead members of the family. The decision to publicly announce the intention to set off on this journey of no return means social death for the shaman. If another person joins the shaman and helps him achieve his voluntary death, it is not

considered to be a crime that can be compared with murder.

Juha Pentikäinen

See also Finland; Indigenous Religions; New Age Movements; New Religions; Russian Federation

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SHANKAR, SRI SRI RAVI (B. 1956)

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, a guru to a great many Indians and foreigners, was born into a religious family in Papanasam, Tamil Nadu, India. His mother, who was commonly known as Amma, seems to have played an important role in his life. His father, R. S. V. Ratnam, or Pitaji, as he is popularly known in the religious movement known as the Art of Living clan, was a religious man, well versed in Sanskrit, Tamil, and English—talents he passed on to his son.

According to the accounts of his life that are recalled by his followers, Shankar showed devotional powers from a very young age. At the age of 3, he was said to have been sent to a teacher, who wanted to begin her lessons with a *shloka* (passage) from the Bhagavad Gita, which to her surprise the young Shankar completed for her. Another story that is told about him involves him watching his father doing *puja* (Hindu rituals) and wanting to know all about it. His followers recall that by the time he was 9 years old, Shankar had mastered the Rig Veda, and by 17, he had completed his traditional studies and obtained an advanced degree in modern science.

After his graduation, his mother encouraged him to appear for an interview with a bank in Delhi. Shankar went reluctantly, but he ended up, in his own words, “teaching meditation to the members of the board” (Guru of Joy, p. 76). It is during this period that he met many masters and leading intellectuals in India. One such master was Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, the guru responsible for introducing meditation to the West and famous for having once had the Beatles as his disciples; Shankar joined his movement and trained as a yogi and a scholar in Rishikesh, India.

Very little is known about Shankar’s time with Maharishi. He learned to speak Hindi and English fluently and travelled with Maharishi to the West. It is said by his followers that Ravi Shankar became Maharishi’s right-hand man and one of his main teachers of Transcendental Meditation. Shankar was also said to have been put in charge of the Vedic school, which trained young Indians in the art of becoming pandits, or temple priests.

After leaving the Maharishi’s organization, Shankar traveled throughout India, and in 1982, he is said to have received enlightenment and started the Art of Living movement, beginning with a series of instructions about religious teachings and practices. The first course was held in Shimoga, India; it is said that he remained silent throughout the course. At first, the participants were baffled, but slowly, they felt that he was actually teaching them, communicating knowledge through what the movement calls “the sacredness of silence.” It is also in 1982 that he established the Art of Living Foundation as an educational organization designed to assist all levels of society in reaching their full human potential.

Today, the headquarters are on the outskirts of Bangalore in a beautiful compound. It is also the location for one of his main charitable foundations, Ved Vigyan Mahavidyapeeth, which looks after rural education and development and seeks to revive Vedic knowledge. The ashram also provides free education to 600 children, and a special attempt is made to provide aid for illiterate families. The ashram also boasts an Ayurvedic clinic; a bookshop where Shankar’s cassettes, videos, and books are on sale; and a juice center. A huge meditation hall is under construction.

François Gautier

See also Hinduism; India; Meditation; New Religions

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 International Association for Human Values: www.iahv.org
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SHANKARA (CA. 700–750 CE OR 788–820 CE)

The Indian philosopher, theologian, and mystic Shankara, also called Shankaracharya and Adishankaracharya, is acknowledged as the greatest thinker in the Hindu school of religious thought of Advaita Vedanta. Hardly anything is known about his life except for hagiographic matters; neither his date of birth nor the date of his death is known, but common suggestions are either ca. 700 to 750 CE or 788 to 820 CE. A number of texts claim to be biographies of Shankara. The most well-known of them is Vidyanaraya's *Shankaradigvijaya*, written in the 14th century. Shankara was probably born in the village of Kaladi in Kerala. His parents were Nambuderi Brahmans and Vaishnavas, but the later tradition made Shankara into an incarnation of Shiva. His father died when Shankara was a small child, and he became an ascetic, *sannyasin*, at a young age, perhaps against the will of his mother. His teacher was Govinda, about whom nothing is known. According to the tradition, Govinda was a disciple of Gaudapada (640–690 CE), the famous author of *Gaudapadiyakarika*, a text strongly influenced by Mahayana Buddhism. Shankara went to Banaras, where he challenged leading philosophers and theologians. Later, he taught mainly ascetics.

Shankara composed a number of Sanskrit philosophical texts and had gifted disciples. His magnum opus is the *Brahmasutrashhya*, a commentary on Badarayana's Brahma Sutra. In addition, he wrote commentaries on the classical Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita, which together with the Brahma Sutra constitute the threefold foundation of Vedanta. He also authored the independent text *Upadeshasahasri*. Tradition ascribes his authorship to an additional 300 texts, but Shankaracharya is also a title, the name of the head of any of the four or five monasteries Shankara is believed to have founded, of which the monastery in Sringeri in Karnataka is the most important. The texts have been written by other Shankaracharyas and then ascribed to the famous philosopher. Shankara is believed to have founded the Dashanami order of monks, and he is also considered the founder of the Smarta tradition.

The basic doctrine of Shankara's philosophy is the oneness (*Advaita*) of ultimate reality, *Brahman*; the illusion of plurality; and the complete identity of the Self, *atman*, with Brahman. Knowledge of Brahman is gained through meditation on several statements of the Upanishads (another name for the Upanishads is Vedanta, which means "the last part of the Veda") such as *tat tvam asi* and *sarvam khalv idam brahman*, which Shankara interpreted as statements of the nondual philosophy of the identity of the self (atman) with the ultimate reality of Brahman. Shankara was influenced by Mahayana Buddhism and Samkhya philosophy, but he argued against both systems. His philosophy is, however, very similar to the Samkhya system, although Shankara denied the independent reality of the material principle, *prakriti*, and therefore the dualism of Samkhya.

Shankara's doctrine of monism, that all is ultimately one, was a strong influence on the development of the modern unifying concept of Hinduism. Difference and separation are mistaken approaches to reality and are based on ignorance (*avidya*). Shankara's philosophy also played a significant role in the early understanding of Hinduism in Europe and North America. European indologists compared his philosophy with that of Parmenides and Kant. During the past 100 years, the Hinduism of a significant number of those belonging to the urban

English-speaking elite in India has been influenced by Shankara's philosophy.

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See also Hinduism; India; Veda; Vedanta Society

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SHARI'A

See Halakha and Shari'a

SHARIATI, ALI (1933–1977)

Ali Shariati (aka Ali Shari'ati), a Paris-educated Iranian sociologist, was—along with the Ayatullah Khomeini—perhaps the most important ideologue and theorist behind the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran. Born into a religious family, he graduated from Mashhad University and moved to Paris to undertake graduate studies, where he involved himself in many political movements. In Paris, Shariati came into contact with Jean-Paul Sartre and Frantz Fanon, who soon became key political and intellectual influences in his life. Authorities arrested Shariati and briefly imprisoned him on his return to Iran for involvement in antigovernment activities while abroad. On his release, he earned his living by teaching at various schools, colleges, and universities, though his radical and popular message put him at odds with most of the

administrations. His political lectures (especially in Tehran) led to further arrests and eventual exilic confinement to his hometown.

In 1977, the government finally permitted Shariati to leave and travel through Europe. He died shortly thereafter under mysterious circumstances in Southampton, England, at the age of 44. Though the official coroner's report stated that he died of a heart attack brought on by natural causes, many observers still hold the Iranian government (specifically, SAVAK, the secret Iranian security service or police of the Shah) responsible for his death.

In essence, Shariati argued that Islam was the best—indeed, the only—way of liberating people from Western-influenced neocolonialism. He authored, among many other works, *Islamshenasi* (or “Islamology”), a Marxist-informed lecture that proposed using Islam to obtain revolutionary objectives. For all intents and purposes, Shariati wanted to make Islam activist, political, and revolutionary. Shariati broke with traditional Islam by reconceptualizing Shi'ite terminologies, concepts, and discourse in novel and revolutionary ways.

Shariati, in his quest for sociopolitical revolution, juxtaposed himself with traditional Islam and Islamic authorities. He argued for ethical, responsible, social, and political action over knowledge and personal virtuosity nurtured for their own sake. Shariati also emphasized collective rather than individual salvation. He likewise attacked the idea of Islam as simply a doctrinally oriented faith and argued instead for a socially and politically active form of Islam. Shariati was a modernizer, yet he presented his ideology in anti-colonial and specifically anti-Western language. Thus, he identified himself and his movement with proletariat liberation struggles (what has been termed *Third Worldism*) against alienation and oppression.

With the end goal of mobilizing masses, Shariati accordingly sought to impart “modernisms”—especially his desire for a just and classless society—through Shi'ite symbols and with Qur'anic references that would be immediately familiar to most Iranians. In other words, he interjected Marxist, socialist, and existentialist content or substance into a traditional Islamic form or style (e.g., as in his revisioning of the Qur'anic terms *mostaza'afin* and *mostakbarin* as “oppressed” and

“oppressors”). It is the combination of these characteristics that culminated in the Islamic revival and heralded the global phenomenon of political Islam.

Daniel C. Dillard

See also Iran; Islamic State; Islamism (Political Islam); Khomeini, Ruhallah Ayatullah; Marx and Religion; Marxism; Mashhad; Modernism; Postmodernism; Shi'a Islam

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SHI'A ISLAM

Shi'a Islam is one of the two major branches of Islam. It refers to a separate or distinct party of men or women who follow or conform with one another, although they do not necessarily agree with one another. In the broad sense, the term refers to the movement upholding a privileged position of the Family of the Prophet (*ahl al-bayt*) in the political and religious leadership (*imama*) of the Muslim community. When used in the specific sense of “partisans,” it designates all those who believe that 'Ali b. Abi Talib (d. 660), the cousin and the son-in-law of Muhammad, was the legitimate head (*imam*) of the Muslim polity and ultimate authority on questions of law and doctrine in Islam, having inherited the Prophet's political and religious authority, immediately following the latter's death in 632 CE. This belief in 'Ali's leadership also led the Shi'a to refuse to acknowledge the first three caliphs, Abu Bakr (d. 634), 'Umar (d. 644), and 'Uthman (d. 656), recognized by the majority Sunnī community, whom they considered usurpers of the leadership that rightfully belonged

to 'Ali and his descendants. This entry discusses the origins of the Shi'ite movement; Shi'ite ideology; religious ramifications of the oppositional Shi'ism; other Shi'ite factions; suffering, martyrdom, and shrine culture; and Shi'ite theology and jurisprudence.

Origins

The historical origins of the Shi'ite movement are difficult to reconstruct with certainty because of the unfair presentation of its beginnings by the Sunnī historians. Modern Western scholars, depending solely on Sunnī sources, have generally dismissed Shi'ism as a heterodoxy, having deviated from the majority Sunnī orthodoxy. Accordingly, the Shi'i appear as followers of a political claimant, who, having failed to establish an ideal rule, was gradually transformed into a religious figurehead. An objective reading of these tendentious sources in light of the Shi'ite accounts of their origins provide a different estimation of the Shi'ite minority, oppositional movement.

Muhammad's message, as embodied in the Qur'an, provided immense spiritual as well as sociopolitical impetus for the establishment of the ideal community of Islam. Muhammad himself was not only the founder of a new religion but also the custodian of a new social order. Consequently, the question of leadership was the crucial issue, which divided Muslims into various factions in the years following his death. The early years of Islamic history were characterized by a constant succession of victories of the Muslim army under the first three caliphs. But as this period reached its end and the civil wars broke out under 'Uthman, the third caliph, contention arose over the necessity of a qualified leadership to assume the office of imam. Most of these early discussions on the leadership took, at first sight, political form, but eventually, the debates encompassed the religious connection between the divine guidance and the creation of the Islamic world order. These debates also marked the inevitable interdependence between the religious and the political in Islam. The rise of some prominent descendants of 'Ali as messianic savior (*al-mahdi*) and the sympathetic, even enthusiastic, following that they attracted shows the tension that was felt in the awareness that the Islamic ideal lacked actualization in the external

world and that it was the divinely guided Mahdi who could and would establish an ideal, just society. Such expectations put the legitimacy of the Sunnī caliphate in question, and the conflict between the 'Alids and their opponents assumed a religious-theological dimension apart from the political one.

Shi'ite Ideology

From the early days of Islam, there were Muslims who regarded the legitimate head of state not merely in political but also in religious terms. They maintained that Muhammad himself held spiritual and temporal, moral and civil authorities. His spiritual authority included the power to interpret the message in the Qur'an without corrupting the revelation. To continue its function of directing the faithful toward the creation of a just and equitable order, Islam was in need of a leader who could perform the Prophet's comprehensive role authoritatively. The exaltation of the Prophet and his rightful successor gave rise to the concept of a messianic imam, the Mahdi, from among the descendants of the Prophet who could create an ideal Islamic community. The thrust of the Shi'ite ideology was the concept of *wilaya* ("authority" and "love") of 'Ali, who became the founder and the first teacher of the special entitlement of the Family of the Prophet to the leadership of the community. Acknowledgment of 'Ali's *wilaya* became the sole criterion for judging true faith.

The Shi'ite concept of imam that identified the legitimate head of state as God's deputy (*khalifa*) on earth was bound to meet with much resistance since it not only demanded the recognition of 'Ali and his descendants as the imams with real control of the entire Muslim polity, but it was also a challenge to the Umayyad rulers (660–748) and a rallying point for all who felt discriminated against or maltreated by the ruling house. Consequently, from its inception, Shi'ism was an opposition party that critically reviewed the performance of the government.

Religious Ramifications of the Oppositional Shi'ism

Several protest movements arose under a wide range of leaders from among 'Ali's descendants

who were able to arouse in their followers a genuine religious urge to achieve sociopolitical goals. However, the Shi'ite attempts at direct political action were met with brutal resistance from the ruling dynasty, and very early on, their efforts met with failure. The resultant frustration produced further Shi'ite factions. The radical factions insisted on armed resistance to the oppressive rule of the caliphate. These were also labeled as *ghulat* ("zealots") by the mainstream Shi'i because of the extravagant claims they made for their imams. The moderate factions, having experienced the futility of direct political action, were prepared to postpone indefinitely the establishment of true Islamic rule under their messianic leader, the Mahdi. More than any other factor, it was the murder of the third Shi'ite imam, Husayn, the younger son of 'Ali and Fatima, the Prophet's daughter, and his followers by the Umayyad troops at Karbala', Iraq, in 680 and later the failure of the revolt of Zayd, Husayn's grandson, in 739, which marked the turn toward a quietist attitude by these factions, who until then had been willing to fight for their ideals.

Shi'ite efforts until the time of 'Abbāsid victory in 750 lacked in a well-formulated doctrine of the imamate. It was then that the great Imam Ja'far al-Sādiq (d. 148/765), who had been largely responsible for the moderation and discipline of the radical elements, provided Shi'ism with a sectarian credo. In the political turmoil of the eighth century, the 'Alid imams had the opportunity to propagate Shi'ite viewpoints without inhibition and modify the revolutionary tone of early Shi'ism into a more sober and tolerant school of Islamic thought. The Shi'ite leaders encouraged and even declared it obligatory to employ precautionary dissimulation (*taqiyya*) of their faith so as to avoid pressing for the establishment of the 'Alid rule and the overthrow of the illegitimate caliphate. *Taqiyya*-oriented life also signified the will of the Shi'ite minority to continue to strive for the realization of the ideal by preparing the way for such an insurrection in the future. al-Sādiq's contribution in shaping the religious and juridical direction of Shi'ism was central. He was acknowledged by all the Shi'ite factions as their imam, including those of radical leaning who led the revolts to establish 'Alids as the legitimate head of state. He was also recognized as an authentic transmitter of the traditions in the Sunnīte

compilations. This indicates that it was under his leadership that moderate Shi'ism, with its veneration of the Prophet's family (*ahl al-bayt*), came to be sanctioned by the Sunnīte majority as a valid expression of personal piety. For the majority of the Shi'i, his attitude toward politics became the cornerstone of their political theory, which, in the absence of the imam's political authority, did not teach its followers to overthrow tyrannical rulers and replace them by their imam. They had to wait for the messianic descendant from the seed of the Prophet through his daughter Fatima and grandson Husayn to emerge as the Mahdi of the community. The doctrine of imamate clarified the dilemma that although the imam was entitled to a comprehensive political authority as the head of the state, his imamate was not contingent on his being invested as the political head. The imamate was seen more realistically as a spiritual-moral rather than as a political office.

The mainstream Shi'i continued to uphold the leadership of the descendants of 'Ali and Fatima through Ja'far al-Sādiq until the line reached the 12th imam, who was believed to be in concealment until the End of Time. He is regarded as the promised messianic Mahdi, whose return to launch the final revolution that would establish the kingdom of God on earth is awaited by his followers. The Muslim eschatology describes in great detail the return of the Mahdi with Jesus to usher the Armageddon and the ultimate defeat of the Antichrist—*al-Dajjal*—and the victory of God's justice on earth. This school of Shi'ism is known as the *Ithna 'Ashariyya* or "Twelvers." In the absence of the Hidden imam, their religious scholars, the ayatollahs, fulfill the role of functional imams and, like the Catholic pope, lead the community in all its religious affairs. They form the majority of the Shi'i in many parts of the world but mainly in Iran, Iraq, and Lebanon.

Other Shi'ite Factions

The Shi'ite movement was represented by various leaders, all members of the Hashimite clan, who represented different trends of thought. Whereas the mainstream followed the line of the 12 imams, there were others who adhered to the imam who called for political action and activist response to the unjust governments in power. The

latter groups included the extremist trend in Shi'ism calling for the overthrow of Sunnī dynasties. The extremist trend was condemned by the mainstream Shi'i, and in the course of history, such minority factions have died out. Besides the Twelvers, the two factions that were once politically activist and that have survived the vicissitudes of history are the Zaydiyya and Isma'iliyya. Their survival strategy, which is not unlike today's strategies in Iraq or in Lebanon, was to abandon political idealism and concentrate on diverting their oppositional role into spiritual and mystical paths. Zaydiyya, who live mainly in Yemen—Iraq and East Africa also have a small population of Zaydiyya—believed until recently that the imam ought to be a ruler of the state and therefore must fight for his rights.

The Isma'iliyya, so named after Isma'il, the eldest son of al-Sādiq, who predeceased his father, believed that Isma'il's son, Muhammad, was their seventh imam. The number seven derives its symbolic religious significance in Isma'ili theology from this seventh imam who was also believed to be a messianic leader. The esoteric interpretation of the Qur'an, which was an overall heritage of all Shi'i, found its sustained connection with this faction, earning them a title of *Batiniyya* (those who believe in the esoteric meanings of the Qur'an). After the initial dormant period in the movement's history, with almost three descendants of the seventh imam believed to be "concealed imams," Isma'ilism attained political and religious prominence under the Fātimid Dynasty (909–1171), which challenged the supremacy of the Sunnī 'Abbāsīd caliphate over the vast empire. The community is divided into two main branches that have survived today: the Musta'li (known as Bohras) and the Nizari (known as Aga Khanis). The Bohras today trace their origins to the religious teachers in Yemen and continue much of the Fātimid religious heritage under their present religious guide (the *da'i*), who represents the 21st hidden Fātimid imam and resides in India. Outside India, they are to be found in the Persian Gulf, southern Arabia, and Syria. The Aga Khanis trace their origins to Iran, where their leaders had established the religious order and have since pursued a mystical path as their main religious orientation under the leadership of Aga Khan. They are concentrated in Central Asia, Iran, Pakistan, and India.

Suffering, Martyrdom, and Shrine Culture

As a minority community, Shi'i suffered oppression under the majority Sunnī dynasties throughout much of their history until the 16th century, when Iran adopted Shi'ism as the official state religion. Martyrdom (*shahada*) became a religious ordeal in Shi'ite political history, sustained by a doctrine that God is just and commands human society to replace an unjust rule by a just and legitimate one. The ensuing struggle to install a legitimate political authority resulted in the murder of several Shi'ite leaders. These violent deaths were regarded by succeeding generations as martyrdom suffered to defeat the forces of oppression and falsehood.

The most powerful symbol of martyrdom is the third Shi'ite imam, Husayn ibn Ali (d. 680), Muhammad's grandson, whose martyrdom is annually commemorated with solemnity throughout the Shi'ite world. In Karbala', Iraq, on the 10th of Muharram, the day of "Ashura," Husayn and his family and friends were mercilessly killed by the Umayyad troops. The Shi'i have preserved this moment in their religious history as a tragic event reminding them of the corrupt nature of power and the way righteous ones suffer. For the greater part of Shi'ite history, the memory of the tragedy of Karbala' has been tampered by the tradition of political quietism; however, there are times when the episode has encouraged activism to counter injustice in society.

The commemoration of the tragedy has served as a principal platform of communication with the Shi'ite public through which sociopolitical-religious ideas have been disseminated by their leaders, like Ayatullahs Khomeini and Muhammad Baqir Sadr. It has also become, for instance in Lebanon and Iraq, a model in the struggle to improve the standing and increase the influence of the Shi'ite population in those countries. In contrast to Sunnīsm, in Shi'ism, special buildings constructed for the purpose of such commemoration, the *husayniyya*, have served as crucial centers for public religious education and mourning rituals. Besides the seminaries, the *husayniyya* were used by the religious leaders to disseminate either an activist or quietist ideology for their followers. The Iranian revolution in 1978–1979 used the Karbala' paradigm to mobilize the people against the corrupt rule of the Shah.

Closely related to martyrdom in Shi'ism was the shrine culture encouraged by the religious practice of visitation (*ziyara*) of *mashhad*—namely, the place where a martyr died and is buried. In Shi'ite piety, all imams are revered as martyrs, and their tombs are visited in the belief that such a devotional act will win forgiveness for their sins and a share in the final victory of the messianic imam al-Mahdi. The visitations to the tombs are extended to both male and female members of the Prophet's family. In the Muslim world, for instance in Iraq and Iran, it is common for both the Shi'i and the Sunnīs to undertake these pilgrimages. The shrines are richly endowed, and lavish gifts are bestowed by various Muslim rulers, especially those of Shi'ite dynasties. Towns have grown around them, and important centers of Shi'ite learning in Najaf, in Iraq, and Qumm and Mashhad, in Iran, are located in and around the shrines.

Shi'ite Theology and Jurisprudence

The fundamental principles of Shi'ism consist of five tenets: (1) affirmation of the unity of God, (2) belief in the justice of God, (3) belief in prophecy, (4) belief in the imamate, and (5) belief in the Day of Judgment. In four of these principles, that is, Principles 1, 2, 3, and 5, the Shi'i in general share a common ground with the Sunnīs, although there are differences in points of detail. The belief in the Justice of God is similar to that of the rationalist theologians, the Sunnī Mu'tazilites who were active in the 8th to the 10th centuries, until they were defeated by the traditionalist Sunnī theologians known as the Ash'arites. In the 9th to the 10th centuries, when the theological exposition of the Shi'ite school was being worked out, its theologians adopted an essentially rational theology in which reason was prior to both sources of revelation, the Qur'an and the Sunna. Reason is God's endowment for humanity. It guides a person to ethical knowledge and asserts that good and evil are rational categories, independent of whether revelation declares them as such. As for the fourth principle—the imamate—the Sunnītes do not consider it as a fundamental principle of religion, while the Shi'i make it their central and cardinal principle.

Shi'ite jurisprudence, using a rationalist-naturalist theological foundation, gives priority to reason in

accord with its substantive assessment of human reason. The comprehensiveness of Islamic revelation must be discovered, interpreted, and applied by the use of reason. Accordingly, in their legal theory, besides the Qur'an, the Sunna, and the consensus (*ijmā'*) of jurists, which are admitted as sources for deducing rulings of the Shari'a by Sunnī legal scholars, the Shi'i included reasoning as the fourth source. However, it was not for just anyone to undertake the interpretation of the scriptural sources rationally. Only a religiously qualified person could assume the authority (*wilaya*) that accrued to the imam as the rightful successor of the Prophet. This authority in Shi'ism was invested in a jurist (*mujtahid*), who applied his independent reasoning in issuing judicial decisions (*fatwa*). Moreover, the Shi'i included the communications of their imams as part of the Sunna, and although there was little substantive variation in juridical content from the Sunna admitted by the Sunnīs, the Shi'i had their own compilations of prophetic traditions. Following the Middle Ages, it was not until recently that religious-legal practice based on the Shi'ite school of law was acknowledged formally as valid by the Sunnīte scholars in Egypt.

Abdulaziz Sachedina

See also Apocalypticism; Iran; Iraq; Islam; Ismailis; Karbala; Khomeini, Ruhallah Ayatullah; Mahdi; Martyrdom; Najaf; Shariati, Ali

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SHIMAZONO, SUSUMU (B. 1948)

A Japanese sociologist of religion and one of the world's leading experts on religion in modern Japan, Shimazono Susumu has been influential in shaping the discipline of religious studies in Japan and in broadening its horizons internationally. His theoretical contributions have been important globally in advancing studies of the relationship between magic and morality and in widening understanding of the dynamics of religion in advanced modern societies such as Japan. He is currently a professor of religious studies at the University of Tokyo.

Shimazono's work on Japan's new religions especially attracted prominence through books such as *Gendai Kyūsai Shūkyōron* ("Salvation Religions in Contemporary Society"), which identified concepts of salvation as a key theme in Japanese new religions and presented a critique of Weberian notions that in modernity, magic is replaced by morality; as Shimazono demonstrated, Japanese new religions have flourished through successfully combining magical practices (e.g., spiritual healing) with moral teachings and showed that magic and morality may be concomitant themes of modern religions. He further developed these insights while enhancing ethnographic studies of Japanese new religions, via research into one new religion, Hōseikai, in *Sukui to Toku* ("Salvation and Virtue") and *Jidai no naka no shin shūkyō* ("New Religions in the Modern Age").

After Aum Shinrikyō's 1995 Tokyo subway attack, Shimazono conducted the first in-depth study of Aum's teaching, which demonstrated how

doctrinal stances underpinned Aum's violence, and his *Shûkyô no kanôsei: Oumu to bôryoku* ("The Potential of Religion: Aum and Violence") was one of the first Japanese studies analyzing the connections between religion and violence in general. Shimazono's recent work on contemporary religious dynamics highlights the decline of organized religions (including new religions) in Japan and argues that this is accompanied by a turn (especially among young, urbanized, educated Japanese) to what he describes as "new spirituality movements" (*shin reisei undô*)—a turn he relates to similar changes in Western societies. In recent books (e.g., *Seishin sekai e no yukue* [Seeking the Spiritual World], initially published in 1996, and *Spirichuariti no kôryû* [The Rise of Spirituality], published in 2007 and in 2004 in English as *From Salvation to Spirituality: Popular Religious Movements in Modern Japan*), he argues that this is creating an increasingly individualized society mirroring the consumerism of advanced capitalist societies, in which people are less committed to organized religious groups than in constructing their own individualized spiritual paths.

Shimazono has striven to assist non-Japanese scholars visiting Japan and to build bridges between Japanese and Western academic communities. As President of the Japanese Association for the Study of Religion, he oversaw the 2005 International Association for the History of Religions conference in Tokyo. Currently, he is also Director of the Centre for Death and Life Studies (*Shiseigaku*) at the University of Tokyo, developing studies of religion, medicine, and bioethics, a new area in which he is working with scholars from around the globe.

Ian Reader

See also Death Ritual; Japan; New Religions in Japan; Shinto; Tokyo

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SHINTO

Official numbers published by the Japanese statistics bureau rank Shinto as Japan's largest religion, with a following that constitutes more than 80% of the population. Yet at the same time, questionnaires asking people for their religious identity consistently reveal that only a few percent of Japanese consider themselves as "adherents" of Shinto. Depending on one's point of view, Shinto may be regarded either as the largest religion of Japan or as a marginal phenomenon. To shed light on this confusing state of affairs, this entry will first distinguish between different layers within the broad category of Shinto and between different discourses on Shinto's meaning and essence and then present a brief overview of Shinto's historical development.

The term *Shinto* does not refer to a single, centralized religion but rather to a cluster of groups, organizations, and even popular practices that all, in their own ways, focus on shrines (*jinja*, *jingû*) and/or their deities (*kami*). Some 100,000 shrines are scattered throughout the Japanese islands. Most of them are very small and lack a permanent staff of priests, but many thousands have at least one dedicated priest, and several hundreds sustain tens or, in some rare cases, even hundreds of professional clergy and other personnel. There are around 20,000 registered Shinto priests; a considerable number of them take care of more than one shrine.

Since 1946, the majority of shrines (approximately 80,000) have been members of an umbrella organization called the Association of Shinto Shrines (in Japanese, *Jinja Honchô*). This association educates priests, defends the interests of shrines in the public arena, and allocates funds raised by member shrines and sponsors. Yet while the association takes the lead in giving meaning to Shinto in the public realm, it avoids defining a Shinto teaching, and it consciously makes space for many voices. It refrains from laying down a Shinto orthodoxy and only rarely meddles in the

religious or ritual policies of its member shrines. The association stresses that shrines should function as stages for community rites open for people of all faiths—not as churches with an exclusive following of dedicated believers. It is hardly surprising, then, that the “users” of shrines rarely perceive Shinto as their religious identity. To them, shrines offer an evocative and nostalgic setting for a range of traditional rituals, such as New Year prayers for happiness in the coming year, life cycle rites for children, purification rites for building sites and cars, weddings, and neighborhood festivals, often focusing on a parade. Most shrine rites deal with issues of life and live in a functional symbiosis with Buddhist rites that take care of death and mourning.

A second layer is constituted by a number of independent religious groups that identify themselves with Shinto. The oldest among these groups have histories that stretch back to the 19th century. These so-called Shinto sects have a much more clearly defined religious profile than the member shrines of the association. They can be divided into two types. The first type takes the form of a loose coalition of different groups of believers dedicated to a single shrine site, but with varying practices and backgrounds. The second typically focuses on a single deity who is believed to have revealed specific teachings to the world through the life and writings of the group’s founder. Groups of this last type may in many respects be compared with Christian church movements: They feature explicit teachings that are actively promoted by preachers, and they have a clearly defined congregation, regular church meetings, and a hierarchically organized priesthood.

The third and last layer to be commonly included in the category of Shinto consists of folk practices relating to *kami*. Many communities have annual celebrations, ranging from large-scale festivals to intimate local traditions, in which shrines and shrine priests play only a marginal role or none at all. Those celebrations that are not recognizably Buddhist in nature tend to be labeled Shinto, even if some of these practices have clear Daoist or otherwise continental origins. This categorization is significant because it has in many cases led to a gradual adaptation of local traditions to a more standardized Shinto format. Examples of such practices are *kōshin* wakes (based on the

notion—of Daoist origin—that three demons inhabiting the human body report one’s sins to the Lord of Heaven in nights marked by the calendrical sign *kōshin*) and *kagura* dances, often featuring lions and dragons.

Within these three very different organizational frameworks, Shinto is defined in a great variety of ways. Yet a few themes are common enough to be called central in most understandings of Shinto. At the basis of all of these themes is the notion that Shinto is Japan’s indigenous religion. From that starting line, Shinto is then related to imperial rule, agriculture, and nature.

The idea that Shinto represents the unchanging essence of Japanese culture has served to differentiate shrines from temples and to give direction to Shinto’s development into an increasingly autonomous tradition. It has brought new meaning to a preexisting obsession with ancient beginnings. This idea is expressed through a clear preference for (reconstructed) ancient and classical forms in the architecture of shrine buildings, in the language of prayers, in the attire of priests, and in the format of shrine rituals. The focus on an ancient Japanese essence, rather than merely a nonlocalized antiquity, gives most variants of Shinto a nationalist or at least clearly a Japan-centered flavor. Ancient Japan is held in high regard as an ideal society where the people led simple but harmonious lives, at peace with each other and with their natural environment. By consciously adopting archaicizing formats, Shinto sites and rites play out the religious ideal of a direct continuity between that golden age and the present. At times, this has taken the form of a rejection of external corrupting forces (e.g., Buddhism and Christianity) or of the dehumanizing forces of modernity.

The emperor plays a central role in most understandings of Shinto as an extension of this ideal: The emperor personifies the era of archaic harmony in the here and now. This move is made possible by the fact that the origins of Japan’s imperial dynasty are hidden in the mists of prehistory. Moreover, the oldest texts of Japanese tradition (*Kojiki*, 712, and *Nihon shoki*, 720) claim that this dynasty derives its right to rule from a divine mandate, bestowed on the imperial forebears in the Age of the Gods by their ancestress, the sun goddess Amaterasu. The imperial line, then, represents a physical link with a sacred time

beyond the historical past. The prominence of the emperor in ancient *kami* worship gained renewed importance in the 19th century, when efforts were made to establish a direct connection between imperial rites and local practice at shrines throughout the land. In 1875, a number of days on which the emperor performed central Shinto rites were declared national holidays, and priests were ordered to perform the same rites at their local shrines, acting in the emperor's name. In this way, shrines became stages for the performance of imperial rites, with the function of broadcasting the importance (or even sanctity) of the emperor among the general populace. After World War II, the Association of Shinto Shrines has continued this practice, and a range of imperial rites is still performed simultaneously at the imperial palace and at member shrines.

Another prominent theme in Shinto is agriculture, and in particular the cultivation of rice. The *kami* are commonly depicted as benevolent beings that bestow blessings of fertility and growth on the community, often in the form of life-giving water running down from the mountains. Again, behind this image is the ideal of ancient society, pictured as a harmonious community of rice-growing farmers. Rice is at the core of the main imperial rituals, which are all performed in the seasons of planting or harvesting. Both in Shinto publications and other media, the emperor is often depicted tending his own rice field, and a ritual of thanksgiving for the harvest forms the centerpiece of the imperial enthronement ceremonies.

Finally, and most recently, Shinto has become associated with ecological themes. In the course of the 1980s and 1990s, interpretations of Shinto as an ancient tradition of nature worship began to challenge the earlier emphasis on emperor-centered nationalism. In this context, Shinto is described as a form of animism and the *kami* as spirits who inhabit natural objects such as stones, trees, or waterfalls or who manifest themselves through the forces of nature—wind, rain, and thunder. The association itself argues on its website that “Shinto sees that nature is the divinity itself” and that “the Japanese spirituality inherited from the ancient ancestors” is grounded in a profound respect and gratitude for the gifts of nature. In its “message from Shinto,” the association stresses the importance of a spirit of “reverence

and appreciation to nature” as a prerequisite for solving the environmental and social problems that the modern world is facing today.

History

Both Shinto's organizational structure and its self-understanding as Japan's indigenous religion are products of a long history. Tracing this history is an intrinsically controversial project because it challenges Shinto's central notion of unbroken continuity with an ancient past.

To get a grip on the developments that produced modern Shinto, it is first necessary to distinguish between shrines, on the one hand, and the concept of Shinto, on the other. The origins of many shrines can be traced to prehistoric times, although most are much more recent. Many of the larger shrines occupy cultic sites that were dedicated to the worship of *kami* centuries before the first datable writings appeared in the early eighth century. However, the notion that the worship of *kami* at shrines constitutes an autonomous “Way” did not begin to gain ground until the 15th century—and even then only as an abstract idea. The final institutionalization of Shinto was a product of the late 19th century.

While shrines and *kami* were important to the court already in the ancient period, it was only in the 13th and 14th centuries that the first seeds of the later Shinto discourse emerge. Before this time, almost all larger shrines had been incorporated in temple-led complexes, where the *kami* were soothed by means of sutra readings and other Buddhist procedures. Within this Buddhist framework, the *kami* were typically treated as nonenlightened beings who, when angered, were ready to unleash their wrath on the community in the form of natural disasters, diseases, and killings. In a typical Tantric reversal, however, these dangerous beings gained a radically new significance in medieval times: as the essence of delusion and, therefore, as the epitome of the Buddhist truth that “delusion equals enlightenment.” In some medieval texts, the violent *kami* were chosen to represent the “original enlightenment” that precedes all Buddhist practice. It is through the worship of these *kami*, it was argued, that one can realize instantaneously the ultimate truth that the essence of enlightenment is delusion and that the realm of

afflictions in which we live is in fact the Dharma realm in its purest form. In this scheme, the *kami* were seen as direct, unadorned, and upright, in contrast to the Buddhas, who are sophisticated, bejeweled, and given to playing with relative levels of truth.

The idea that the ignorant *kami* constitute the very foundation of the enlightened Buddha realm also gave rise to a nativistic vision of Japan. Japan was a land created by the *kami* and also the land where the *kami* were born. It was ruled by an emperor who personified the powers of the sun—identified simultaneously both as the ancient *kami* Amaterasu and as the cosmic Buddha Mahāvairocana, from whom all Buddhas arise. The emperor, then, embodied the pre-Buddhist state of enlightened delusion that was associated with the violent *kami*. In this early form of Buddhist Shinto (which was the first context in which the word *Shinto* was singled out as a term for the “Japanese Way”), the *kami*, the Japanese islands, and the emperor were all combined as emblems of a sacred Japanese essence, transmitted as a self-contained body of knowledge and ritual.

In subsequent centuries, these transmissions about the *kami* went through a series of profound changes, but the fundamental elements that constituted this early Buddhist Shinto lived on: the idea that the *kami* are primitive beings but profoundly sacred for that very reason and the definition of Japan as a sacred land where the *kami* and their blessings originated and of the emperor as the born keeper of the secrets of the *kami*. From the 17th century onward, the same ideas were rephrased in Confucian, anti-Buddhist terms. A century later, nativist scholars turned to Shinto to foster a new pride in Japan’s own ancient traditions, in an age when common sense dictated that China was the center of the world and the source of the Way. In the 19th century, when Western pressure on Japan came to a head, a radically nativistic Shinto that rejected all foreign influences as impure gained broad support. This prepared the way for the Shinto policies of the Meiji period (1868–1912).

The Buddhist, Confucian, and even nativist discourses on Shinto had very little impact on shrine cults as these functioned in urban and rural communities around the country. From 1665 onward, there had been a licensing system for priests, but

even in the early 19th century, most shrines were managed by local people, monks, or mountain practitioners. All this changed in the course of a few years after the Meiji coup of 1868, when a small band of insurgents arranged for the emperor to issue an edict announcing the abolishment of the shogunate. This edict called for a restoration of direct imperial rule, as in the ancient days of the first mythical emperor. The new regime was to be based on the principle that “rites and government are one,” and the rites referred to were Shinto. These events, which drew on a wave of utopian nativism, had a large impact on shrines. In the same year, all shrines were methodically separated from Buddhism. In what was arguably one of the most radical breaks in Japanese religious history, Buddhist priests, deities, buildings, and rituals were banned from shrines. In 1871, shrines were arranged on a hierarchical scale, from imperial and national shrines at the top to prefectural shrines, district shrines, and finally nonranked shrines at the bottom. At the same time, hereditary lineages of priests were abolished, and a unified system of state-appointed priests was put in its place. In this way, shrines were appropriated by the state and designated as sites for the performance of state rituals. It was at this time that Shinto became physically and institutionally distinct from Buddhism.

As fears of Western (Christian) expansionism waned and the need for national development along Western lines became apparent, the initial enthusiasm for Shinto cooled considerably. By 1882, Shinto had been reduced to a body of national rites that were regarded as nonreligious; in fact, shrine priests were banned from engaging in activities that were defined as religious. The Shinto sects mentioned above were established at this time to make place for “religious” Shinto groups outside the shrines.

In the aftermath of wars with China (1894–1895) and Russia (1904–1905), Japan experienced a wave of patriotic enthusiasm, which on many occasions was expressed in a ritual format that put shrines center stage. The fallen from these wars were honored in newly founded military shrines, and shrine visits by the military, as well as school classes, became a new social ritual, even in the occupied territories. Soon after, a growing socialist and communist movement swept over Japan,

inspiring fear that national unity was under threat. Under these circumstances, Shinto once more became a focus of attention. Until 1945, Shinto was to serve as Japan's official state cult, propagated with increasing zeal especially after 1931 as the country headed into war.

After the war, the American-led occupation issued a so-called Shinto Directive (December 1945) to put an end to "the perversion of Shinto theory and beliefs into militaristic and ultra-nationalistic propaganda, designed to delude the Japanese people and lead them into wars of aggression" (Breen & Teeuwen, 2010, p. 13). This directive prohibited all forms of official support for Shinto rites or ideas. At the same time, shrines were offered a new lease on life as private religious organizations: "Shrine Shinto, after having been divorced from the state and divested of its militaristic and ultra-nationalistic elements, will be recognized as a religion if its adherents so desire" (Breen & Teeuwen, 2010, p. 13). In February 1946, shrines were registered under a new law as religious organizations, and the Association of Shinto Shrines was founded as a new coordinating body.

This history set the stage for the postwar development of Shinto in its various guises. Once they were freed from direct government administration, Shinto organizations developed in different directions. Some lament the separation of Shinto from the state and call for a restoration of the prewar function of Shinto rites as communal ceremonies that unite the nation under the aegis of the emperor. Others have broken with the past and seek to redefine Shinto in ways that bear little relationship with imperial nationalism—in terms of healing through contact with *kami* deities, spiritual union with nature, or community values. Yet even the new Shinto sects that have sprung up in the postwar period live within the context of the Shinto discourse that crystallized in the 19th century. This explains their failure to spread abroad, other than in places where there is a significant Japanese minority. In postwar Japan, many prewar Shinto institutions have retained a prominent presence in the public eye; obvious examples are the continued practice of Shinto rites by the emperor and the controversy around the Yasukuni shrine (where Japan's war dead are celebrated by means of Shinto rites). This makes it difficult, if

not impossible, to reinvent Shinto as drastically as in the 19th century or, indeed, as in medieval times.

Mark Teeuwen

See also God; Japan; New Religions in Japan; Sacred Places; Tokyo

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SIDDHA YOGA

The Siddha Yoga path is a set of teachings and spiritual disciplines that, according to the Indian spiritual teacher and Siddha Yoga guru, Swami Muktananda, unfold the God consciousness hidden in human beings. In Siddha Yoga teachings, this divine consciousness (Sanskrit *cit* and related words) dwells within all things as the universal Self (*atman*) and is also understood to be an

effective inner power (*shakti* or *kundalini-shakti*). Experience of the Self is known to be activated through the agency of a true guru. In this context, such a guru is perfected (*siddha*) in the awareness of the divine presence within all beings and awakens that awareness in others. This awakening takes place through Shaktipat initiation (the transmission or “descent” of shakti) and is meant to be strengthened and expanded through the practice of spiritual disciplines under the direction of the Guru.

The Siddha Yoga path was founded and named by Swami Muktananda (1908–1982). Having received Shaktipat initiation in 1947 from Bhagawan Nityananda (d. 1961) and succeeding him as guru, Muktananda brought this initiation to seekers throughout India and, then, over the course of three international tours between 1970 and 1981, to thousands of people throughout the world. Shortly before his death in 1982, Muktananda conferred the power and authority to give Shaktipat awakening to Swami Chidvilasananda (b. 1955), also known as Gurumayi, who is the spiritual head of Siddha Yoga. Nityananda, Muktananda, and Chidvilasananda are the Gurus of the Siddha Yoga lineage.

Essential Siddha Yoga teachings include the following: “God dwells within you as you” and “See God in each other.” The core Siddha Yoga disciplines are meditation, chanting of sacred texts and divine names, selfless service, and giving to support the Siddha Yoga path. Other important practices include study of the Guru’s teachings and contemplation.

Siddha Yoga draws on a number of Indian religious traditions: contemplative philosophies and practices presented by Vedantic texts, the experience of divine love presented in songs and other devotional works by poet-saints, and meditative techniques and theologies presented by nondual Shaiva Tantric works from Kashmir.

The SYDA (Siddha Yoga Dham Associates) Foundation, established in 1974, is a not-for-profit religious and charitable organization that protects, preserves, and disseminates Siddha Yoga philosophy and culture.

William K. Mahony

See also Hinduism; India; New Age Movements; New Religions; Shaivism; Veda; Yoga

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SIERRA LEONE

With a population of nearly 5.3 million residents, most of them Muslim, Sierra Leone is a West African country on the Atlantic coast, the approximate size of South Carolina. With Guinea to the northwest and war-torn Liberia to the southeast, Sierra Leone has had a tumultuous recent history. Peacekeeping and stability have become the number one priority for the country as it recovers from causing 2 million displaced refugees to relocate after 11 years of civil war (1991–2002) between the Revolutionary United Front and the then-in-office government.

The national declarations of genocide and mass rapes, debates over the trade of blood diamonds, and snapshots of the dictatorial leader, Charles Taylor, who was recently tried by the Special Court for Sierra Leone for war crimes and crimes against humanity initiated during the civil war are still fresh in the memories of residents. From 1989 to 1997, Taylor was leader of the rebel group, the National Patriotic Front of Liberia, and became president of Sierra Leone from 1997 until 2003, when he stepped down from office under international pressure. Taylor fled to Nigeria for political asylum but was extradited in 2006 by Liberia’s current president, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf.

English is the official Sierra Leonean language, though Temne, Mende, and Krio are spoken by most residents. Arabic is read by literate Muslims. Historically, Sierra Leone was colonized or under protectorate by the British from 1808 to 1961 and before this was viewed by Europeans as fertile ground for capturing slave labor headed off to the Americas. In the late 1700s, thousands of formerly enslaved African Americans, Jamaican maroons, and African Nova Scotians emigrated, repatriated, and missionized the British colony. Settling in

Freetown with their progeny, these people saw the region as a haven for religious proselytism, enabling Protestant forms of Christianity to rise and later spread across coastal West Africa. Islam, however, has predominated in the northern regions of Sierra Leone since the 18th century and continues as the religion of choice for 60% of Sierra Leoneans. Christians constitute about 10% of the population, predominantly in the coastal south. Indigenous practices are adhered to throughout Sierra Leone and account for 30% of the population's beliefs.

Today, the Krio or Creole, the descendants of freed slaves who returned to Sierra Leone, account for approximately 2% of the national population. The majority of the population comprises Temne in the north and Mende in the southeast, with Limba, Kono, Mandingo, and foreigners also inhabiting the region. Historically, ethnolinguistic groups hold less sway in marriage selection and social contracts than is prevalent in other African nations. Ernest Bai Koroma, who was elected in a 2007 runoff and is now the nation's fourth president, is a Christian convert who has Muslim parents of both Limba and Temne origins.

Fiscally, the nation has suffered great setbacks due to more than a decade of guerrilla warfare, refugee displacement, and ill-managed allocations of large international loans. With recollections of child soldiers, suppression of the press, government corruption, and mass brutalization stifling national calls toward increased education and development, Sierra Leone's landscape holds hope but may take more than a generation to fully recover.

Christi M. Dietrich

See also Africa; Guinea; Islam; Liberia; Refugees

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Founded in the early 16th century by Guru Nanak (1469–1539), the Sikh tradition is historically associated with the North Indian state of Punjab, a region that connects southern Asia with the Middle East and Central Asia. The current Sikh population is around 23 million, of which 2 million have left the Punjab and now live and work in North America, western Europe, and former British colonies. This entry discusses the history of Sikhism, touching on beliefs, sacred literature, and devotional and ceremonial life.

History

Guru Nanak was born into an educated, land-owning, influential Hindu family that lived in Talwandi, a village near Lahore, the cultural and political center of the Punjab. While in his late 20s, he underwent a powerful experience in which he describes having visited the divine court (*darbar*) and having been entrusted with the mission of spreading the divine word (*nam*). Leaving his domestic life behind, he embarked on a period of extensive travel.

In 1521, Guru Nanak witnessed large-scale violence wrought by the invasion of Babar, the Mughal chief from Central Asia. This experience resulted in a new turn in Guru Nanak's life. He acquired a piece of land in the lush plains of the central Punjab, founded a town, and named it Kartarpur ("City of God"). As the founder of the community, Guru Nanak served as the central authority at Kartarpur, and his beliefs provided structure to the lives of those who gathered there. We now know that after some years, Guru Nanak renewed his travels, seeking followers in other places.

Guru Nanak provided the early Sikh community with rudimentary institutional structures. He composed hymns of great beauty and had them recorded in a distinct script called Gurmukhi (script of "the Gurmukhs/Sikhs"). These hymns formed the core of the Sikh sacred text, which later came to be known as the Guru Granth (the book manifested as the Guru). He also instituted the communal recitation of three daily prayers at sunrise (*Japji*), sunset (*Rahiras*), and before going to sleep (*Sohila*) and established a community kitchen (*langar*) where all Sikhs ate in a manner that embodied their Guru's belief in human equality. Guru Nanak also created an initiation ceremony

SIKHISM

The Sikhs (followers) represent the youngest of the world's major monotheistic religious traditions.

(*Charanpahul*) with which people could enter the Sikh fold. At the time of his death in 1539, Guru Nanak appointed one of his followers, Angad, to be his successor and, by doing so, institutionalized the office of Guru, which continued until the death of Guru Gobind Singh, the 10th Sikh Guru (1675–1708).

By the end of the 16th century, the Sikhs had become powerful enough to be seen as a threat by the Mughal administration in both Lahore (the provincial headquarters) and Delhi. A phase of tension culminated in the execution of Guru Arjan (1561–1606), the fifth Sikh Guru. The Sikh community, under the leadership of his successor, Guru Hargobind (1595–1644), responded by declaring the Guru to be both their temporal (*duniya/mir*) and spiritual (*din/mir*) leader. In consequence, the Mughal authority forced the Sikhs to move to the Shivalik foothills, where they remained throughout the 17th century. An attempt to revive the community in the Punjab plains during the leadership of Guru Tegh Bahadur, the ninth Sikh Guru (1621–1675), ended with his execution/martyrdom in Delhi.

Given this hostile political environment, the Sikh belief in God's justice (*nian*) took the form of a declaration by Guru Gobind Singh that the Sikh community was to be understood as the *Khalsa*, "the pure." By insisting on their pure and separate identities, Guru Gobind Singh gave the community a new understanding of its special relationship to God and its mission to establish a *Khalsa raj* ("Kingdom of the Pure"), a political entity where that relationship could flourish. Guru Gobind Singh introduced a ceremony of initiation in which fresh water was transformed into nectar by reciting over it the compositions of the Gurus, the divine word as revealed to the Sikhs, while stirring it with a double-edged sword (*khanda*) symbolizing God's power and justice. Having taken the nectar, a Sikh became a *Singh* ("lion") and followed an expanded version of the existing code of conduct (*rahit*). The new code involved the carrying of five Ks on one's person—*kes* ("uncut hair"), *kangha* ("comb"), *karha* ("steel bracelet"), *kirpan* ("sword"), and *kachha* ("long shorts")—as well as abstinence from tobacco.

Guru Gobind Singh thus gave the community a sharpened sense of identity and a well-defined geopolitical vision. In the subsequent decades, Sikhs developed the powerful myth that the land of

the Punjab belongs to them, and it came to them as a gift from the 10th Guru. They waged military campaigns in the years that followed, and finally, under the leadership of Ranjit Singh (1780–1839), created a powerful kingdom in the region. The community's understanding of itself as the *Khalsa* and the special ones did not foster any concerted effort among Sikhs to convert others to their faith, although many joined the community during this period.

The death of Ranjit Singh in 1839 ushered in a period of instability, and the British eventually annexed the Sikh kingdom in 1849. After an early phase of tense reflection on the fall of their political power, the Sikhs began to work closely with the British. This revised relationship resulted in the British recognizing the Sikhs as a "martial race," and they opened the doors of the imperial army and the police to them, which created extensive opportunities for work as well as worldwide travel.

With the coming of the printing press, Western education, Western medicine, and other institutions of modernity, Sikh leadership in the last quarter of the 19th century undertook a concerted effort to make Sikhs aware of what they saw as the early Sikh beliefs and practice and the need to revive them in changed circumstances. These leaders also worked closely with the British administration and made them treat Sikhs as a political community distinct from the Muslims and Hindus.

In the prolonged negotiations that preceded the partition of the Punjab in 1947, the idea of an independent Sikh state figured prominently, but the small size of the Sikh population in relation to the Muslims and Hindus of the Punjab made this an impossible proposition. In independent India, the Akali Dal, the Sikh political party whose criteria for membership have a distinctly religious character, has historically found itself in conflict with the federal government of India in Delhi. In 1966, its sustained efforts led to the founding of the present-day state of Punjab, where Sikhs would be in a majority and Punjabi the official language. In the 1980s, a Sikh secessionist movement under the leadership of Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale (1947–1984) paralyzed the Punjab and resulted in Operation Bluestar, in which the Indian army used heavy artillery to flush out Sikh militants based at the Darbar Sahib, Amritsar. The army and the police then bulldozed over the Sikh separatist

movement, creating a semblance of peace by the mid-1990s.

Although a large majority of Sikhs still live in the Punjab, approximately 10% of them have settled in other parts of the world. This migration overseas has created a new situation in which issues of religious authority, sacred language, Sikh relationship with the land of the Punjab, and social practice are being scrutinized anew in these communities away from the homeland. The positions taken on these issues will have an important impact on the future of Sikhism, not only among the overseas community but also, owing to process of rapid globalization and the sharing of Sikh leadership internationally, in the Punjab itself.

Beliefs

Guru Nanak's teachings are centered on the foundational concept of the unity of God, the creator lord (*kartar/patishih/sahib*), who governs the universe with the divine command (*hukam*) centered on the principles of justice (*nian*) and grace (*nadar*). As the creator of the universe, God is the only legitimate object of human worship and reverence.

The universe came into being as a divine decision. Being the divine creation, the world and all beings living here are assigned a high degree of sanctity, with humans positioned at the top. Irrespective of their social and gender distinctions, humans have the unique opportunity to achieve liberation (*mukti*), which means obtaining release from the cycle of birth and death and becoming united with God.

Self-centeredness (*haumai*) serves as an obstruction to attain liberation and has to be brought under control by developing a relationship with God based on love (*bhau*) and fear (*bhai*). Guru Nanak traces the movement toward liberation in five distinct stages. These include the recognition that the universe runs according to a divine plan (*dharam*), the realization of the vastness of the divine creation (*gian*), and the humility arising from an understanding of the nature of human existence in this God-created universe (*saram*). These three prepare human beings for receiving the divine grace (*karam*), which then takes them to the ineffable realm of truth (*sach*).

Other enduring assets in pursuit of liberation include commitment to hard work (*kirat*), sharing

the fruits of one's labor (*vand ke chhako*), and service to humanity (*seva*). The family and community do not simply provide a backdrop for an individual's search for liberation, but they are part and parcel of that agenda. Guru Nanak firmly believes in the individual's obligation to work toward collective liberation. A successful individual obtains liberation for himself or herself and assists in the liberation of everyone around. It is not an issue of choice but a moral imperative.

The social and ethical dimensions of early Sikh doctrine evolved into a belief in the indivisibility of the spiritual and temporal. The Gurus were seen as the master of both Sikh spiritual and temporal interests. Characteristic Sikh thinking on this issue is manifest in the proximity of the Darbar Sahib, the most sacred religious site of the Sikhs, and the Akal Takhat, the highest temporal seat of Sikh authority, in Amritsar. The *Khalsa* under the leadership of Guru Gobind Singh saw itself as the army of God (*Akal Purakh ki Fauj*), declared its mission to bring divine victory on earth, and worked on the belief that if peaceful means fail to bring justice, it is legitimate to wage a war. He also decided to discontinue the office of the personal Guru. After his death, the mantle of his authority was passed on to the Guru Panth (the community as the Guru) and the Guru Granth (the Guru in the book form). The communal decision making thus came to be centered on the Sikh leadership meeting in the presence of the scripture and reaching a consensus that will then be binding on all Sikhs.

Sacred Literature

Early in its history, Sikh literature developed along five lines: (1) the scriptural text, (2) commentaries on this text, (3) statements about practice, (4) life stories of the founder and his successors, and (5) other historically inflected texts such as court poetry. These strands are not always demarcated, but it is not too difficult to trace their evolution in early Sikh history.

Guru Nanak's compositions provided the core of Sikh scripture. There are early reports that the Guru's companions wrote down his compositions as he sang them and that these compositions were compiled in the form of a *pothi* (volume) in the opening decades of the 16th century. This corpus expanded as Guru Nanak's successors created

compositions and appended them to the earlier text. The Guru Granth attained its canonical form during the period of Guru Gobind Singh, and it includes hymns composed by six of the Sikh Gurus, alongside others composed by bards associated with the Sikh court and by 15 non-Sikh saint-poets known in the Sikh tradition as *bhagats* (“devotees”). The text plays the central role in Sikh devotional and ceremonial life.

Unlike the Guru Granth, the remaining four categories of textual production were seen to constitute an open-ended corpus, which was expected to grow as time passed. The first segment of this “open canon” was composed of the commentaries on the Guru Granth. Beliefs enshrined in the compositions of the Gurus were not only to be recited and revered but were to be understood and translated into real life. Guru Nanak’s successors attempted to elaborate on his themes, and the exegesis of Sikh sacred compositions thus began with the very inception of the community. During the 17th century, the ballads of Bhai Gurdas (d. 1638) take up themes such as the ideal Sikh (*gursikh*), the nature of relationship between the Guru and his followers (*guru-chelalpir-murid*), the nature of Sikh congregation (*sangat*), and values such as service (*seva*), explaining them on the basis of the Gurus’ writings. This period also saw the rise of commentaries that focused on the benefit (*paramarth*) of the reciting and reflecting on the scriptural verses. Into this category now fall numerous commentaries on the Guru Granth as well as its translations.

Given the Sikh emphasis on *shubh amal* (“good deeds”), it was logical that statements about practice (*rahit*) developed alongside the interpretation of Sikh beliefs. By 1600, we have a list of 10 prescriptions, which included five things that a Sikh should do and five that he or she should not do. These terse prescriptions later developed in the form of narratives of question-answer sessions between the Gurus and the Sikhs. Several statements on *rahit* were created during Guru Gobind Singh’s period. In the middle decades of the 20th century, this literature was codified into a work titled *Sikh Rahit Maryada* (“the Sikh code of conduct”) by the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, the premier management body overseeing the historical Gurdwaras.

The *Janam Sakhis* (“life stories”), a genre of Sikh literature celebrating the life and mission of Guru Nanak, started during his lifetime. In the

closing decades of the 16th century, these stories developed in the form of a narrative of the Guru’s life titled *Puratan Janam Sakhi* (“Old Life Story”). Being relatively close to the founder’s life, this serves as an important source of information about Guru Nanak. The genre expanded to include stories about the later Gurus and sectarian versions of the founder’s own life. An offshoot of this genre celebrates the heroic accomplishments of Guru Hargobind and Guru Gobind Singh and is named the *Gurbilas* (“Praise of the Guru”).

This takes us to the last type of literature that emerged during this period—that associated with bards. The presence of bards at the center of Sikh activities started with Mardana, a contemporary of Guru Nanak, and developed to include Balvand and Satta (1540s), the Bhattas (1581–1606), and Abdulla and Natha (post-1606). They were all poets who composed songs in praise of the Gurus in an idiom they had acquired prior to accepting Sikh patronage. While some of them had ties with Islam, the Bhattas were Brahmans, who liked to compare the gurus with Janak, the royal ascetic (*raj yogi*) who appears in the *Ramayana*. During the period of Guru Gobind Singh, a large number of poets were based at the Sikh court. The *Dasam Granth* (“the Book of the Tenth Guru”) is an important anthology that includes the compositions of these poets. The text belonging to the last four categories enjoys a quasi-authoritative status.

Devotional and Ceremonial Life

Each day, most Sikhs recite three prayers: the *Japji* and a set of other hymns in the morning, the *Rahiras* in the evening, and the *Sohila*, a thanksgiving prayer offered just before going to sleep. On the first day of each month of the lunar calendar, the *Barahmah* (“twelve months”), a special prayer, is recited.

In addition to the texts setting out these prayers, almost all Sikh families possess anthologies of selected sacred hymns (*gutkas*), which are used for recitation that goes beyond the daily prayers. Families who can do so usually also keep the Guru Granth in their house. The text is kept in a separate room, it is opened (*prakas*) in the morning and put to rest (*sukhasan*) after sunset. The lady of the house invariably assumes the responsibility of taking care of the text. Family members often

undertake the complete reading of the Guru Granth over a period lasting from 6 months to 1 year. A reading of the text completed in a week and an unbroken reading taking 48 hours mark special occasions.

Soon after the birth of a child, the family visits the *gurdwara*, Sikh temple, offers supplication for the child's healthy and productive life, and takes "the command" (*hukam*) from the Guru Granth: The book is opened at random and the hymn that appears on the top left-hand corner is considered to be the divine reply to the family's supplication for guidance in the life of the child. The opening letter of the hymn is used as the first letter in the name of the newly born child. The Sikh marriage ceremony is preceded by an unbroken reading of the Guru Granth. In the ceremony itself, the bride and groom circumambulate the Guru Granth four times while a specific hymn of four stanzas is recited from its text, and the congregation prays, seeking divine blessings for the new couple. At the time of death, the body is cremated, the ashes are dispersed in the flowing waters in the vicinity, and the bodily remains are taken to Kiratpur, the town where Guru Hargobind died, and are disposed off in the River Sutlej. A reading of the Guru Granth is completed on the 10th day after the death, and relatives and friends offer prayers seeking peace for the departed soul.

Other Sikh community celebrations include the following: the birth anniversaries of Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh, the days of martyrdom of Guru Arjan and Guru Tegh Bahadur, and Vaisakhi, the day of inauguration of the *Khalsa* by Guru Gobind Singh. These are celebrated by a pilgrimage to the Darabar Sahib, in Amritsar, or other historical sites.

Gurinder Singh Mann

See also Guru Nanak; Hinduism; India; Islam

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The Sikhism Home Page: www.sikhs.org

Sikhnet: www.sikhnet.com

SILK ROAD

The *Silk Road*, a term first coined in the 19th century, describes the network of overland trade routes connecting China, India, and the Mediterranean through Tibet and Central Asia. Caravans traveling by land across the Silk Roads were the primary mode of exchange between the East and the West from the second century BCE until the regular use of sea routes started in the 15th century CE. High freezing mountains, desolate deserts, and the scarcity of water restricted travelers to a few traversable paths, where difficult terrain was interrupted by occasional oases and towns.

Traveling the Roads

The Silk Road was regularly traveled in both directions. From China, the Silk Road begins at Chang'an, although trade was also conducted with Japan. The Silk Road passes west through China

along the Gansu corridor to Dunhuang. From Dunhuang, travelers either used the northern route around the Taklamakan Desert through Kucha and the foothills of the Tian Shan Mountains or the southern route to Khotan. From Khotan, travelers could go south across the Kun Lun and Himalayan mountain ranges to India or rejoin the northern route at Kashgar. From Kashgar, paths led south across the Pamir Mountains to Kashmir, but the main route led west to Samarkand. Beyond Samarkand, one route turned north at Bukhara, passing Khiva on the way to the Caspian Sea. Alternatively, the Silk Road continued west across Persia to the Mediterranean. Other trade routes extended through Arabia, North Africa, and Europe. Merchants generally did not travel the full length of the Silk Road. They instead acted as intermediaries who carried goods along a portion of the route and acquired different goods to trade on the return trip. Most products were exchanged between neighboring regions rather than being carried to the end points of the Silk Road.

Trade and Commodities

As the name implies, silk was an important commodity often carried by trade caravans from southern China to the Near East, Arabia, or Rome. The silk trade accounted for a substantial portion of state revenue, so the Chinese ordered all aspects of silk production to be kept secret: Anyone attempting to smuggle silkworm eggs or mulberry leaves out of China would be put to death. Sassanian Persian merchants, often middlemen for the silk trade, also understood the value of the secret and sometimes propagated disinformation about the origin of silk and the methods of its production. Despite attempts at secrecy, a fifth-century Chinese princess successfully smuggled silkworm eggs to Khotan by hiding them in her hair. In the sixth century, two Nestorian monks hid silkworm eggs in hollowed staves and carried them to the Byzantine court in Constantinople. Trading silk to the West was a lucrative business, but silk was not the only commodity traded on the Silk Road. Horses, gold, precious gems, jade, fabrics, and produce were carried by caravans between Silk Road towns. Unavoidably, travelers also spread cultures and ideas, with a noteworthy example being advances in medical science.

History Along the Silk Road

People, commodities, ideas, religions, music, and art moved along the Silk Road since the fourth century BCE, when the Macedonian empire of Alexander the Great expanded east from Greece as far as Kashmir. Aspects of Hellenistic Greek culture influenced developments in Central Asian art, architecture, language, religion, and coinage.

In the third century BCE, China was unified under the Qin Dynasty. Continuous conflicts between China and the Xiongnu nomads in the area of modern-day Mongolia motivated the Chinese to build the Great Wall for defense. In 138 BCE, the Chinese Han Dynasty court sent Zhang Qian, a military liaison, west to seek allies against the Xiongnu.

In the following centuries, China and the nomadic tribes of Central Asia and Mongolia were in constant conflict. The Xiongnu were replaced by the Xianbei, and the Yuezhi engaged the Parthians in Bactria. By the seventh century, the Gokturks had established a powerful empire (*kaghanate*) stretching along the north of China from the Korean peninsula to the Caspian Sea. The Parthians were succeeded by the Sassanian Persian Empire, which was conquered by the Arab armies in the seventh century. It was also during the seventh century that the tribes of Tibet united to form the Tibetan empire.

The Arabs, Tibetans, Chinese, and Turkic tribes in Mongolia fought over the Silk Road territories until a period of political destabilization in the mid-eighth century. The An Lushan (or Rokhshan) rebellion led to a 15-year hiatus in Tang dynastic rule in China. At the same time, the Tibetan empire was also destabilized when the emperor was killed in a revolt led by his ministers. In Damascus, the Umayyad caliphate was defeated in a coup, which led to the establishment of the 'Abbāsid caliphate. During this period, the Uighurs succeeded the Gokturks as the ruling kaghanate. The Uighurs helped the Chinese defeat the An Lushan rebels and resist a Tibetan invasion from the south. The Uighur kaghanate made Ordu-Baliq its capital (the ruins of which are called Kharabalghasun) and became extremely wealthy through a trade arrangement requiring the Chinese to pay exorbitant fees (in the form of silk) every year to purchase cavalry ponies. Advancing Kirghiz armies seized the Uighur capital in 840 and

occupied the Uighur lands. The fleeing Uighurs were initially accepted by the Chinese as refugees and made camp along the Yellow River. Three years later, the Chinese army attacked and slaughtered thousands of Uighurs, forcing them to flee south and west along the Silk Road.

In the 11th century, the Seljuk Turks conquered an area extending from modern Afghanistan to the Mediterranean. The Seljuk capital was Nishapur until the empire collapsed in the 12th century due to internal revolts. The 13th century saw the rise of the Mongol Empire under the leadership of the warlord Temujin, who would later be called Genghis Khan. By the reign of Kublai Khan, the Mongol Empire had conquered most of the continent, forming an empire that included Korea, China, Central Asia, most of the Middle East, and parts of eastern Europe. Civil wars caused this empire to disintegrate into separate khanates. Kublai Khan retained control of China, Tibet, and regions to the north beyond the modern boundary of Mongolia and ruled them as the first emperor of the Yuan Dynasty. Marco Polo's travels to the Mongol Empire lasted 17 years, from 1274 until 1291.

Use of the Silk Road declined with the establishment of the east-west sea routes. Beginning with the Portuguese in 1517, European cargo ships traveled from Europe around the Cape of Good Hope, north to India, and through the Straits of Malacca to arrive at Macao in southern China.

Religion on the Silk Road

Zoroastrianism

Although the date when Zoroastrianism was first practiced in Persia is uncertain, it was the religion of the Archaemenid Persian Empire during the sixth century BCE and may even have been carried as far as China during that time. The Sassanians codified the religion, and Sogdian Zoroastrians could be found in most towns along the Silk Road from Damascus to Chang'an.

Buddhism

In the third century BCE, the Mauryan Emperor Asoka converted to Buddhism and encouraged its propagation by sending missionaries through Hellenized Bactria and Persia all the way west to Anatolia. Missionaries were also sent south to

Sri Lanka, northeast to Nepal and Tibet, and into Southeast Asia. Asoka also sponsored the building of thousands of Buddhist stupas. Buddhism became common in Silk Road towns in Parthia, Sogdiana, Tibet, the oasis towns around the Tarim Basin, and China. A Kucheian monk named Kumarajiva contributed to the spread of Buddhist doctrine by translating sutras from Sanskrit into Chinese. Bodhidharma was an Indian monk who transmitted Ch'an (Zen) Buddhism to China and is credited as the founder of Shaolin kung fu. Fa Xian (Fa Hsien) was an early fifth-century Chinese monk who traveled to India to retrieve Buddhist scriptures, and the travels of the monk Xuanzang in the seventh century are famously recorded as the *Journey to the West*.

Manichaeism

Originating in third-century Persia, the teachings and priests of the prophet Mani were known in the Roman Empire, Persia, Central Asia, Greater Mongolia, and China. In the eighth century, Sogdian merchants from Samarqand introduced the Uighur ruler to Manichaeism, whereupon he converted and ordered the religion to be propagated among his people. His efforts were unsuccessful: Many people quickly reverted to shamanistic practices and a traditional meat diet.

Nestorianism

The Nestorian diophysite school of Christianity broke away from the Byzantine Church and was conveyed by both Syrian missionaries and Sogdian merchants east across the Silk Road. Nestorianism was popular among Turkic tribes until the 13th century. The Tang emperor permitted the construction of a Nestorian monastery in Chang'an, but except for a brief resurgence during the Yuan Dynasty, antiforeign sentiment caused Nestorianism to disappear from China by the 10th century.

Islam

In the seventh century, Islam spread with the Arab conquests across Persia and Bactria as far as Sind (modern Pakistan). Arab armies that had entered Transoxania in the eighth century confronted the Chinese armies northeast of Samarqand in 751. Although the Arab armies were victorious, they did not advance farther east along the Silk

Road. Individual traders proceeded along the Silk Road, settling and raising families as far east as China. The influence of these settlers may account for the origins of the Hui Chinese ethnic group, who can be distinguished from other groups by their practice of Islam.

Brendan Newlon

See also ‘Abbāsid Caliphate; Alexander the Great; Ancient Near Eastern Religions; Asoka; China; Christianity; Constantinople; Eastern Orthodox Christianity; Global Religion; Islam; Kashmir; Mahayana Buddhism; Manichaeism; Mediterranean World; Mongol Empire; Mongolia; Rome; Stupa; Umayyad Dynasty; Zen Buddhism; Zoroastrianism (and Parsis)

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SINGAPORE

Singapore is a Southeast Asian island country south of the Malay peninsula of Malaysia and north of Indonesia. Historically a commercial hub for Malays, South Asian, Chinese, and later British merchants, Singapore reflects a long tradition of transnational economic, political, and especially religious activities. One clear example of its diversity is in its name. The name Singapore was inherited from the indigenous Malay *Singapura* (“City of the Lion”) and is derived from the Sanskrit *simhapura*, which was a town in the Indian epic the *Mahābhārata*. Singapore continues to promote its Malay heritage as well as its historically diverse immigration. This section will cover briefly the historical development of Singapore’s nation-state and the religious practices of Singapore’s dominant ethnic groups.

The indigenous people of Singapore are the Malay *Orang Laut* (“Sea People”), who experienced early and frequent maritime contacts with

South Asian Hindus and Buddhists. By the seventh century, Singapore was under the political jurisdiction of the Malay Buddhist kingdom of Śrīvijaya. The Śrīvijaya thalassocracy controlled the majority of the Southeast Asian region, which included Singapore, Sumatra, and Borneo and stretched as far as the northern Philippines. During this time, many Malays practiced a form of Tantric Śaivism, worshipping deities such as *Kala* and *Durga*. As early as the 16th century, Singapore’s population began to convert to Islam along with many other kingdoms in the archipelago. The country later became an international center for Malay literature and generated a healthy amount of translations of Arabic and Persian romances and legends.

In 1819, the British Admiral Sir Thomas Stamford Bingley Raffles established a trading post in Singapore, converting the island into an international commercial hub. As with most British expeditions at the time, Raffles’s commercial interests were inextricably linked with colonial expansion. Singapore, along with the current states of Malaysia and Burma, became part of the British colonial empire. Singapore’s geographic location became a crucial military advantage for the British Empire. The British presence destabilized Singapore’s power structures and allowed Chinese immigrants to find a strong and dominant place in Singaporean society. The British occupied Singapore until World War II, when they lost it to the Japanese. The Japanese exercised brutal measures on Singaporeans. One of the islands closest to Singapore *Pulau Blakang Mati* (“Island of Death From Behind”) received its name from its use by the Japanese for torturing and killing Chinese suspects. Today, it is called Sentosa, Singapore’s internationally popular island resort.

The British regained control of Singapore in 1945 and held on to power until 1963, when Singapore gained independence. After a failed attempt to join with Malaysia and other neighboring countries, Singapore established itself as an independent Southeast Asian state in 1965. From 1959 to 1990, Singapore rose in economic power, mostly due to the policies and guidance of Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew. Due to his efforts, Singapore joined South Korea and Japan as one of the tiger economies of Asia.

The Singaporean government prides itself on its religious diversity and promotes religious holidays

for its Muslim, Hindu, Christian, and Buddhist citizens. In its tourism packages and nationalistic pamphlets, religious pluralism is a method of promoting Singapore's status as a fully modernized and developed country. The largest Islamic festival in Singapore is *Hari Raya Puasa* ("Fasting Day of Celebration"), which is celebrated throughout Singapore, especially at the Malay Heritage Centre in downtown Singapore. Deepavali is the corresponding Hindu festival, and the focus of the celebration is in a quadrant of the city called Little India. One of the wealthiest areas in Singapore is Orchard Road, which sponsors the annual Christmas promotions and celebrations. Other festivals such as the Chinese New Year and the Buddhist Vesak Day are national holidays in Singapore and testify to the active and diverse religious population. While Singaporeans widely celebrate and acknowledge these diverse religious practices, religious communities such as the Hindus complain that there is more performance than practice of tolerance.

The different religious communities reflect previous and current immigrant movements. The largest ethnic population in Singapore is the Chinese, who have collectively enjoyed political and economic power shortly after Singapore's independence. The majority of Singapore Chinese have ancestral roots in southern China and are predominantly Cantonese, Hakka, Hokkien, or Teo Chiu. Chinese continue to immigrate to Singapore, mostly from economically challenged areas in Malaysia or China. Most Singaporean Chinese practice a form of Buddhism or Daoism, while others follow Christianity, Islam, or Tang-ki rituals and worship. One popularly venerated Buddhist tradition in Singapore is Thai Buddhism. Part of Thai Buddhism's popularity is Singapore's geographic proximity to Thailand. Thai Buddhist monks favor Singapore over Malaysia, partly due to the greater degree of religious tolerance in Singapore. The growth of Thai Buddhism and its monasteries is financially sustained through a strong Singaporean Chinese Buddhist patronage.

Singaporean Malays are the second largest ethnic group in Singapore and represent the largest population of Muslims in Singapore. For most Singaporean Malays, their ethnicity denotes their religious identity as Muslims, or as *bangsa Melayu* ("Malay race"). The Malay population in Singapore has decreased since the 1970s, and this is

partly due to the large and constant flow of Chinese immigrants to the country. One of Singapore's most famous Malays is Singapore's first president Yusof bin Ishak, whose image appears on Singapore currency notes. Malays are considered the indigenous population; however, Malays also come to Singapore from the neighboring countries of Malaysia, Indonesia, and Brunei. Travel between Malaysia and Singapore is relatively inexpensive, with many people commuting daily through trains and buses.

The third largest ethnic group is Tamil. Tamil families have roots in southern India, Sri Lanka, and Malaysia, and new immigrants continue to arrive in Singapore in search of manual labor. Singapore's Little India shops offer Bollywood paraphernalia, Hindu devotional groups, and yoga exercise classes. Singapore also boasts one of the most diverse arrays of Indian restaurants, which specialize in regional varieties such as Goa, Punjabi, and Kashmiri foods. Singaporean Tamils are predominantly Hindu or Christian, and many of their ancestors arrived as laborers for the British East India Company in the early 1800s. The Tamil language is the least well-known of the four national languages but is still present in public spaces such as sky trains and buses. Many of the Singaporean Hindu temples have Dravidian architectural motifs, a testament to the influence of southern Indian immigrants in the 1800s. The first of these temples was the Sri Mariamman Temple, which is located today in Singapore's Chinatown. The most well-known Hindu temple in Singapore is the Sri Veerama Kaliyamman Temple, which is a famous tourist spot and a landmark in Singapore.

One of the fastest growing religious practices in Singapore is Thai Buddhism. Part of Thai Buddhism's presence in Singapore is due to the Thai government's missionizing in the early 1900s. Thai king Chulalongkorn (1853–1910) visited Singapore near the end of his reign and purchased land for the purpose of promoting and supporting Thai Buddhism. However, it did not flourish until the latter part of the 20th century. Between 1986 and 2007, the number of Thai Buddhist temples grew from 6 to 100. Much of this is due to the continual Chinese Buddhist patronage and support from Thai migrant workers. One of the most popular Thai Buddhist spaces in Singapore is Wat Ananda Metyarama, which was founded in 1923 by a Thai abbot from southern Thailand. Wat Ananda

Metyarama's most venerable image is of Luang Pho Tuat, who is one of the most widely venerated Buddhist monks in Thailand. Luang Pho Tuat amulets are regularly sold throughout Singapore, and his statues are often on the dashboards of Singaporean taxis.

Christian adherents are various; they come from myriad countries and constitute approximately 15% of the population. Nearly two thirds of the Christian population in Singapore belong to Protestant denominations and follow these traditions. Many of the growing number of Catholic adherents derive from the Filipino diaspora, who are both seasonal and immigrant workers in Singapore. Filipino Catholics maintain strong ties to their extended families in the Philippines and have secured a strong religious base in Singapore. Some Filipinos will visit the customary seven Catholic churches for *Visita Iglesia*, a traditional Holy Week for Catholics, in Singapore in lieu of returning to the Philippines for the practice. Filipinos are the largest Christian group in Asia and help sustain much of Singapore's Catholic practices.

Singapore's commercial success has attracted a diverse flow of immigrants and religious practices for centuries. As Singapore continues to develop and grow financially, it will draw Christians, Buddhists, Daoists, Hindus, Sikhs, Baha'i, and Muslims from all over Southeast Asia and enjoy its place among the global cities around the world.

Michael Jerryson

See also Buddhism; China; Confucianism; Hinduism; Indonesia; Islam; Mahayana Buddhism; Malaysia; Philippines; Southeast Asia; Sri Lanka; Thailand

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country within the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Until 2010, it was part of the Netherland Antilles, a conglomeration that was dissolved in October of that year. The country then became self-determinate, with the Netherlands providing for its defense, foreign policy, and financial stability. Sint Maarten occupies the southern portion of Saint Martin island in the Caribbean Sea, the northern portion belonging to France. While precise numbers are unavailable, Methodism is the most popular religious faith in Sint Maarten; Roman Catholicism comes next and is more popular in the French northern part of the island. Other faiths represented include Anglican; Seventh-Day Adventist, which is rising in popularity; Baptist; Hindu; and significant numbers of Vodou practitioners and Rastafarians. Some faiths are syncretized with African Caribbean religions, and the celebration of the dead also plays a large role in Sint Maarteners' lives.

Originally inhabited by Arawak Indians who were later conquered by the Carib tribe from which the sea takes its name, Sint Maarten's religious history began with its settlement by the Spanish after the island was spotted by Christopher Columbus in 1493. The island takes its name from St. Martin, on whose feast day it was sighted. It was not highly regarded by the Spanish, and in their absence, the Dutch founded a colony in 1631; the island was prized by them for its geographic location between Dutch settlements in New Amsterdam and Brazil. The Dutch East India company began salt mining operations soon after, and the island would violently change possession between Dutch and Spanish hands during subsequent years. The Treaty of Concordia was signed in 1648, dividing the island between the two colonizing powers—in effect, the Catholic north and Methodist south. Slaves were later imported to the island to cultivate the cotton, tobacco, and sugar plantations, and repeated slave rebellions ended only when the Dutch outlawed slavery on Sint Maarten in 1863. In the 1950s, the country became a popular tourist destination, at which time immigrants from the Lesser Antilles as well as Haitians, Dominican Republicans, and others arrived with their varied religious practices, drawn by the opportunities made available by the tourist economy.

Sint Maarten's populace is diverse, with many different faiths coexisting peacefully. The number

SINT MAARTEN

Sint Maarten is a small nation located on an island in the eastern Caribbean that is a constituent

of faithful cannot be precisely specified, but churches of various faiths are listed as popular tourist destinations, for both their function and their beauty. Interfaith conflict is rare; the island's inhabitants place the peace of the country above any religious disagreements.

John Soboslai

See also Caribbean; Christianity; Netherlands; Postcolonialism; Protestant Christianity; Roman Catholicism; Syncretism; Vodou

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SLOVAKIA

Slovakia is a central European country formerly joined with the Czech Republic to create the nation of Czechoslovakia within the Soviet bloc. Since the end of the Cold War, Slovakia has been independent. The Slovak cultural identity has been significantly influenced by the fact that it has always been part of the Western Latin culture, which brought rationalism, individualism, and eventually also humanism to people's thinking and behavior. Though dominantly Roman Catholic, contemporary Slovak religious society is distinctively postmodern, especially in its pluralism of beliefs and practices. The postmodernization of religion in Slovakia has manifested itself through a growing number of followers—particularly in the minority religions—a continual rise in the number of new religious movements, greater participation of laymen in church activities, and a

higher proportion of young people and intellectuals being part of the modern religious population.

At the same time, parallel to these trends, the conservative tendencies in the traditional churches are growing stronger. Despite the global phenomenon of secularization, religiosity in the Slovak republic is becoming more important according to census data. We can see a growing number of citizens affiliating themselves with a church or a religious group. Also, the number of the people who do not declare membership in any church or religious group and describe themselves as nonreligious has grown. The number of people affiliating themselves with a different religious group or church has risen too. This rise can be attributed to the establishment of new religious groups in Slovak society. In comparison to other former Eastern Bloc countries and considering the secular tendencies in Europe, we can conclude that the situation in Slovakia is unusual, and such a high degree of religiosity (from the quantitative point of view) in the given geographic area is exceptional. It shows that gradual pluralism is taking place, and new forms of religious practices are emerging. There are 18 registered churches and religious groups and approximately 200 unregistered religious groups in Slovakia presently. The success of small churches creates a precondition for a gradual change of the structure of Slovakia's denomination map while preserving the monopolistic position of Christianity in its various forms.

The largest section of nonregistered religious groups consists of movements of Christian origin—just below 50% compared with followers of neopagan groups and groups of oriental origin. The various messianic groups have the lowest number of members. Slovakia is one of the countries where a traditional pastoral environment and the type of traditional “inherited” religiosity connected with it disappear in proportion to the process of modernization that is in progress here. “Rustic piety” becomes marginalized, while fundamentalist and sectarian religiosities are in demand, and more personal, more sophisticated, and more individual beliefs are growing. A gradual strong shift from ritually moralizing religion to spirituality focused on meditation or mystic experience is taking place. The main reasons for this are lack of confidence in religious institutions, especially in the Catholic Church, which is due to the complicated religious development in Slovakia in the

remote past; strong anti-Catholic interpretation of the national identity as a result of the communist propaganda, which forced the church out of public life from 1948 to 1989; and the scandalous portrayal of churches in tabloids since 1989.

Lucia Grešková

See also Communism; Czech Republic; Marx and Religion; New Religions; Postmodernism; Roman Catholicism

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SLOVENIA

Slovenia is a relatively small country (20,300 square kilometers, 2.1 million inhabitants) in the Balkan Peninsula in southeastern Europe. Once a part of Yugoslavia, it is now independent and a member of the European Union. Its capital city is Ljubljana (280,000 inhabitants). The majority of the population is Slovenian (more than 80%) and from other Slavonic nations (Croatians and Serbians). There are also important minorities, Italians and Germans, in Slovenia. Given its location on the edge of the Balkan Peninsula, Slovenia has in the course of its history been influenced by many cultures and religions (Catholicism, Orthodox religion, and Islam). Slovenia was a part of the Habsburg Monarchy (since the 14th century). Due to the religious circumstances under Habsburg rule, the most important religion was and still remains Catholicism (about 58% of population). Ljubljana, the capital, is the center of Catholicism in the region, and since 1961, it has also been the seat of the Roman Catholic Metropolitan Archdiocese. Other dioceses include the towns of Koper and Novo Mesto.

Between 1918 and 1991, Slovenia was a part of Yugoslavia. It was decidedly the most developed and the most modernized region of this former Communist state. Being a part of Yugoslavia greatly influenced the religious map of Slovenia. Alongside traditional Catholicism, other religious

traditions arose, especially the Orthodox Church and Islam. According to the last census of 2002, about 2.3% of people declare themselves to be Orthodox, and 2.4% of the population are Muslims. These two religions are represented mostly in the capital city (5.5% Orthodox Christians and 5.4% Muslims). The civil war in former Yugoslavia affected Slovenia only marginally but it was the cause of increased migration from other parts of Yugoslavia and led to the growth of some religious groups, above all Islam.

Compared to other parts of former Yugoslavia, in Slovenia, there is a large number of people who are not affiliated with a religion but have some religious beliefs (about 4%). Also, the number of people who declare themselves as unbelievers or atheists is relatively high (more than 10%). Nontraditional and new religious movements are also very active in Slovenia. These groups had great difficulty in being recognized during the last decade of the 20th century. The current situation is better, but there is still much tension between these groups and the rest of society. Around 38 other religious communities, spiritual groups, societies, and associations were registered in Slovenia in 2010. In the past 10 years, the number of people sympathetic to New Age ideas has also increased. In this context, the former president of Slovenia, Janez Drnovšek (1950–2008), is an important figure as he became the supporter of ideas connected with New Age phenomena during the last years of his life. He is the author of several books with spiritual content—for example, *Thoughts on Life and Consciousness* (2006), *Golden Thoughts on Life and Consciousness* (2006), and *The Essence of the World* (2006).

David Vaclavik

See also Christianity; Croatia; Europe; Islam; New Age Movements; New Religions; Roman Catholicism; Serbia

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SMART, NINIAN (1927–2001)

One of the most influential figures in the field of religious studies in the latter half of the 20th century, Ninian Smart's life was thrown off course by the changing fate of history. Born into a relatively privileged family, groomed for an Oxford or Cambridge education by his Cambridge mathematician father and well-born mother, Smart had been set on a path leading to a conventional academic career in the British university system like his two brothers, Alastair, an art historian, and John Jamieson, the philosopher. But World War II intervened, and Smart was pressed into military service, first to study Chinese at London's School of Oriental and African Studies and then to be removed to a remote tropical island, Ceylon, later known as Sri Lanka. Smart's encounter with the classics of China stood in stark contrast with his previous training in the Western classics; his face-to-face meeting with the Buddhism of Ceylon and with Ceylonese Buddhist intellectuals, such as the formidable philosopher K. N. Jayatilleke (who became a lifelong friend), introduced him to a religiosity quite different from his own Anglican piety and the theological establishment of the Church of England. These occasions made for intellectual reflection about the reality of global life outside the United Kingdom, which soon received deeper affirmation through Smart's marriage to his Italian Catholic wife, Libushka Barrufaldi. Ninian Smart was a committed comparativist of the world's religions and ideologies, a sophisticated proponent of developing the tools of transnational comparative analysis, *Doktorvater* for a generation of postgraduate students from every continent, recipient of international honors and prestigious lectureships, tireless world traveler in the interests of academic internationalism, and veritable citizen of the world. He set a high bar for people seeking to think of themselves as global scholars. This entry will focus on the global features of his work. First, Smart was a global scholar in that he thought about his subjects in a cross-cultural comparative way. This is reflected in his major publications in the comparative study of religion: *World Religions: A Dialogue*, *World Philosophies*, *The World's Religions*, *Reasons and Faiths*, *Dimensions of the Sacred: An*

Anatomy of the World's Religions, *World Views: Crosscultural Explorations of Human Beliefs*, *The Religious Experience of Mankind*, *Religion and the Western Mind*, *Religion and Nationalism: The Urgency of Transnational Spirituality and Toleration*, and *Buddhism and Christianity: Rivals and Allies*. Even where the titles of Smart's books do not signal a work of transnational comparison, the substance does. *Doctrine and Argument in Indian Philosophy*, for instance, is written expressly to put Western philosophy of religion into play with Indian; *The Philosophy of Religion* sets out to treat some of the perennial problems of philosophy in intentionally comparative ways; and *The Phenomenon of Religion* offers a model for doing the comparative study of religion along the lines developed by the phenomenology of religion.

For Smart, doing comparative work did not mean matching up one religion against another to assert that all religions were really one and the same. Though Smart thought globally, he thought pluralistically. For Smart, global thinking always meant thinking about religions in which distinctiveness was taken with the utmost seriousness. For Smart, comparison did mean seeking and positing analogies between and among religions, but to explain how and why things happen in religions. Take the idea of *lord* and how this notion is conceived by different religions. How might the presence of "the lord" configure with ritual acts of devotion, prayer, sacrifice, meditation, worship, and so on in one religion as compared with another? What intricate analogies might there then be between one religion and another? What if, for example, the lord in question was also incarnate and human, like Attis, Jesus, or Krishna, rather than more heavenly, like the Amitābha Buddha or the Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara? What if the lord were fully transcendent, like Allah or Yahweh? How would these different conceptions of *lord* be reflected in a religion's mythology or the style of religious experience and emotion, for example? Would we not perhaps expect kinds of religious experience to vary as the conception of lord does? Can we likewise expect religions that emphasize the lordly qualities of their focus to express that in certain forms of concrete religious materiality, such as in architecture or sculpture? Given the generality of the terms, this same series of questions can be submitted to any particular religious

context in which lordliness figures, whether that be the religious world of Lord Krishna or Lord Jesus.

Smart cherished the lifelong, but unrealized, wish to develop a truly global analytic language of comparison, with its own lexicon of comparative terms. Such a language could be constructed in several ways. Smart worked avidly on at least two.

One of these was to strive to find a comparative language devoid of particularistic or ethnocentric taint. Smart used this kind of relatively abstract or neutral language in his phenomenological ventures. He might thus use the term *focus*, as in the phrase *focus* of worship, instead of, say, any one of a number of culturally specific terms such as *god*, *dominus*, *Brahman*, *deva*, and so on. In this way, by trying to pursue the religiously neutral path of trying to invent clean comparative terminology, Smart felt that he could talk *globally* without slighting or privileging any particular religious point of view.

Smart also thought an alternative strategy for achieving a cross-culturally comparative language of study was available. It was never clear whether this was to be used if a clean comparative language proved impossible to construct or whether it stood alone. Nevertheless, Smart's idea was to cross-pollinate the repertoire of comparative terminology by mutual adoption of different terminologies—a kind of export/import operation for religious studies. Thus, in his use of neutral terms like *lord* for comparative purposes, Smart assumes that this term could be recognized by religions other than those arising in the West as pertinent to their own situations. Smart presumed that the term *lord*, although an English one, carried no significant ethnocentric baggage. But what if he were mistaken? Smart's answer was simply to offer an alternate strategy. Instead of seeking a clean comparative language, we should mutually *import* terms from each other's religious traditions—without seeking one-for-one correspondence translations between imported/exported and “domestic” terms. In the same way that we import foreign words into English wholesale, and without translation, such as Zen or yoga, we could globalize our thinking about religion by just doing more of the same with the key terms of the comparative discourse of religious studies. Thus, instead of trying to translate a term such as the Sanskrit word

for moral order, *dharma*, into an English equivalent, we should just learn how *dharma* maps onto the world and, thus, import the term *dharma* into the Anglophone discourses of religious studies on its own terms.

Smart did not believe that the resultant polyglot, comparative religious studies language would be easy to create. He did little more than call for his dream to be made into a reality—perhaps by a succeeding generation of scholars in the study of religion. Still in all, Smart's intentions and visions for a global study of religion are stressed in this entry. If his vision were realized, each religion could deliver some conclusions of general use and supply elements of a comparative language to all the rest. Would it not be better for both understanding and for ease of thinking, for example, if we in the West gave up the clumsy practice of substituting a cluster of Western terms such as *moral-ity*, *duty*, and so on for the Indic *dharma*? Why not start a global enterprise of learning—by learning from each other what far richer terms, such as *dharma*, mean and then go ahead and import them for use in our own lexicons? Smart thought that such an export/import operation would mark progress toward furthering the globalism at the heart of his worldview.

Ivan Strenski

See also Mahayana Buddhism; Multiculturalism; Pluralism; Religious Dialogue; Sri Lanka

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SMITH, HUSTON (B. 1919)

Huston Smith is a public intellectual known for his work on comparative religion, notably for his book *The World's Religions*. Throughout his career, Smith has sought to educate the English-speaking world about religions, to foster respect for religious traditions, and to dialogue with modern Western science.

Smith was raised by Methodist missionary parents in a rural town near Suzhou, China. In addition to the Christianity of his parents, he was introduced to Buddhism, Confucianism, Daoism, and indigenous traditions. After primary education in China, he attended college in the United States. At the University of Chicago, he adopted the naturalistic theology of his mentor, Nelson Wieman, and married Wieman's daughter, Eleanor Kendra Wieman.

After graduating, Smith taught at Denver University, Washington University (St. Louis, Missouri), Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Syracuse University, and the University of California, Berkeley. While in St. Louis, he became a follower of Swami Satprakashananda and the Vedanta Society. He also hosted several television series, and two of these turned into publications. "The Religions of Man" later became *The World's Religions*, and "The Search for America" became a book by the same name and included chapters cowritten with Eleanor Roosevelt and Paul Tillich. Toward the end of his career, he starred in Bill Moyer's television series on world religions titled *The Wisdom of Faith With Huston Smith*.

As a public intellectual and curious inquirer, Smith met and learned from several spiritual luminaries, including the 14th Dalai Lama, Gerald Heard, Aldous Huxley, Timothy Leary, Thomas Merton, Frithjof Schuon, D. T. Suzuki, and Alan Watts. Driving these encounters was Smith's commitment to ecumenism, which for him involves developing respect for other religions' capacity to foster spiritual development. Accordingly, Smith is not a comparativist; rather, he elucidates the experiences and values of different religions. To enrich his scholarship, Smith became a practitioner of Vedanta, Rinzai Zen, and Sufi Islam, for more than a decade in each tradition. This led him to perennial philosophy and the teaching that all great religions converge at the infinite transcendent and at the deepest inward self.

Smith has been a public advocate for diverse people, religions, and religious practices. For example, as a Christian in the Civil Rights Era, he marched on Selma and participated in the March on Washington. Inspired by his encounters with indigenous peoples in Australia and the Americas as well as his experimentation with drugs, Smith testified to Congress to remove the ban on peyote

for Native Americans, cowrote *One Nation Under God* and wrote *Cleansing the Doors of Perception* (books about the religious use of hallucinogenic plants).

Throughout his career, Smith has engaged in dialogue with Western scientists. He has urged them to embrace science's inherent openness and limitations to develop more holistic theories. In short, Smith argues that religious worldviews and experiences do not have to be invalidated by modern science.

Brett Esaki

See also China; Christianity; Confucianism; Daoism; Ecumenicalism; Global Religion; Perennial Philosophy; Religious Dialogue; Sufism; Vedanta Society; World Religions

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SMITH, WILFRED CANTWELL (1916–2000)

A scholar of the comparative history of religion and also a theologian, Wilfred Cantwell Smith was a prolific author, visionary educational administrator, and major intellectual force in the academic study and practice of religion during the latter half of the 20th century. Building on his roots in Islamic studies, Smith was an early advocate for taking religious pluralism and its conceptualization seriously. This entailed meticulous historical research across the range of the world's religious traditions and a willingness to address what he perceived to be the failings of modern intellectuals and the university to understand religious life. The impact of his work, both personally on those who studied with him—many of whom have become leaders in their fields—and through his writing, is enormous. Smith's work remains significant for its understanding of religious life, for the ongoing engagement with issues of global religious diversity and pluralism, and for its crisp portrayal of the moral dimension of intellectual life.

Biography

Born in Canada, Smith obtained his early education at the University of Toronto, followed by 2 years studying theology at Westminster College, Cambridge, and as a research student in oriental languages at St. John's College, Cambridge. Joined by his wife, Muriel, Smith then accepted an appointment with the Canadian Overseas Missions Council based primarily at Forman Christian College in Lahore in prepartition India, in what is now Pakistan, where he taught Indian history. Smith's 5 years in India were formative in many ways. The warm friendships that he formed with colleagues of varying religious orientations—Hindu, Muslim, and Sikh—manifested the complex and deeply personal nature of religious and cultural difference, thereby demonstrating the inadequacy of the common but facile Western view of religious life as competing belief systems. The Indian years also deepened Smith's interest in the nature of historical process, particularly as the ground for moral and sociopolitical life. This entailed an initial attraction to Marxism, later recanted in the interest of a less dogmatic and more nuanced understanding of history. Smith returned to North America after World War II and completed his PhD in oriental languages at Princeton University.

In 1949, Smith was appointed to McGill University's faculty of divinity in Montréal where, 2 years later, he became the first director of the University's Institute of Islamic Studies. This institute embodied Smith's unique vision for scholarship at the interface of different religious traditions: faculty and students drawn in equal numbers from the West and from throughout the Muslim world, working on common subjects. This vision spoke to the two key dimensions in engaging religious pluralism and diversity: the differences *between* religious traditions and the differences *within* any one tradition.

In 1964, Smith was invited to expand this vision to global horizons by becoming the director of Harvard University's Center for the Study of World Religions. The center was not itself a teaching institution but provided a nexus for the teaching of world religions at Harvard, chiefly at the Divinity School, but increasingly, under Smith's leadership, in the faculty of Arts and Sciences. The center provided residential space for faculty and students, facilitating both formal and informal

interactions and continuing Smith's recognition that the study of religious life is chiefly a matter of persons in conversation.

Smith left Harvard in 1973 to accept an appointment at Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia, which allowed him to advance an ambitious agenda of scholarly writing. He returned to Harvard in 1978 to assume oversight of both doctoral and undergraduate programs in religious studies, which increasingly took on a global and comparative perspective. Smith retired in 1984 and died in his native Toronto 16 years later.

Global Religion

Smith's work has implications for thinking about religion globally in at least four ways. First, Smith is insistent throughout his work that religious life has fundamentally to do with *persons*. Religiousness is a quality or dimension of human life that is broadly, if not universally, attested by the historical record. In making this argument, Smith is harshly critical of the modern academy's obsession with methodology, which he sees as subordinating the complex particularity of human beings to the demands of theory and, in particular, to a preoccupation with objectivity. Such a preoccupation, for Smith, misses the deep interiority with which individuals actually live their lives, not in private, solipsistic subjectivity but in fluid, ever-evolving interaction with other human beings. It is this third possibility, this personal space, that is, for Smith, the ultimate subject of the scholar's inquiry. Access to it demands humility, imagination, reciprocity, a capacity for inference, and much hard intellectual work—the very same qualities that are essential to all kinds of authentic interpersonal communication. It is possible for a scholar eventually to discern patterns of religiousness cross-culturally, but those patterns must arise inductively from the historical data and should not be superimposed on it deductively from one's prior theory. Smith's early book—now available as *Patterns of Faith Around the World*—is an engaging model of this approach to the comparative study of religion.

Second, as noted above, Smith is keenly attuned to the dynamic, ever-unfolding nature of historical processes. He is foremost a historian, and his arguments are always made on the basis of meticulous analysis of textual material in a great range of

languages. His best known book—*The Meaning and End of Religion: A New Approach to the Religious Traditions of the World*—documents the changing meanings of the English word *religion* and its linguistic counterparts in other languages. Smith's astonishing discovery is that the notion of "religion" as something that human beings *have*, and in which they *believe*, is a relatively recent development of the modern West. The most distorting outcome of this development, he maintains, is that it reifies the historical dynamism of religious life into an abstract entity called "religion" (or "Christianity" or "Buddhism" or "Hinduism"). Smith's bold proposal is that the word *religion* simply be dropped from everyday use. In its stead, he suggests a pair of complementary concepts: "cumulative tradition," which refers to the inherited circumstances in which each individual finds himself or herself, and "faith," which is the inner orientation of the individual, the pattern that he or she experiences or discovers in his or her life, as informed by the cumulative tradition.

Third, just as the life of individuals and of cumulative traditions is dynamic, so too is the interaction between religious traditions. Smith's later work pays particular attention to the theological implications of his synoptic, organic view of world history, and *Towards a World Theology* may be seen as taking preliminary steps toward "a history of religion in the singular" (Smith, 1981, p. 20). While not denying episodes of interreligious conflict, Smith is particularly interested in those historical moments—in medieval Spain, in 16th-century North India, and in classical China—that have brought different cumulative traditions into intimate proximity to one another and have been the occasion for rich and creative interchange: They are harbingers of the ready interaction between traditions that characterizes the modern world. Careful attention to historical detail, Smith maintains, shows that cultures have been much less insular and much more creatively interactive than is commonly supposed. What binds human beings with their different cumulative traditions together is not some universal essence but participation in the shared, universal historical process.

Fourth, Smith contributes, particularly in his later writings, to ongoing discussions of secularism in two ways. The first is by conceiving of the classical

humanist tradition of Greece and Rome as one of the cumulative traditions of the world that have enabled human beings to live lives of personal fulfillment and faith, with intimations of transcendence. Smith suggests that this tradition is analogous to the more overtly religious traditions of the world and is what he calls a tradition of "positive secularism." There is also a second form of secularism, emerging in the modern West and subsequently spreading widely around the globe, to which Smith gives the name "negative secularism." It includes a presumption that religious life is an unnecessary by-product of cultural life and exhibits an intolerance of alternative views that, for Smith, makes it ill suited as the foundation for the necessarily pluralistic next chapter in global history. As Talal Asad demonstrates, these views remain provocative and fruitful.

Thomas B. Coburn

See also Christianity; Eliade, Mircea; Global Religion; Islam; Religious Dialogue; Secularism; Secularization; World Theology

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SOCIAL JUSTICE

Social justice designates the visions of—and the efforts to bring about—a just and equitable society.

Social justice movements have often been supported by religious groups and frequently have an emphasis on providing rights and resources to those subgroups that have been historically and systematically oppressed. While the term originally referred to the equal distribution of economic opportunities, social justice came to denote a wide range of political, legal, and cultural causes, including—but not limited to—rights to health care, housing, education, and legal representation. Poverty, racism, sexism, and other institutionalized inequalities are considered to be obstacles to achieving the egalitarian society envisioned by social justice advocates. Guided by the complementary principles of subsidiarity and solidarity, movements that advance social justice emphasize the inherent dignity of all human beings as well as the interconnectedness of various human rights struggles. Numerous religious groups, grassroots movements, and political associations invoke the term “social justice”; however, groups that see religious and state organizations as perpetuators of inequalities also use the term. While many social justice activists work for reform through established political channels, not all efforts toward social justice seek change through governmental reform.

History of Social Justice

Luigi Taparelli, a 19th century Italian Catholic priest and philosopher, first coined the term *social justice* in his book titled *Theoretical Treatise on Natural Law Based on Fact*. Expanding on the teachings of St. Thomas Aquinas, Taparelli espoused a natural law approach to political and economic systems as the ideal way to bring about social justice. The natural law of social organization is formed through the twin values of solidarity and subsidiarity, and the balance of these two principles results in a just society. According to Taparelli, such a just society is a reflection of eternal law, the divinely ordained law found not in scripture but in the workings of the universe. The natural law paradigm and social justice became a core component of Catholic social teaching. Those teachings were part of the inspiration for Liberation Theology, a movement started in Latin America in the 1950s and 1960s, which interpreted the Gospels as a call to liberate those suffering in unjust economic conditions.

In Protestant Christianity, social justice is understood to be the main impetus of the Social Gospel movement of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The leaders who initiated this movement believed that the Second Coming would only occur once the world was rid of social evils by human effort. Applying Christian ethics to the social problems of the time, the Social Gospel provided Christians with a religious rationale to enact social change, including labor reform, public health reform, and outreach to immigrants and the poor.

Concepts similar to social justice have been identified in the teachings and doctrines of non-Christian faiths. Islamic scholars, most notably Sayyid Qutb, have contended that social justice is one of the most important components of Islam, pointing to core teachings of Islam that promote equity among all members of society. *Zakaat*—alms giving—is one of the five pillars of Islam and instructs followers to give 2.5% their wealth to the poor and needy. Such a mandate is reminiscent of the principle of wealth redistribution advocated by many social justice activists. In addition to alms giving, Muslims are encouraged to please God through charity (*infaq*) and to give out of generosity (*sadaqah*)—actions that purify one’s self through helping others.

In Judaism, the goals of social justice are evident in the ethic of responsibility reflected by several concepts, most notably *tikkun olam* (“repairing the world”). Some interpret this particular form of responsibility as a call to create a model society for the welfare of all. Rabbi Michael Lerner articulates a twofold vision of the relationship between social justice and religion by stressing spiritual values (those values that challenge selfishness and materialism) and solidarity (the recognition that we are all harmed by the oppression of others).

Engaged Buddhism, a form of Buddhism that actively promotes social change, challenges the more traditional practice of introspective withdrawal and encourages engagement with social and political issues. Some Buddhist scholars note that this form of engaged Buddhism is evident in the efforts of Buddhist nuns throughout Asia working to end their second-class status by reforming the hierarchical structure of the Buddhist Sangha as well as in the phenomenon of numerous untouchables of India converting to Buddhism to end the misery caused by the caste system.

The late 20th-century philosopher John Rawls further developed the concept of social justice in his book *A Theory of Justice*. Unlike religious teachings, Rawls avoids appeals to divine and natural law and stresses a secular foundation for justice based on the principle of fairness. Recognizing that all societies are composed of formal and informal structures (social, economic, and political), Rawls proposes that the legitimacy of any collectively enforced social arrangement should be determined by those who are subject to it. With this in mind, Rawls contends that wealth is a collective legacy and should be distributed equally among all members of society.

Social Justice Policies

From the mid-20th century to the present, several international and regional conventions, declarations, and treaties have been designed to promote social justice. Signed into action in 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights stresses the human dignity and social protections. It makes strong accommodations and recommendations for workers rights, including protection from unemployment, safe work conditions, a living wage, health care, and “the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food.” In 1976, two equally important covenants were passed: the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Cultural and Social Rights. In addition to these major accords, several multilateral treaties of the past 30 years emphasize the rights of women, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Protocol in the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, the Declaration on the Protection of Women and Children in Emergency and Armed Conflict, and the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women. These pieces of legislation signify the universal concern for and commitment to social justice by a significant spectrum of members of the global community.

Criticisms of the Concept of Social Justice

Several philosophers and politicians have criticized the core assumptions of social justice. One of its

more prominent critics, Friedrich Hayek, questions the theoretical underpinnings of social justice in his book, *The Mirage of Social Justice*. His concerns are twofold. First, Hayek rejects the idealism of any “just society” founded by the imposition of authorities (governments) as compared with free individuals acting responsibly and justly (classic liberalism). A government that uses its power to enforce equalization removes the sense of solidarity and responsibility that citizens form with each other in the pursuit of their shared political interests. Hayek also points out the other side of this argument, contending that the more governments try to realize a desirable redistribution, the more they sink into a command economy and forms of despotism. For Hayek, both “equality of outcome” and “equality of opportunity” are practical impossibilities that can only come about through authoritarian dictates. The debates continue regarding the practicality and the possibilities of achieving social justice.

J. Cade Harris

See also Civil Society; Engaged Buddhist Groups; Equality; Ethics; Liberation Theology; Politics and Religion; Qutb, Sayyid; Racism

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SOKA GAKKAI

The Soka Gakkai is a lay Buddhist association that originally began as an educational movement in Japan in 1930. Its founder, Tsunesaburō Makiguchi (1871–1944), was inspired by the thought of Nichiren (1222–1282), a Japanese Buddhist monk. Nichiren’s brand of Buddhism has exerted a diverse array of influences on modern Japanese society, and according to some interpretations, this can be partly attributed to

Nichiren's nationalistic appeals. Under these influences there emerged a number of religious figures and movements in 20th-century Japan, the Soka Gakkai being the most distinct example. It grew into a gigantic and influential religious group after World War II. In 1961, the Soka Gakkai formed a political group that eventually became a political party, Komeito, in 1964. Komeito participated in the coalition government in 1993 to 1994. It reorganized as New Komeito in 1998, advocating both peace and humanitarian policies. Since 1999, New Komeito has formed a coalition government with the Liberal Democratic Party as the major partner. The Soka Gakkai organized its international network, Soka Gakkai International (SGI), in 1975 under the leadership of its third president, Daisaku Ikeda. Ikeda was born in Tokyo in 1928, and he joined in the Soka Gakkai in 1947. He served as the president from 1960 to 1979 during the period of its most rapid growth. He has also served as the president of the SGI since 1975 and as the honorary president of the Soka Gakkai since 1979.

The postwar recovery and development of Japan paved the way for the growth of the Soka Gakkai, which taught individuals to strive for "Human Revolution" through self-empowerment by encouraging them to believe in the positive power of the Lotus Sutra. Promoting a message that individual rejuvenation will inevitably lead to improvements in one's community, society, and the world, the Soka Gakkai has been actively engaged not only in individual empowerment but also in social activities, especially those related to the peace movement. Although it was formerly known for its aggressive proselytizing and harsh remonstrations of other religions, the Soka Gakkai now seems to adopt more moderate ways in its social outreach. In 2005, the Soka Gakkai counted more than 8 million families as its members in Japan. Ikeda has been very prolific in publications and active in the fields of education and culture. He has promoted dialogue with various world leaders, both religious and secular, and he has received numerous honorary titles from academic institutions worldwide. Now, the SGI extends to more than 190 countries and areas in the world, claiming 12 million members globally.

Interestingly, there has been more academic research conducted on the Soka Gakkai and the SGI outside Japan than within the country, and

there are several publications written by leading sociologists of religion such as Karel Dobbelaere and Bryan Wilson. In sharp contrast to other Japanese religions abroad that often draw mainly Japanese residents and immigrants, the Soka Gakkai has drawn significant numbers of non-Japanese converts around the globe, and therefore, it deserves special scholarly attention, as Machacek and Wilson argue.

Michiaki Okuyama

See also Japan; Japanese Religions in Latin America; New Religions; New Religions in Japan; Tokyo

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SOLAR TEMPLE ORDER

L'Ordre du Temple Solaire (OTS), "The Order of the Solar Temple," is a generic title for a small, primarily European religious movement that consisted of groups with various names all led, directly or indirectly, by Jo Di Mambro (1924–1994). The Francophone apocalyptic new religion was founded in 1984 by Di Mambro and Luc Jouret (1947–1994). Between 1994 and March 1997, members of this secretive neo-Templar, quasi-Catholic group died in a series of ritualized murder-suicides in Switzerland, Quebec, and France. At its zenith in 1989, it appears to have had 442 members: 187 in France, 90 in Switzerland, 86 in Canada, 53 in Martinique, 16

in the United States, and 10 in Spain. Notably, many members were wealthy and respected (e.g., Robert Ostiguy was Mayor of Richelieu; Robert Falardeau was an official in the Québec Ministry of Finance; and Guy Berenger was a French nuclear engineer).

Information about the OTS emerged in the early hours of October 5, 1994, when police were called to investigate a fire at a farmhouse in the village of Chierly in Switzerland. They discovered secret chambers and a makeshift temple within which there were 23 bodies, most of which were dressed in ceremonial robes, arranged in a circular formation, and had plastic bags placed over their heads, having first been shot in the head. Within hours of this grim discovery, an investigation into another conflagration at three holiday chalets in Les Granges sur Salvan revealed 25 bodies. The chalets belonged to Camille Pilet (a retired sales director of the Piaget watch company), Jouret, and Di Mambro. As news of these events was unfolding, police in Québec began to make connections with a similar tragedy in Canada on the morning of October 4. A fire had destroyed a condominium complex owned by Pilet, Jouret, Di Mambro, and another OTS member, Dominique Bellaton. Police found the bodies of four adults and a baby. Of the 53 who died, it was clear that some had been murdered. In 1995, the bodies of 16 members were found in France, and in March 1997, 5 more were discovered near Québec.

Di Mambro, a former member of the Ancient and Mystical Order Rosae Crucis, was a key figure in the Templar resurgence in France in 1952. He was introduced to Jouret, a charismatic physician and homeopath, in the early 1980s. Between its founding in 1984 and the beginning of its demise in 1990, there were three distinct areas of OTS-related activity. First, as *Amanta*, Jouret and others lectured and provided workshops. Second, those who expressed interest could attend the *Archedia Clubs* for further teaching. Finally, the *International Chivalric Organization of the Solar Tradition* was an advanced initiatory order.

OTS rituals mixed guided meditation, prayer, and the recitation of esoteric texts, such as Alice Bailey's *Great Invocation*, and biblical texts. OTS teaching included an apocalyptic focus on environmental catastrophe, extraterrestrial elements, Rosicrucian ideas, soul travel, and reincarnation.

Problems began to emerge in the early 1990s. The commitment and financial support of some members waned. More damaging still, Di Mambro, who had produced supposedly occult phenomena during the ceremonies, was publicly questioned by his own son regarding his teachings and exposed as a fraud. This led to the departure of a number of members. These challenges appear to have led to an apocalyptic focus on "transit" (i.e., soul travel) to Sirius where the faithful would assume glorious "solar bodies." This transit required bodily death.

The movement has ceased to exist, but there are former members who still defend Di Mambro and the OTS.

Christopher Partridge

See also Apocalypticism; France; New Age Movements; New Religions; Violence

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SOLOMON ISLANDS

The Solomon Islands constitute an independent country in the South Pacific north of Australia and east of Papua New Guinea. Most of the indigenous Melanesian people living there profess Anglican or Roman Catholic Christianity. Spanish explorers were the first Europeans to set foot on the Solomon Islands. In November 1567, Alavaro de Mendaña departed from Callao, Peru, to search for the storied land of Solomon's gold. What Mendaña found instead were countless islands throughout the South Pacific. He landed on a cluster of islands in February of 1568, naming them Las Islas de Solomon, and taking formal possession of the archipelago in the name of Spain. The Spanish theologian José de Acosta commented on the inhabitants of the Solomon Islands in his 1588 missionary manual titled *De Procuranda Indorum Salute*. Although the comment was brief, Acosta hinted that the conversion of the indigenous peoples of the islands would occur quickly given their

inherent docility. Acosta essentially believed that the indigenous people of the Solomon Islands had no religion that would act as a hindrance to the establishment of Catholicism.

Mendaña attempted to establish a colony in 1595 to 1596. It quickly collapsed. The Spaniards discovered that the natives practiced head hunting, cannibalism, and ritual warfare. The people of the Solomon Islands practiced ancestor worship, believed in numerous deities, and maintained small statues depicting deceased loved ones, deities, and protector spirits. There was another attempt at colonization in the early 1600s, but it failed as well. There were no large-scale missionary attempts to convert the indigenous populations to Catholicism. The Catholic priests who arrived with the colony were tasked with serving Spanish colonists. In contrast to what Acosta believed, the indigenous people of the Solomon Islands were not docile. The natives eventually repelled the invaders from their islands.

During the period of Spain's domination of the Pacific, there was talk of colonizing the Solomon Islands and systematically converting the indigenous population. However, the lack of funds, constant warfare in Europe, and a scarcity of missionary personnel limited Spanish goals in the region. The Solomon Islands would not be desired by another European kingdom until 1767. After the decline of Spanish power in the Pacific in the 19th century, British Protestant missionaries became the dominant religious forces.

The British took official possession of the islands in the 1890s, though Germany would lay claim to some. Western missionaries, most of whom belonged to the Anglican and Catholic churches, converted most of the indigenous population to Christianity. This was interrupted, however, during the Japanese occupation in World War II. The Japanese Catholic Church made no attempts to evangelize the Solomon Islands. In 1978, the Solomon Islands gained independence. Today, more than 90% of the population are Christian: Anglican, Catholic, Evangelical, and Methodist.

Robert L. Green Jr.

See also Anglicans; Australia; Guam; Indigenous Religions; Pacific Islands/Oceania; Papua New Guinea; Roman Catholicism

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SOMALIA

Somalia is a troubled Muslim nation on the Horn of Africa on the coasts of the Indian Ocean and Gulf of Aden, east of Ethiopia and Kenya, threatened by quarreling Islamist movements. The overthrow of Somalia's President Siad Barre in 1991 following power struggles among clans resulted in the disintegration of central authority, and Somalia ceased to be a political national entity. Following the ousting of Barre, the region plunged into civil war with various clans jostling for power. This state of war has been exacerbated by the conflict between traditional religious groups and the more recent politicized movements for control over the future destiny of Somalia. In the ensuing mayhem, the Republic of Somaliland, Puntland, and Jubaland set themselves up as autonomous governments.

The transitional government that was set up in 2000 failed to establish order. In 2004, warlords reached a power-sharing agreement that called for a 275-member parliament and restoration of order by African peacekeepers. In 2006, fighting broke out between the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and the Islamic Courts Union (ICU).

The ICU (established in 2000) managed to bring a semblance of order in areas under its control. Subsequently, the TFG and the Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counter-Terrorism (which includes government ministers and warlords), with the assistance of Ethiopian troops, ousted the ICU, which then began to engage in a guerilla war against the government.

In the meanwhile, *Al-Shabab* (founded in 2004 and suspected of links with al Qaeda), soon grew popular and went to war with the TFG; the latter remained under the protection of AMISOM (African Union Mission in Somalia), which was deployed in 2007 by the African Union. Both the TFG and its opposition claimed strong adherence to Islam and a readiness to apply Shari'a law. However, they were

not agreed on what constitutes an Islamic state, thereby adding to the conflict and tension. The majority of nations in the international community have thrown its weight behind the TFG, which is being portrayed as consisting of Islamic moderates, led by Sheikh Sharif who rejects violence as a political weapon and urges political dialogue. Scheduled national elections in 2012, however, provided another occasion for unrest.

Somalis can be classified into traditionalists, reformists, and Salafis. They have traditionally adhered to the Ash'ariyah theology, Shafi'i jurisprudence, and Sufism. This tradition of the Ahl Al-Sunna wa Al-Jama is now being challenged by Salafi-inspired groups, including Al-Itisam, Al-Shabab, and Hizb Al-Islam as well as the reformists (Islah). The Salafis condemn many traditional Muslim practices as innovations (*bid'ah*). They also consider Sufism to be a heresy. Salafi influence entered Somalia through students who studied in Saudi Arabia and migrant laborers.

The Islah movement, being tolerant of theological differences, disapproves of preoccupation with fine distinctions in doctrine. It accommodates Sufism and other traditional practices found in Somalia and focuses on social and political issues. Its adherence to principles of peaceful reform and promotion of reconciliation since the collapse of the state is attractive to Somalis. Its main aim is to create an environment of cooperation between various Islamic groups and organizations that will facilitate the Islamization of the society and the state.

Suleman Dangor

See also Africa; al Qaeda; Ethiopia; Islam; Islamism (Political Islam); Politics and Religion; Religion and State; Somaliland; Sufism; Violence

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SOMALILAND

The Republic of Somaliland is an unrecognized de facto state on the Horn of Africa on the coast of

the Gulf of Aden adjacent to Somalia and Ethiopia. Somaliland declared independence from Somalia on May 18, 1991, following the outbreak of the Somali civil war but is internationally considered to be an autonomous region of Somalia and is not diplomatically recognized by any foreign state. The society of Somaliland is clan based, and clan structure has a powerful effect on politics and social interaction. The population of Somaliland is almost exclusively Muslim, primarily Sunnī and Sufi, and Islam is the official state religion. Islam is an important element of Somalilander identity, and there is a high rate of adherence to the religion. Somaliland, like Somalia itself, has significant historical connections with the Arabian Peninsula, and Islam spread to the region relatively early in its history.

Excellent preserved Neolithic cave paintings in the Laas Geel cave complex in Somaliland represent the first evidence for human inhabitation and religious belief in the region. Islam came to Somaliland in the 7th century and became entrenched during the 11th and 12th centuries. Somali society was traditionally decentralized, nomadic, and pastoral for much of its history. The Ottoman Empire annexed coastal portions of Somaliland in the 16th century as it provided a strategic location on the Gulf of Aden. In 1888, Britain took control of the region and instituted the British protectorate of Somaliland, ruled from British India, and this territory forms Somaliland today. In 1899, a resistance movement led by Sayyid Mohammed Abdullah Hassan challenged British control of the region. Hassan, the religious leader of the Dervish state, known colloquially as "The Mad Mullah," waged a bloody struggle against the British for more than 20 years before succumbing to superior British military technology and force. On June 26, 1960, Somaliland gained independence from the British and remained independent for 5 days before joining with Italian Somaliland to form the Republic of Somalia.

In the late 1980s, Siad Barre, president of Somalia, who had seized power during a military coup d'état in 1969, used military forces to attack clan enemies who opposed his rule. This use of force sparked an ongoing civil war, leading to the deposition of Barre in 1991 and the collapse of the Somali government. Somaliland declared its independence in an effort to avoid the intensifying violence in the rest of Somalia. Somaliland was then able to create a stable democratic government

with a functioning judicial system, which has decreased the necessity of Shari'a courts. Somaliland resisted politicized Islam, and unlike in Somalia proper, Wahhabism has had little effect on Somaliland, although there is some evidence that both trends are growing in the region.

Gregory J. Goalwin

See also Africa; Islam; Islamism (Political Islam); Somalia; Sunnī Islam; Wahhabis

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SOROUSH, ABDULKARIM (B. 1945)

Considered by some as Islam's Luther, the Shi'a theologian Abdulkarim Soroush has played a central role in the religious intellectual movement in Iran. Soroush is an important figure among a new wave of modern Islamic scholars who argue that the global message of the religion should be distinguished from its local elements. Although the essence of the Islamic message is global and timeless, Soroush argues that it has taken a local shape due to various human factors, including history, culture, and language. Soroush's project is to demonstrate the role of natural, cultural, and historical elements in the religion without reducing it to a wholly natural phenomenon. In his various writings, Soroush argues that three major components of Islam—namely, the Prophet's religious experience (or the *wahy*), the Qur'an, and the believer's understanding of Islam—are affected by natural and historical elements.

Religious Experience

Soroush believes that the religious experience, in general, and the Prophet's religious experience or

wahy (i.e., revelation), in particular, lie at the heart of the religion. In his book *The Expansion of Prophetic Experience*, he argues that the Prophet's religious experience is affected by his character and life at several different levels. For example, the duration of the Prophet's experiences, and thus the length of verses revealed to him, depends on the spiritual capacity of the Prophet. Verses revealed to the Prophet at the beginning of his prophecy, when he was not familiar enough with, and was even scared by, the *wahy*, are shorter than the verses revealed later. The content of the prophetic experience, Soroush argues, is also influenced by the character of the Prophet. Moreover, the content of *wahy* changes in accordance with the events of the life of the Prophet.

The Qur'an

The theory of "essential and accidental in the religion" is developed by Soroush to demonstrate the human side of the Qur'an, which is the verbalized form of the Prophet's experience. According to Soroush, the Qur'anic message consists in essential and accidental parts. While the essential part of the Qur'an is the essence of the Qur'anic message, the accidental part is not essential to its message. The accidental part could have been otherwise without affecting the real message of the Qur'an. For example, it is not essential to the Qur'anic message that the language is Arabic. The Qur'an would be in another language were the Prophet not Arab. Not only is the language of the Qur'an Arabic, but also the culture of the Qur'an is Arabic, and so the culture of the Qur'an is accidental to the Qur'anic message.

Religious Understanding

In his book *The Theoretical Contraction and Expansion of Shari'a*, Soroush makes a distinction between the religion of Islam itself and our understanding thereof. While the religion is complete, consistent, and timeless, our understanding of the religion is incomplete, historical, and sometimes inconsistent. All we have access to, according to Soroush, is our understanding of the religion, which is human and subject to errors.

Recognizing the local and historical elements in Islam, Soroush seeks to show that the global

message of the religion is consistent with human rights and our modern global values.

Maryam Alaeddini

See also Iran; Islam; Islamism (Political Islam); Liberal Islam; Politics and Religion; Religion and State

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SOUTH AFRICA

Predominantly Christian, the nation of South Africa at the southern tip of the African continent illustrates the extent to which religion can both articulate and oppose the political agenda of a country. Approximately 80% of the population identify with the Christian faith, with 1% reporting as Hindu, another 1% Muslim, and 1% as practitioners of indigenous religion, the last number rising quickly in the first years of the 21st century. Also, 8% of the populace recognize no religious doctrine at all, but the history of South Africa shows how even citizens not directly involved in religion can be strongly affected by it. African Independent Churches claim the largest body of Christian worshippers, with the Calvinist Dutch Reformed Church following. Due to its past of racial segregation, the Calvinist Dutch Reformed Church is predominantly Caucasian in its composition, though some Black Afrikaners also attend its services. The African Independent Churches, syncretic institutions blending Christianity with traditional African religion, include the Zion Christian Church, to which 11% of the overall population belong, and the Apostolic Church, which accounts for an additional 10%. Pentecostal churches also have large Black congregations, as does the Anglican Church, led during the end of the 20th century by Nobel Peace Prize winner Archbishop Desmond Tutu. South Africa

remains deeply religious in spite of the socialist roots of its ruling party, the African National Congress.

The earliest religion practiced in what would become South Africa was that of the Khoisan people, an ethnic group that joins the San and Khoi societies and is distinct from the majority Bantu-speaking group of the region. Khoisan religion is heavily dualistic, recognizing a supremely good opposed to an evil god responsible for the pain and suffering in the world. No canon of practices existed, and while some Khoisans looked to appease the supreme god with small sacrifices, others thought that any attempt to communicate with such a being was offensive. Ancestral heroes also provided a locus of worship, and provided examples of how to behave in times of conflict. Khoisan practices are still evident in South Africa, especially their healing dances, which are still performed in some communities.

Bantu-speaking people, by far the majority ethnic group in the southern half of the African continent, arrived in the area during the first millennium CE. The group included ancestors of Zulu, Xhosa, Swazi, and Tsonga South Africans, and their arrival brought a change in religious practices. Ancestors were likewise important to the Bantu-speaking clans, and these ancestors were specific to the communities that respected them. The male head of the household was also the ritual leader of the clan—a practice that has antecedents in the Egyptian culture on the same continent.

The first European contact came with the Portuguese navigator Bartholomeu Dias, who sailed around the Cape of Good Hope in 1488. He would erect a cross there upon his passing, foreshadowing the role Christianity would play in the country's history. Judaism was introduced to the area at the same time, as Dias employed Jewish astronomers and cartographers during his journey: Vasco de Gama, who would travel the route in 1497, did likewise. Jewish people did not begin arriving in the area in significant numbers until the 1820s, however.

The first Christian institution in South Africa was that of the Dutch Reformed Church, established in 1652 on the Cape of Good Hope. It arrived with the Dutch East India Company and would soon displace the traditional spiritualities of

Khoisan and Bantu peoples. The church would play a role in the subjection of the native people, which would resonate throughout the apartheid era. The question of racial segregation began early, with the conversion of Black Africans and those of mixed race to Christianity. Slavery was rampant in the country, and although the Calvinist synod had decreed in 1618 that any slave baptized to Christianity should be freed, those inhabitants of Cape Town who relied on slave labor for farm work refused. To bypass the decree and yet remain in good standing with the church, leaders banned religious education for slaves, so none could be baptized, and therefore none could be freed.

While religious education was not allowed for slaves, missionaries worked in the countryside on the indigenous African people. The London Missionary Society, along with a good deal of British citizens, arrived in the country at the end of the 18th century, and they were soon followed by many other groups looking to Christianize the Africans. During the next century, the results of such activity would be mixed, but the missionaries would play a role in many political situations. Sotho King Moshoeshe I attempted to use the teachings of the missionaries to solidify his own rule, claiming the training they attempted validated the rules of behavior he had long promoted. Xhosa chief Ngqika rewarded local missionaries when their prayers seemed to bring rain, much to the dismay of the missionaries. They were also in a symbiotic relationship with the colonial administration, seeking government intervention at times when a local chief's power was frustrating their attempts at catechism and in return attempting to convince indigenous Africans of the validity of European customs. This extended even into architecture; along streets in so-called native locations, missionaries erected simple, square European style houses for those Black Africans who converted.

These changes to African culture did not go unchallenged, however. One of the largest uprisings in the face of Christian inroads came from the Xhosa tribe, who were enraged when their traditional practices were outlawed by the British in the 1830s. By 1850, the situation had become unbearable, and a leading healer and diviner named Mlangeni organized a resistance army. A frontier war ensued, which ended with British victory 3 years later. Sadly, the relations would cause

more harm through a Xhosa advisor Mhlakaza, who prophesized that deliverance from British rule would come if the Xhosa slaughtered their cattle and destroyed their food stocks. He convinced many, and during 1856, they enacted the prophecy, resulting in more than 40,000 dying from starvation and the loss of many others who sought work in the colonial labor market.

By the 20th century, British forces had taken over the region of South Africa, motivated in part by the discovery of gold and diamond reserves. Until this time, racial segregation had been largely informal, though some legislation of a racist nature had been put in place. In 1948, the National Party was elected to power (though voting rights were not universal), and thereupon began the systematization of racist legislation, including the classification of the populace according to race. This began what has been known as the apartheid (from the White Afrikaans word for *apartness*) era. The Dutch Reformed Church became the official religion of the country, and the church's views on racial separation were accepted due in part to White Afrikaners' fears for the survival of their community. The Christian communities of the nation would diverge into those that supported apartheid and those that did not. The Christian League of South Africa would join the Dutch Reformed Church in their apartheid support, while Methodist churches composed of mainly Black Africans openly opposed the system. The Anglican Church of the Province of South Africa likewise spoke out against apartheid in its early years, but was restricted by the feeling among parishioners that the church should not engage in politics. That was not the prevailing view of pro-apartheid churches, who continued to blend church doctrine with the political and social issues of the time.

The Anglican Church would later take the lead in the fight against apartheid under the direction of Archbishop Desmond Tutu. During the 1980s, Tutu led the South African Council of Churches, the most active antiapartheid institution, and would use the networks available to coordinate church opposition while minimizing the exposure of particular religious leaders and parishioners. Tutu's leadership saw the growing of antiapartheid sentiments and protests in the United States and Europe, and pressure was growing on the South African government to release the popular Nelson

Mandela, a long-standing critic of apartheid, from his long prison sentence. Apartheid finally came to an end in a series of negotiations from 1990 to 1993, under then president, F. W. de Klerk, and the first universal elections in 1994 were claimed by the African National Congress with Nelson Mandela—joint winner of the 1993 Nobel Peace Prize along with de Klerk—winning the presidency.

In the 21st century, Christianity is still promoted by the government, and though no state religion exists, churches of various denominations play a role in the politics of the nation. Racial relations have taken giant strides following the end of apartheid, though occasional tensions continue to besiege the nation. While the missionary and colonial heritage continues to determine the religious nature of South Africa, the African Independent Churches, which blend traditional African beliefs with Christian devotion are the fastest growing churches in the country.

John Soboslai

See also Africa; Christianity; Churches; Indigenous Religions; Missions and Missionaries; Postcolonialism; Racism; Social Justice; Syncretism; Tutu, Bishop Desmond

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SOUTH ASIA

South Asia refers to the geographical region comprising the South Asian subcontinent, roughly corresponding to the modern states of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, and Sri Lanka. Demarcated in the north by the Himalayan and Kunlun mountain ranges and in the south by the Indian Ocean, this area is one of the most religiously diverse in the world. It has given rise to two global religions—Hinduism and Buddhism—both of which have spread outside South Asia and exerted tremendous influence on other cultural regions. Three other transnational religions—Christianity, Judaism, and Islam—were introduced to South Asia from outside, developing distinct regional characteristics through their interaction with indigenous cultures. Finally, smaller-scale traditions such as Jainism, Sikhism, and Zoroastrianism have also contributed to the unique diversity of this region. The openness to the sea in three directions as well as contact with trans-Asian trade routes such as the Silk Road in the northeast has ensured the movement of traders, migrants, pilgrims, and missionaries over millennia, making South Asia a virtual crossroads of cultures and religions. This entry will discuss Brahmanical, Buddhist, and Jain traditions; early exchanges with other cultures; classical Hinduism; the spread of Buddhism across Asia; the consolidation of Islam in the subcontinent; religions in interaction in early medieval and medieval South Asia; Judaism and Christianity in South Asia; the colonial period; the Hindu diaspora; and religion in postpartition South Asia.

Beginnings: Brahmanical, Buddhist, and Jain Traditions

Historically speaking, even the diverse traditions that came to be called *Hinduism* emerged out of a fusion of cultures: the Indo-European-speaking Aryans, on the one hand, and Dravidian and tribal peoples, on the other. While the origin of the Aryan people remains a contested issue, we know that by 1000 BCE, they had settled in the Ganges region, practicing a religion centered around ritual and the sacred Sanskrit texts that govern these rituals—the Vedas. Indeed, most of what we know about the culture of this period comes from the Vedas, precluding a wider view that would include the Dravidian and tribal communities. Vedic religion was decidedly polytheistic: The Vedas glorify gods and goddesses, among whom Agni, Soma, and Indra ranked as the most important. The task of preserving both the ritual and the Vedas was assigned to a priestly class, the Brahmanas. As their roles became increasingly specialized and the sacrificial system itself more elaborate, Vedic religion evolved into what is called Brahmanical religion.

The late Vedic or early Brahmanical period, around 600 to 400 BCE, was marked by transitions and developments that were foundational for later forms of religion in South Asia. This period saw the development of a later class of Vedic texts, the Upanishads, that reflect a process of interiorization and ethicization of ritual. *Karma*, earlier denoting ritual acts, was redefined as the logic of cause and effect inherent in any action, which binds one to the never-ending cycle of death and rebirth (*samsara*).

These terms, and the central problematic of liberation from karma and *samsara*, were shared and to some degree alternately defined by various non-Vedic *śramana* (“mendicant”) movements that emerged in the same period. Many of them challenged the ultimate authority of the Vedas and hence were labeled by the Brahmanas “heterodox” or “unbelievers” (*nāstika*). Among these wandering mendicants were two teachers whom the world would come to know as Mahavira and the Buddha, the “founders” of Jainism and Buddhism, respectively. While the exact dates of the Buddha’s birth and death are still debated, it is accepted that he lived sometime around the fifth century BCE. Mahavira was slightly senior to him and is understood by the later Jain tradition to be the 24th and

last in a long succession of teachers or “ford-makers” (*tīrthaṅkara*). Both Mahavira and the Buddha spent their lives wandering and teaching around the Middle Gangetic region, attracting disciples who ordained under them as monks and nuns.

The self-definitions of these traditions—Buddhism, Jainism, and the Brahmanical tradition—were forged through the process of their constant interaction with each other over the centuries that followed. The main topic of doctrinal contention was the nature of karma and the method of finding release from *samsara*. The Vedic tradition held that performing the correct rites would ensure rebirth in the world of the gods after death. The more contemplative and ascetic strains belonging to the fold of the Hindu tradition, reflected in the Upanishads, redefined the soteriological goal as a total release (*moksha*) from the cycle of rebirth, attained through knowledge about the true nature of the self. The Buddhists, in turn, rejected the idea of such an essential core to a person, arguing instead that release from *samsara* required the eradication of desire, the root cause of all suffering. The Jains maintained that all activity, particularly all forms of violence, affects the soul by generating karmic effects, and liberation is hence predicated on an ascetic life of tremendous restraint, aimed at eradicating existing karma and minimizing the accumulation of new karma.

Buddhist monks and nuns originally lived peripatetic lives but later settled in fixed residences sponsored by lay followers; the Jain mendicants retained more peripatetic lifestyles. After the Buddha’s passing, his disciples gathered to recite his teachings and fix them into a canon consisting of “three baskets” (*tipiṭaka/tripiṭaka*) of discourses, discipline, and doctrine. The community soon split into different schools (*nikāya*). Jainism’s split into two main sects, the Śvetāmbaras and the Digambaras, appears to have occurred later, as did the formation of their “canon.”

An important transition in Indian Buddhism occurred with Mahayana, or the “Great Vehicle.” Very little can be said with certainty about its nature and origin: While it was long believed that Mahayana was essentially lay oriented, scholars have recently postulated that it may have been, to the contrary, quite conservative in character, criticizing laxity in monastic practice. Texts called Mahayana Sutras were being composed in India in

the first centuries of the Common Era, but the term *Mahayana* was not necessarily adopted as a self-conscious designation of a religious movement or cult practice until the fifth century. Mahayana was characterized by a shift in attitude regarding the Buddhist soteriological goal, as demonstrated by the concept of *bodhisattvas*—persons who take a vow to emulate the Buddha’s path and commit themselves to cultivating the *pāramitās* (perfections), postponing their own full enlightenment while working toward the benefit of all.

Early Exchanges With Other Cultures

With the discovery of trade winds in the first century CE, maritime contact between the Indian subcontinent and the Mediterranean region increased. Greek and Roman coins from this period have been found in South Indian ports. In the northwest, South Asians came into contact with Persians and—in the wake of the conquests of Alexander the Great—Bactrian Greeks. Cross-cultural influences traveled to both directions along the Silk Road and other caravan routes. They left their marks on art, such as early Indian images of the Buddha that show considerable Greek influence; on shared narrative themes; and on commonalities between figures and their epithets, such as the Buddhist Maitreya and the Zoroastrian cult figure Mithra. This meeting ground of cultures enabled encounters between practitioners of different religions. A famous Buddhist text, the *Milindapañha*, depicts one such early—though probably fictional—encounter, a Platonic dialogue between a Greek general, Menander, and a Buddhist monk Nāgasena. At least from the fourth century CE onward, we also have records of Chinese pilgrims traveling to India in search of Buddhist learning and manuscripts.

Both Buddhism and Hinduism also exerted extensive cultural influence on Southeast Asia. Migration from India to Southeast Asia, along both sea and land routes, may have begun even before the beginning of the Common Era. By the fifth century CE, we find Sanskrit inscriptions in many kingdoms of Southeast Asia. Sanskrit names of places and rulers also attest to the significance of Sanskrit as the medium that enabled transregional communication among the elite during this period, much like Latin did in Europe. The

presence of Hindu traditions in Southeast Asia—particularly in Cambodia and Indonesia—is evident in temple architecture, rituals, and the popularity of narratives such as the Hindu epics the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, which continue to be performed. The significant presence of Hindu traditions tapered out around the 15th century, while Buddhism has retained its position as the predominant religion in mainland Southeast Asia.

Classical Hinduism

It is impossible to isolate the various components—Dravidian, Aryan, Brahmanical, and tribal—that collectively shaped what we now call Hinduism. There is no “original” Hinduism independent of the constant process of adjusting and reformulating beliefs and practices in response to changing historical circumstances. The millennium or so between the development of the Upanishads and the end of the Gupta period (ca. 500 BCE to 500 CE) was particularly formative, witnessing a consolidation of the Hindu tradition. It was during this period that an extensive literature on *Dharma*, understood as “law” or “duty,” began to be produced. It articulated, among other precepts, the important socioreligious model of *varṇāśramadharma*, the law of castes and stages of life. This schematic ideal divided society into four hierarchically ordered castes and laid out the life stages through which an ideal male householder was expected to pass.

This period also saw the emergence of new urban centers, an increase in the importance of kingship, and along with them, an urban ethic and aesthetic that highly valued patronage of the arts. As the Hindu tradition assimilated local deities and cults, it developed more theistic emphases. Some minor divinities, such as lineage deities and village deities, that had previously had only local influence or had been mentioned as minor deities in the Vedas were now incorporated into the Pan-Hindu pantheon. Representations of Vishnu/Krishna, for example, developed over time as an amalgamation of various elements and local cult figures. The rising popularity of these high gods coincided with the rise of *bhakti*, or “theologies of devotion,” that found expression in ritual worship, song, or one’s daily actions. It is hard to exaggerate the significance of *bhakti* in constituting later forms of mainstream

Hinduism. An entire *bhakti* literature exploded around the middle of the first millennium CE, first in Tamil and later in other regional languages. A related historical development was the emergence of temples as centers of cultic and social life around the same time. Later, in the medieval period, we begin to see Hindu sectarian traditions proliferating, as regional and vernacular identities were strengthened and indigenous forms of religious practice appropriated.

Buddhism Spreads Across Asia

According to tradition, the earliest Buddhist “missionaries” were sent by the Buddha himself during his lifetime. However, it was not until the reign of the Maurya emperor Asoka (r. 268–233 BCE) that the spread of Buddhism began on a global scale. According to Sri Lankan chronicles, Buddhist preachers were sent throughout Asoka’s wide empire as well as to nine neighboring countries, including Sri Lanka itself. From the northwest, Buddhism spread to the lower Indus Valley, Gandhāra, and Afghanistan. The prosperous Kuṣāṇa empire facilitated the diffusion of Buddhist communities and texts: Kuṣāṇa rulers were generally favorable toward Buddhism, and their unified domain—extending from Bactria to Bengal—enabled the exchange of material goods and ideas among Indian, Hellenistic, Iranian, and Central Asian cultures. This vibrant context enabled the transmission of Buddhism to Central Asia and onward to China.

In the south, the ports of South India and Sri Lanka became points of departure for journeys that took Buddhist monks, nuns, and texts to Southeast Asia, Indonesia, and China. In Sri Lanka and the Himalayan regions, where Buddhism continued to be practiced after it disappeared from India, the continuous interaction with Hindu traditions over centuries has fostered unique religious cultures, with a great deal of overlap between the symbols and the practices of the two.

The Consolidation of Islam in the Subcontinent

Historical evidence suggests that the emergence of Muslim communities in South Asia was a gradual process. Arab Muslim traders settled along the

west and south coasts of the subcontinent as early as the eighth century. The first Muslims to enter from the northwest, on the other hand, were tribes of Persianized Central Asian Turks in the 10th century, interested primarily in acquiring loot. While the nature of these first incursions was ethnic and political rather than religious, in an effort to uproot image worship, the settlers did demolish many Hindu and Jain temples and important Buddhist centers of monastic learning such as Nālanda. However, in most areas, Buddhists, Jains, and Hindus were granted protected subject status as *dhimmis*, non-Muslims who would be taxed but not persecuted.

In the centuries that followed, some Central Asian dynasties established sultanates and empires in the subcontinent. The most powerful among them were the Mughals, who consolidated their control over much of northern India in the 16th century. In the wake of political conquests, Iranian and Central Asian immigrants belonging to various classes followed—administrators, judges, poets, artists, and religious scholars (ulema). However, these immigrants and their descendants constituted only a small percentage of the South Asian Muslim population; the majority were of indigenous origin.

Sufism played a major role in the Islamization of South Asia. Various Sufi orders began to arrive in South Asia from the 13th century onward. Their members, particularly the charismatic *pīrs*, folk singers, and poets, introduced Islamic ideas and practices to the local populations in accessible ways. Indeed, it was likely *folk* Sufism, as opposed to elite or learned Sufism, that was most crucial in spreading Islam on local levels. Devotion to the *shaykhs* and *pīrs* and seeking blessings at their tomb shrines (*dargāh*) has been and remains a widespread practice all over South Asia and is by no means limited to the Muslim population.

Religions in Interaction in Early Medieval and Medieval South Asia

The historical relationships among various South Asian religious communities have often been portrayed in predominantly confrontational terms. There certainly were antagonisms: Defensive reactions against Muslims on the part of Hindus, for example, occurred among the Rajputs of Rajasthan

and the Marathas of Maharashtra. Yet alongside political conflict, competition over patronage, and sometimes fierce philosophical polemic, there were ongoing processes of dialogue, accommodation, and integration that were perhaps more formative. The meeting of Sanskrit and Perso-Arabic traditions led to great developments in science and medicine and the creation of new forms of music, dance, and architecture. The Mughals were active in sponsoring translations from Sanskrit into Persian; in fact, it was in their Persian form that many Sanskrit classics first became accessible to Europeans. We have already mentioned the popularity of the cult of the Muslim saints among both Hindus and Muslims. Two examples illustrate particularly well the significance of such cross-fertilization: the Pan-Indic religious system known as *Tantra* and the reciprocal relationship between Hindu *bhakti* and Sufi devotion.

With Tantra, we see for the first time textual evidence of a current that had been practiced for centuries outside the orthodox mainstream before the early medieval period. It had its roots in folk traditions and developed Hindu as well as Buddhist and Jain forms. Tantric practices were usually aimed at obtaining special magical powers. Characteristic elements of Tantra include the use of special incantations (*mantra*) and geometric designs (*yantra* or *mandala*), a yogic physiology of *chakras* and channels, the centrality of the goddess cult in worship, and the esoteric nature of the teachings, received from a guru only after initiation. “Left-handed” Tantric worship involves the ritual ingestion of illicit substances such as meat and intoxicants and engaging in sexual intercourse. Tantra is an excellent example of rituals transcending religious boundaries: Medieval Tantric texts attest to rituals and mantras being shared by Buddhists and Jains, and Buddhists and Shaivas.

The common ground between the *bhakti* movement, with its fervent expressions of devotion for God, and Sufism, with its focus on loving and surrendering to God, created a basis for a rapprochement between Hindu and Islamic practices. In their verses, poets such as Kabir (ca. 1440–1518) and Nanak (1469–1539) called for total inward surrender to God instead of excessive focus on outward rites and exclusive labels. Kabir’s songs combined aspects of Vaishnava devotion, *hatha*

yoga, and Sufism with a monistic vision. His message was simple: Whether a practice is Muslim or Hindu does not matter as long as it brings one closer to God.

These examples of continuity and exchange problematize the unreflective use of categories such as *Hindu*, *Muslim*, *Buddhist*, or *Jain* in the premodern era. On the one hand, as we have seen, the boundaries between religious traditions in South Asia have tended to be unfixed and porous. Historically speaking, hyphenated, hybrid identities have been the norm rather than the exception. On the other hand, each of these religious traditions is itself internally diverse; one’s sectarian identity as a Tamil Vaishnava or a Kashmir Shaiva, or a Tapā Gaccha Śvetāmbara Jain, or a Puṣṭimārga Vaiṣṇava might well outweigh labels such as *Hindu* or *Jain*. In addition to sectarian affiliation, ethnic, and linguistic identity, class, caste, or socioeconomic status have often proved to be more important as markers of identity than religious affiliation.

Judaism and Christianity in South Asia

The Jewish diaspora in South Asia has historically comprised three different groups of migrating Jews. The earliest, the so-called Cochin Jews, settled near present-day Cochin, Kerala, possibly as early as the first century of the Common Era. They came to speak a dialect of Malayālam but used Hebrew in their religious ceremonies. They observed dietary laws, the Sabbath, and religious festivals but also adopted local customs in their dress and marriage celebrations. The Bene Israel Jews, further north on the same coast, originated in Persia, the Middle East, and the Iberian Peninsula. They were more assimilated than the Cochin Jews: For example, they used no Hebrew religious texts. The last significant migration, in the 18th century, brought the Baghdadi Jews, who were primarily merchants and bankers, and they settled in Bombay (now Mumbai) and Calcutta (now Kolkata).

In general, local attitudes to these Jewish communities were tolerant, although some South Indian Jews were viewed as “low caste” due to their profession as oil pressers. In fact, the worst persecution of Jews in South Asia was carried out by Europeans during the colonial struggles between the Portuguese and the Dutch. The Jewish population of Kerala

declined over time, in part due to conversion. Since the mid-20th century, the majority of South Asian Jews have emigrated, primarily to Israel.

The earliest known Christian community in South Asia was the Syrian Christians or Thomas Christians of southwest India, in what is now the state of Kerala. They attribute their origin to the missionary efforts of Saint Thomas who, according to tradition, arrived on the Malabar Coast in 52 CE. While the historicity of this account cannot be verified, the Christian presence in the region is certainly early, as attested by mid-fourth-century CE copper-plate inscriptions documenting grants of land and other privileges to Christians. Successive waves of Christians—merchants, missionaries, and refugees—continued to arrive over the centuries. The resulting Christian population, therefore, was diverse: Besides Persian and Syrian immigrants, it included Jewish Christians and Nestorians.

With the arrival of Vasco da Gama in Calicut in 1498, India's west coast became the target of Portuguese colonial and missionary ambitions. Catholic missionaries of various orders—Franciscans, Dominicans, and especially Jesuits—soon followed, converting many Syrian Christians, as well as new converts, to the Catholic faith. They worked from enclaves on the coast, such as the Portuguese-governed Goa and the French Pondicherry. Conversions became increasingly aggressive, being sometimes accelerated by incentives from Portuguese officials and, due to the legacy of the Jesuit Francis Xavier (1506–1552), by inquisitorial methods. As a result, tensions and conflicts arose between the indigenous Christian communities and the European missionizing communities. There were controversies over both cultural and doctrinal differences: Thomas Christians rejected the veneration of images, allowed their priests to marry, and celebrated festivals and rituals that the Europeans viewed as heathen practices. The latter, in turn, offended local sensibilities through engaging in habits that violated Indian notions of purity and pollution. In the wake of these tumultuous times, an entire complex of ecclesiastical systems, with branches and sub-branches distinguished in terms of their Catholic or Syrian affiliations, eventually emerged to form the new contours of South Asian Christianity.

Christian communities in South Asia have always been profoundly indigenous, their practice

shaped by local, caste, and ethnic identities. They have come to share many customs with the Hindu population: For example, some Indian Christian women today wear a *mangalsūtra* around the neck and a *bindi* on the forehead. The Thomas Christians of Kerala incorporate umbrellas and elephants as ornaments in their ceremonies, while Catholics take out processions similar to the Hindu *yātras*.

The Colonial Period

The transformation of South Asian culture in response to global currents that had begun during the early colonial period further accelerated with the founding of the British East India Company in 1600. This venture was originally driven by military and economic gain but became, from the early 19th century onward, more imperialistic in nature: The British conquered and made alliances with local leaders, began to develop an infrastructure with policies and legal systems following the British model, built a system of roads and railroads, brought in British missionaries, and founded schools. “Orientalist” scholars studied South Asian languages and made ancient texts available to Western audiences for the first time. These enterprises were often accompanied by a critique of “native,” particularly Hindu customs. Even positive appraisals were built on fundamentally Eurocentric assumptions and resulted in misrepresentations of South Asian cultures.

Colonialism and Orientalism no doubt played a formative role in the reification of Hinduism as a single religious tradition. The term *Hinduism* itself is a colonial construction (first attested in English as late as 1829), an abstraction from the word *Hindu*, which itself originally had nothing to do with a religion but designated the inhabitants of the Indian subcontinent. Yet the process of shaping religious and community identities in the colonial context was much more complex and dialectical. High-caste, mainly Brahman, pundits played a crucial role in collaborating with Western scholars in studying ancient religious texts—the codification of “Hindu” law being one important example of this. South Asians themselves appropriated the constructs that developed as a result of their interaction with Europeans, and this, in turn, influenced the Western investigators’ representation of

their culture. As Gauri Vishwanathan has pointed out, the processes of reifying or solidifying religious identities in South Asia are hardly a modern phenomenon; even in pre-Muslim India, “Hinduization” occurred in response to other communities, such as Buddhists and Jains.

The 18th and 19th centuries witnessed the emergence of various reform movements as both Hindu and Muslim communities tried to come to terms with the British political supremacy and the flood of new cultural influences. On the Hindu side, Ram Mohan Roy (1772–1833) advocated social reform and selective appropriation of Western values, while Swami Dayananda Saraswati (1824–1883) turned to the Vedas for inspiration for reformed, “purified” Hinduism. The Bengali mystic Ramakrishna (1834–1886) and his main disciple Vivekananda (1863–1902), on the other hand, played a significant role in articulating a “universalist” Hinduism. On the Muslim side, the so-called Aligarh modernist movement, led by Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khān (d. 1898), advocated higher education modeled on the British system and a rational approach to the Qur’an. The Deobandi theological school adopted a more conservative approach, insisting on upholding correct Muslim practice in spite of the changing times. These efforts to define Muslim identity under colonial rule combined with concerns regarding the political repercussions of their minority status led to the foundation of the Muslim League in 1906.

The period of British colonial rule provoked an unprecedented process of cultural distancing and alienation between Muslim and Hindu communities. The census of the 1870s and other such surveys conducted by the British forced Indians to identify themselves primarily in terms of their religion, fostering the idea of religions as mutually exclusive. Even language became an arena of religious and ideological contestation. Although colloquial Hindi and Urdu essentially constitute a single language with two standardized registers—the former being written in the Nāgari script and incorporating more Sanskritic vocabulary and the latter written in the Perso-Arabic script, with Persianized vocabulary—they became increasingly perceived as symbols of Hindu and Islamic identities, respectively. Writers would deliberately switch from one to the other or be forced to do so. Religious practices, even forms of music and dance, became similarly politicized. These developments set the stage for intensified

demands for two separate nations, resulting in the partition of British India into two countries—India and Pakistan—in 1947.

Hindu Diaspora

Migration of Hindus outside South Asia in the modern period has occurred in two main stages. The first wave migrated under the auspices of the British Empire in the 19th and early 20th centuries to other colonies, primarily the Caribbean, South Africa, East Africa, and Fiji. These migrants were primarily indentured laborers, although some were also merchants or colonial administrators. The second wave consisted of the post-World War II movement of students, businessmen, and laborers to industrialized Western countries. Presently, the largest Hindu populations outside South Asia are in Indonesia, the Gulf States, North America, the United Kingdom, South Africa, East Africa, and the Caribbean.

Given such a variety of landscapes and historical contexts, the identities of Hindus outside South Asia have also been formulated through drastically different trajectories. In many cases, Hindu temples have come to function as important community centers, although temple rites have had to be modified and negotiated in order to cater to migrants from distinct regions and with different sectarian emphases and to bridge the gap between generations. Even when immigrants do not necessarily wish to return to India, or rarely even visit, the tie to India and the imaginaire of its sacred geography remain central to shaping diaspora Hindu identity.

Religion in Postpartition South Asia

From the aftermath of the 1947 partition, it became clear that the partition was not going to provide a lasting solution to interreligious tension and communal conflict in South Asia. The constant negotiation of religious identity and the outbreaks of communal violence would simply remain a fact of life in a region so diverse and with religious issues that were so charged with politicized meanings. About 10 million people are estimated to have left their homes in the wake of the partition, and about 1 million died in the ensuing violence that left the region traumatized.

The state of Pakistan was founded to provide South Asian Muslims a state of their own where

they would no longer hold a minority status. Since its inception, Pakistan has struggled with defining what it means to be an Islamic state, with competing visions offered by secularists, modernists, and Islamists. The secession of East Pakistan and its establishment as the state of Bangladesh in 1971 was driven primarily by economic concerns and an affirmation of ethnic and linguistic (Bengali) identity. Although Islam is the majority religion in Bangladesh, the role of Islam has been a topic of debate and contention. Islam in Bangladesh has been uniquely shaped by the presence of distinct Bengali cultural elements and the historical influence of both Hindu and Buddhist traditions.

Religion has played a major role in the 20th century in the ongoing conflict between Sinhala-speaking Buddhists and Tamil-speaking Hindus in Sri Lanka and in Hindu-Muslim conflicts in India. A highly visible factor in the latter case has been the proliferation of right-wing Hindu nationalist movements that are working toward installing Hindu values at every level of polity and government to achieve a “Hindu nation.” Their campaigns have often been accompanied by anti-Muslim rhetoric and riots. Hindu-Muslim tension was exacerbated in the 1980s, culminating in the demolition of the Babri Masjid mosque in Ayodhya on December 6, 1992, and its violent aftermath. A decade later, violent Hindutva pogroms against Muslims erupted in Gujarāt.

In recent decades, South Asia has seen an unprecedented acceleration in contact with Western countries and the spread, if not “export,” of its religious heritage in new forms. Since the 1960s, Western travelers have been flocking to India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka in ever-increasing numbers in search of spiritual wisdom, gurus and swamis, and meditation and yoga traditions. As a result, many of the existing movements centered around a specific guru or teacher have grown and spread on a global scale, and new ones have mushroomed. Among those that have attracted large Western followings are the Hare Krishna movement (ISKCON), founded by Swami A. C. Bhaktivedanta (1896–1977), which has its roots in the Bengal Caitanya tradition; Siddha Yoga, drawing on Kashmir Shaivism, taught by Swami Muktananda (1908–1982) and Gurumayī (b. 1955); Integral Yoga of which Sri Aurobindo (1872–1950) is the founding teacher;

and the movement started by Amma, or Mātā Amritānandamayī (b. 1953), well-known for her charitable missions and world tours.

In addition to these teachers who draw primarily on the Hindu tradition, many Tibetan Buddhist lamas and teachers who settled in India or Nepal after China’s occupation of Tibet in the 1950s have also attracted Western followers and founded *sanghas* (“communities”) and branch monasteries in various parts of the world. The most famous of these Tibetan refugee settlements is Dharamsala in Himachal Pradesh, India, home to His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama. Sri Lanka has been a popular destination for those interested in Theravadan Buddhist meditation practice.

Nepal, which until the 2006 revolution was the only constitutionally declared Hindu kingdom, became a democracy in 2008. The steady stream of tourists over the last few decades has left a lasting imprint on Nepalese culture. In contrast, the other Himalayan state, Bhutan, has made deliberate efforts to remain isolated in order to preserve its traditional culture and environment. As a result, Bhutan has managed to maintain its distinct form of Vajrayana or Tantric Buddhism. The impact of globalization is only now beginning to be felt in Bhutan, primarily in its urban areas.

South Asian religions continue to change with such rapidity and with such transmutations that it is impossible to catalogue them. Increasing exposure to people, ideas, and goods from other parts of the world is only one factor in this process; the intermingling of South Asians from various regional, linguistic, and religious backgrounds in large cities has also contributed to modifications to existing forms of religious practice and the emergence of new movements. Although globalization is rapidly changing South Asian culture and society, its reach and impact are uneven. Though inexpensive cell phones are found everywhere, among all economic strata of society, computers and other technological conveniences of the 21st century are not easily available to the impoverished population, especially in rural areas. As in many developing societies, the division between globalized urban areas and local-oriented traditional communities is increasing. What this will mean for religious culture in South Asia in the long run remains to be seen.

Mari Jyväsjärvi

See also Afghanistan; Akbar; Aryans; Bangladesh; Bhutan; Christianity; Cycle of Rebirth; Hinduism; India, Indo-European Religion; Islam; Jainism; Mughal Empire; Nepal; Pakistan; Sanskrit; Southeast Asia; Sri Lanka; Theravada Buddhism; Veda; Zoroastrianism (and Parsis)

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SOUTH SUDAN

One of the world's newest countries, the eastern African nation of South Sudan officially declared

its independence on July 9, 2011. After decades of civil war between the government of Sudan and the rebel forces in the south, a United Nations–brokered agreement called for a resolution of the issue through a referendum that was held in the region in January 2011. More than 99% of the population in South Sudan voted for independence.

One of the main issues in the South Sudanese independence movement was religion. The northern part of Sudan is dominantly Muslim; South Sudan is a mixture of Christianity and traditional African religion. South Sudan is primarily a rural, tribal society that practices the customs and beliefs of its traditions, which are largely animistic. The largest tribal group is the Dinka, followed by the Shiilok and the Nuer.

The region came under British colonial influence in 1842, and Christian missionaries soon followed. British Anglicans and Roman Catholic missionaries have had a considerable influence on South Sudan's society. Though some observers regard the country as primarily Christian, others regard only 10% of the population as being strict followers of church teachings. Most citizens of South Sudan practice a mixture of traditional animistic African religion and Christianity. The first president of the new nation, Salva Kiir Mayardit, is a Catholic.

Mark Juergensmeyer

See also Africa; Anglicans; Christianity; Islam; Sudan; Syncretism

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SOUTHEAST ASIA

The religious diversity of Southeast Asia from ancient times to the present encapsulates the history of the global spread of some of the world's major religions. The region, which is east of India, south of China, and north of Australia, is usually

grouped into two sections: mainland Southeast Asia, which includes Myanmar (Burma), Thailand, Malaysia, Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam, and island Southeast Asia, which includes Singapore, Indonesia, East Timor, Brunei, and the Philippines. Malaysia can be placed in either category: One part of it is the Malay Peninsula that juts southward from the mainland; the two other parts, Sabah and Sarawak, are located in northern Borneo—a large island that Malaysia shares with Indonesia. Papua New Guinea is sometimes included in Southeast Asia and sometimes in Oceania; Sri Lanka is at times listed with Southeast Asia but usually with South Asia; Taiwan is sometimes grouped with Southeast Asia as well, though far more often it is counted as a part of East Asia.

Most of the mainland countries of Southeast Asia are Buddhist, except for Malaysia, which is mainly Muslim. The island countries of Southeast Asia adhere to a mixture of religious customs: Indonesia and Brunei are Muslim, Singapore is predominantly Buddhist, and the Philippines is Christian. This simple characterization, however, masks a great deal of religious diversity within each of these countries, both at present and in the past. The southern part of the Philippines is Muslim; Indonesia has a thriving Hindu population in Bali; Cambodia hosts the ancient Hindu and Buddhist temples at Angkor Wat and its environs. The Mahayana Buddhism of Vietnam and Singapore is different from the Theravada Buddhism practiced in other areas of Southeast Asia. The history of Southeast Asia is the story of successive waves of religious cultures that left their marks in a variety of ways on the region's societies and were influenced, in turn, by indigenous religious traditions. Religion in Southeast Asia, therefore, is best described as syncretic. This entry will provide an overview of the history of religious globalization in the region: ancient Hindu and Buddhist kingdoms, the arrival of Islam, the cultural effect of European colonialism, and the religious situation in the post-colonial global era.

Ancient Hindu and Buddhist Kingdoms

The traditional animist practices of Southeast Asia's peoples were initially supplanted by Hinduism that was brought to the region from India at the beginning of the third century BCE. There are several schools of thought regarding

how Hinduism came to Southeast Asia. Some Indian historians have claimed that the spread of Hinduism was an aspect of the Indian cultural colonization of lands beyond the subcontinent—the creation of a “Greater India” or “Farther India.” Dutch scholars who studied the history of Indonesia, however, have challenged this theory and argued, instead, that it was Southeast Asians themselves, with their long history of seafaring, who more likely took the initiative to bring back to Southeast Asia elements of Hinduism that they had encountered in India during their trade voyages. Some Southeast Asian rulers might have welcomed Hinduism because the social hierarchy embedded in the Hindu worldview was useful for their practice of statecraft, but it is not clear how deeply Hinduism penetrated the world of the common people. It is notable that the caste system, a major feature of Hinduism, never took root in Southeast Asia. Some French scholars who explored the history of Indochina have offered yet another interpretation: They argued that what occurred was, more accurately, a process of “Brahmanization,” given the fact that Southeast Asian rulers adopted religious doctrines and rituals of well-educated Brahmans; these Brahmans, who knew Sanskrit and the fine points of Hinduism as well as Indian art and architecture, could have provided guidance to the royal courts. The journeys of these priests and scholars very likely followed the maritime routes that Indian merchants who traded between India and Southeast Asia were already using. After the Brahmans arrived in Southeast Asia, they joined the retinues of local rulers.

The earliest and best known Hinduized/Brahmanized kingdoms in Southeast Asia included Funan, located in today's Cambodia; Champa, in central and southern Vietnam; Angkor, which occupied a much larger area than today's Cambodia; and smaller kingdoms in the Malay Peninsula and the Indonesian archipelago, particularly in the island of Bali. The history of Champa offers a telling example of how religious and political changes intertwined. Indian influence first appeared in Champa in the fourth century; by the seventh century, Cham rulers had begun building Hindu temples dedicated mainly to Shiva and occasionally to Vishnu. A Mahayana Buddhist dynasty came to power and ruled Champa during the 9th and 10th centuries, but the kingdom reverted to Hinduism in the late 10th century.

Meanwhile, Islam began to gain some converts among the Cham people. After centuries of armed conflicts between Vietnam and Champa, the Vietnamese sacked the Cham capital in 1471, but Cham resistance continued sporadically for several centuries, even after the Vietnamese claimed the Cham territory as a part of their country in 1693. Over the years after their defeat, an increasing number of Cham converted to Islam, inspired in part by the fact that Muslim rulers and their subjects in Melaka (Malacca)—located on the west coast of the Malay Peninsula, where the ruler had converted to Islam in 1414—as well as in Aceh in northern Sumatra, supported Cham resistance. Almost all Cham still living in Cambodia and Vietnam today are Muslims, but small numbers of Hindu and Buddhist Cham can still be found. There is also a sizable Cham community in Malaysia, formed by Cham Muslims who escaped from Vietnam and Cambodia during the refugee exodus following the end of the Vietnam War in 1975; the Cham were offered sanctuary by a Malaysian government sympathetic to fellow Muslims. Hinduism's religiocultural dispersal was at its peak during the Chola Empire based in the Tamil region of south India. By 1050, the influence of the Cholas stretched all the way to Laos and Cambodia in mainland Southeast Asia and to the islands of Java and Bali in maritime Southeast Asia.

During the same historical era that Hinduized/Brahmanized kingdoms were founded in Southeast Asia, Buddhist kingdoms, most notably Sailendra, a Mahayana Buddhist dynasty that originated in the latter half of the eighth century, were also established on the islands of Java and Sumatra. Hinduism and Buddhism occasionally rivaled one another or, more commonly, became elements in a syncretized local religion that also included indigenous beliefs and practices. One example is found near Yogyakarta in Java where one of the world's great monuments to Buddhism—the temple at Borobudur with its bas relief that illustrate thousands of Mahayana Buddhist texts—is located near the imposing Prambanan temple dedicated to Shaivite Hinduism. Both were constructed in the 9th and 10th centuries. Beginning in the 8th century, Mahayana Buddhism, often inflected with Tantric mysticism, had gained a foothold in both the Malay Peninsula and the Malay/Indonesian archipelago, in contrast to the inroads that

Theravada Buddhism was making in mainland Southeast Asia. The great temple complex of Angkor in Cambodia was originally constructed in the 12th century to honor the god Vishnu. Later additions to the temples provided Buddhist iconography, most likely the efforts of successive kings for whom Buddhism rather than Hinduism was the religion of the realm.

Over time, many of the old Hindu and Mahayana Buddhist kingdoms died out, and the cultures in mainland Southeast Asian countries, except Vietnam, became dominated by Theravada Buddhism and by Islam in Malaysia, Brunei, and Indonesia. The only large contingent of Hindus remaining in Southeast Asia is in Bali, Indonesia, where a thriving community combines ancient forms of Hinduism with Balinese folk religion. In the 19th and 20th centuries, Indian migrants settled in Malaysia and Singapore (both British colonies at the time), some of them in service to the British army, but most of them worked as indentured laborers in rubber and coconut plantations. Modern Hindu temples and Sikh Gurudwaras have been constructed there by descendants of the Indian pioneers.

Though the remnants of Hindu communities in Southeast Asia are not extensive, the entire culture of the region is deeply influenced by Hinduism. Whereas most Indonesians are Muslims, the popular performances of *wayang kulit* that use shadow puppets to act out the Hindu *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* epics are considered as central elements of Indonesian culture and society. The name of the winged Hindu god, Garuda, who figures in the shadow puppet dramas, has been adopted as the name of Indonesia's national airlines. Indian gods are found in Thai Buddhist temples as well, and the *Ramayana* legend persists not only in Indonesia but also in Myanmar (Burma), Thailand, Laos, and Cambodia. The names of Hindu gods are used as personal names throughout Southeast Asia—vestiges of a once flourishing Hinduized civilization in the region.

In the modern era, Buddhism thrives throughout Southeast Asia, though in different forms. Buddhism in mainland Southeast Asia is largely Theravada. Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, and the island nation of Sri Lanka are the world's primary locations for the Theravada tradition—the most ancient or Indian form of Buddhism that accords great respect to the monastic community.

Many young men in Theravada Buddhist societies are expected to spend a period or time, ranging from several weeks to many years, under temporary monastic discipline; in Thailand, it is said that even the King must be a “world renouncer” before he can become a “world conqueror.” Members of the *sangha* (“monastic community”) are usually apolitical, though at the turn of the 21st century, monks in Burma, Sri Lanka, and Thailand have played influential roles in protest movements against governments that they deemed corrupt.

In Vietnam, the Mahayana Buddhism that is found in China, Korea, and Japan, is the dominant religion, though the religious iconography and stories are suffused with traditional Vietnamese legendary heroes who are seen as semidivine saintly figures. A more traditional Chinese-style Mahayana Buddhism, combined with Confucianism and Daoism, is practiced in the Chinese-majority city-state of Singapore and among the large ethnic Chinese communities in Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, and elsewhere.

Islamic Countries

Arab sailors, who for several centuries dominated the sea lanes around the rim of the Indian Ocean, and Muslim merchants from both the Arab lands and Persia (Iran) brought Islam to Southeast Asia during the seventh century CE, when a small Muslim colony was established on the Indonesian island of Sumatra. Beginning in the 12th century, Muslim kingdoms were established in the Malay Peninsula and the Malay/Indonesian archipelago as well as in southern Thailand (Siam) and on the large Mindanao Island and in the Sulu Archipelago in the southern Philippines, which rivaled the power and glory of the Hindu and Buddhist kingdoms. In 1136, the King of Kedah renounced the Hindu faith and became a Muslim, establishing the sultanate of Kedah in the northwestern part of the Malay Peninsula. In the 15th century, the Malay Sultanate at Melaka (Malacca) became the center of Islamic thought and influence in Southeast Asia. Sufi missionaries played a significant role in the spread of Islam throughout the region. In 1520, the last major Hindu kingdom in Java fell to the rising power of a Muslim ruler. The Islamization of Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei, and other regions was a long and complex process, however, and

there was no common pattern of conversion and transformation.

The creation of the independent country of Indonesia in 1949 brought into existence the world’s largest Muslim nation. By the beginning of the 21st century, Indonesia contained more than 200 million Muslims, mostly followers of the Sunnī branch of Islam and the Shafi’i school of Muslim thought. In the late 20th and early 21st centuries, two large Muslim organizations dominate Muslim social and educational life in Indonesia: the Muhammadiyah movement, which has about 30 million members, and is regarded as modernist, keeping up with changing global trends in Islam, and the Nahdlatul Ulama, which has 40 million adherents, is traditionalist, and more in line with local Indonesian Islamic practices and customs. In general, Indonesian Islam is regarded as moderate and accommodating of modern forms of political and social thought.

In Malaysia, the government census officially regards all people of Malay ethnicity as Muslims. Even though Islamic schools and organizations in Malaysia are moderate, as is the case in Indonesia, they serve primarily the ethnic Malay community and not the large ethnic Chinese community and smaller ethnic Indian community. In Brunei, the Islamic practices and teachings are similar to those of neighboring Malaysia and Indonesia, but since the country is a Sultanate, Islam is the state religion. In the Philippines, the first mosque was established in Mindanao in the 14th century. The 2000 census indicates that 5% of the population of the Philippines is Muslim—or “Moros” as they are called—but their political visibility is much greater than their numbers may otherwise indicate due to a long-standing Moro separatist movement in the southern Philippines. Tens of thousands of Moro dissidents have escaped as refugees to neighboring Sabah, Malaysia, a Muslim-friendly country.

The rise of radical jihadi Muslim movements around the world at the end of the 20th century has also affected the Muslim communities of Southeast Asia. A series of bomb attacks in Bali and in Jakarta, Indonesia’s capital, were aimed mostly at the Western tourist and business presence in the country. The most violent was a series of three bombs ignited in or near nightclubs in Bali in 2002 that killed more than 200 people, many of them young Australians on vacation. Members of

the militant Muslim movement, Jemaah Islamiyah, including the spiritual leader of the movement, Abu Bakar Ba'asyir, were arrested and convicted for the act. The Jemaah Islamiyah has connections elsewhere in Southeast Asia, including Singapore and Malaysia, and the operational head of the movement, Riduan Isamuddin—known as Hambali—was arrested in 2003 in Thailand. The movement is also active in the Philippines, where it works in conjunction with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and other militant protest movements. It was in the Philippines, in Manila specifically, that al Qaeda activist Ramzi Yousef planned some of his most ambitious terrorist attacks, including an assassination attempt on the pope and a 1994 plot that would have exploded bombs in American airplanes as they flew over the Pacific. Yousef was arrested in 1995 and convicted for his role in the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center in New York City. His uncle, Khalid Sheikh Mohammad, was later arrested and accused of being one of the chief conspirators in the September 11, 2001, World Trade Center and Pentagon terrorist attacks.

Christianity in Southeast Asia

Though there may have been Mar Thoma Christians from India who established outposts in Indonesia as early as the 12th century, Southeast Asian Christianity resulted primarily from European cultural contact under colonialism. Three countries and one distinctive region in Southeast Asia have significant Christian populations: the Philippines, Vietnam, the Maluku (Moluccas) Islands in eastern Indonesia, and East Timor. In the Philippines and East Timor, Christians form a vast majority of the population. In Vietnam, Christians—primarily Catholics—though a small minority, have played a significant role in their country's history. In the Maluku Islands, Christians stand out, not only on the basis of their religion in a Muslim-majority country but also because many Malukans served in the Dutch colonial army, thereby playing an auxiliary role in Indonesia's colonial state structure. They thus feared possible persecution after Indonesia gained its independence.

The country in Southeast Asia with the largest percentage of Christians is the Philippines, which

has a long history of Western colonial control. Spain ruled the Philippines (named after the Spanish monarch at the time, Felipe II) from Mexico City, capital of the Vice Royalty of New Spain, Spain's major colony in the Americas, from 1571 to 1821; after Mexico gained its independence, Madrid governed the Philippines directly until 1898. The United States then claimed the Philippines as its colony from 1898 to 1946.

The interplay of religion (in this case, Christianity—first Catholicism, then Protestantism) and politics profoundly marked the evolution of Philippine society. After Christopher Columbus returned from his first voyage to the Americas, both Portugal and Spain became interested in colonizing those parts of the earth that Europeans had hitherto known little about. Pope Alexander VI (of Spanish birth) issued a papal bull in 1493 that indicated how the new lands were to be explored, conquered, and colonized. The 1494 Treaty of Tordesillas and the 1529 Treaty of Zaragoza divided the globe between Spain and Portugal. The first treaty gave Spain the right to explore, colonize, and exploit all lands west of a line drawn from pole to pole located 370 leagues (1,281 miles [1 mile = 1.609344 kilometers]) west of the Cape Verde Islands, while the Portuguese had the right to carry out the same activities in the lands east of that line. The second treaty specified where the antimeridian (i.e., the line on the opposite side of the globe across from the line delineated in 1494) should be. Spanish explorers set foot on Cebu, an island in the central part of the more than 7,000 islands that became the Philippines, in 1565. By 1571, the Spaniards had chosen Manila, located on Luzon Island, as their main outpost. The islands contained numerous small political entities governed by various chieftains, whose peoples spoke dozens of languages. Given the fact that there was no dominant political or religious authority, Spain found it relatively easy to lay claim to all the islands and to convert most of the population to Roman Catholicism. When Filipinos revolted against Spain at the end of the 19th century, they initially welcomed the support of the United States until it became clear that the Americans themselves intended to colonize the country. In 1934, the United States Congress passed the Tydings-McDuffie Act promising independence to the Philippines in another 10 years,

but World War II delayed independence until 1946.

During the decades of American rule and in subsequent decades following independence, Protestant and Mormon missionaries made significant inroads among the population, but the Philippines continues to be predominantly Roman Catholic. At the beginning of the 21st century, 93% of the Filipino population was listed as Christian; its 63 million Christians make it the second largest Christian country in Asia (after China, which has 70 million Christians) and the seventh largest Christian country in the world.

The Southeast Asian country with the second largest Christian population is Vietnam. Christianity was brought to Vietnam initially by Portuguese Catholics in 1535; it was propagated more actively by French Jesuit missionaries beginning in 1614 and especially after France colonized the area. Christianity, however, has had a turbulent relationship with Vietnamese politics in the successive regimes dominated by French colonialists, North Vietnamese Marxists, and South Vietnamese leaders supported by the United States. Between 1862 and 1883, France colonized Cochinchina, Annam, and Tonkin (the southern, central, and northern sections, respectively, of today's Vietnam), and these three colonies became constituent parts of French Indochina, along with Cambodia (colonized in 1863) and Laos (colonized in 1889). Under the French colonial regime, Roman Catholicism flourished and played a role in the politics of the region, providing an ideology for some pro-independence forces, and more frequently, for those Vietnamese who supported French rule. When Vietnamese independence fighters finally defeated the French in 1954 at Dien Bien Phu, located in northwestern Vietnam, the 1954 Geneva Accords divided the country at the 17th parallel, with the future of the country to be determined by national elections to be held in 1956. However, the promised elections never took place because South Vietnam, with the strong support of the United States, refused to hold them. In the immediate aftermath of the Geneva agreements, more than 900,000 Vietnamese Catholics fled south to avoid what they feared would be religious persecution by the new Marxist regime of Ho Chi Minh. Attempts by the Hanoi regime to unify the country under a communist government brought

strong resistance from the south. According to some reports, one reason why President John F. Kennedy committed American military support to South Vietnam in 1961 was the insistence of Cardinal Spellman of New York City that he do so: Spellman said that a Catholic president must protect the Vietnamese Christian community in the southern part of Vietnam. Following the end of the U.S.-Vietnam War in 1975 and the unification of the country under socialist rule in 1976, the size of the Christian community has diminished considerably. Many Vietnamese Christians were among some 1 million refugees who escaped by land and by sea; a majority of them were resettled in the United States and the remaining numbers elsewhere. At the beginning of the 21st century, some 8% of the population of Vietnam was registered as Christian, mostly Catholic.

Portuguese traders founded a Christian settlement in the Maluku Islands (many of which gained fame in world history as the original producers of certain highly desired spices such as cloves and nutmeg) in eastern Indonesia. When the region came under the rule of Dutch colonial administrators, the Christian community in the islands continued to be protected by the Dutch. In the second half of the 20th century, immediately following Indonesia's independence, the percentage of Muslims and Christians in Maluku was roughly evenly divided, but the percentage of Maluku Christians decreased when the departing Dutch colonial government showed special consideration for two groups in the population that might suffer persecution—Indos, the mixed-blood children of Dutch and Indonesian parents, and Maluku Christians who had served the Dutch colonial administration and army. These two groups were allowed to resettle in the Netherlands as repatriates and refugees, respectively. Still, even after the exodus, tensions developed between the Christians and Muslims in Maluku: Hundreds of thousands of people were displaced and many killed, and houses were burned before the Indonesian government was able to restore order by 2004.

A different fate was in store for another Christian colony established by the Portuguese in the 16th century: East Timor. The eastern section of the island of Timor, located east-southeast of Java in the Indonesian archipelago, remained a Portuguese outpost even after most of Indonesia came under

Dutch colonial rule during the 17th century. Thus, even after Indonesia became independent in 1949, East Timor continued to be a Portuguese colony. In 1975, the Portuguese abandoned their claims, and East Timor achieved self-rule. However, the Indonesian government quickly claimed East Timor as a state in Indonesia. A protracted and often violent struggle for independence persisted for more than 30 years until the Indonesian government finally relinquished authority over the region, and East Timor became independent in 2002. Consistent with its Portuguese colonial heritage, 97% of the population in East Timor is Roman Catholic.

In addition to these four places with significant Christian populations, there are smaller numbers of Christians scattered throughout Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, and elsewhere. In these countries with a Christian presence as well as in Theravada Buddhist-majority and Muslim-majority countries with historic Hindu overtones, religious diversity has been an inescapable feature of Southeast Asia's intricate and fascinating history.

Mark Juergensmeyer and Sucheng Chan

See also Brunei Darussalam; Cambodia; Christianity; East Timor; Hinduism; Indonesia; Islam; Islamism (Political Islam); Jemaah Islamiyah; Laos; Malaysia; Myanmar (Burma); Philippines; Singapore; Southeast Asia; Sri Lanka; Taiwan; Thailand; Theravada Buddhism; Vietnam

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SPAIN

The religious life of the southern European country of Spain is characterized by a deep-rooted Catholicism and the major structural changes that have taken place in Spanish society in recent decades. This entry centers on three aspects. First, it briefly outlines the historical reasons for the hegemonic character of Catholicism up to recent times; second, it analyzes the extent to which Spanish society is becoming secularized; and, finally, it touches on two issues that are currently of great importance: the formation of a new religious plurality as a consequence of the arrival of immigration and the debate over laicity of the state.

The political unification achieved by the Catholic monarchs in the 15th century, together with the expulsion of Muslims and Jews, resulted in religious homogenization and, as a consequence, a Catholic hegemony that prevailed right up to the 20th century. It was not until the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries that the rise of socialist and anarchist tendencies led to the emergence of an antireligious (in particular anticlerical) movement. The confrontation between “the two Spains” culminated in the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939), which broke out following the military uprising of General Franco—legitimized in terms of a Crusade—against the democratically constituted power of the Second Republic. The end of the conflict and the victory of Franquist troops marked the beginning of a dictatorial regime (1939–1975) that experts have defined as *National Catholicism*. Based on the alliance between the Catholic Church and the state, it was a regime founded on the ideals of state confessionality and the complete Catholicization of society.

The democratic period that followed the Franquist era has brought about major changes in Spanish society. However, we would be making a grave mistake if, as sometimes happens, we were to attribute political change to changes in Spaniards' religiosity. In fact, the secularization of Spanish

society had essentially already begun in the 1960s during a time of industrial growth. This had reached Spain much later than the rest of Europe and was accompanied by the rise of the consumer society.

To what depth has this secularization process taken place? First, it should be pointed out that Spain has undergone a profound process of differentiation, and this has resulted in religion ceasing to be the sacred center of society and becoming just another sphere. In keeping with this, the Catholic Church is no longer a central institution; it has become an institution like any other, albeit one that has adopted the role of a strong lobby. A contributing factor to this change in the position occupied by the Church in Spanish society has been the Spanish constitution, dating from 1978, which proclaims that “no confession will have a State character.”

With respect to the secularization of individuals, the data we have available indicate that this is a process that is taking place gradually. If we limit ourselves for the time being to the native population (the immigrant population will be dealt with later), it will be noted that there has been a considerable decline in both religious beliefs and practices. Nevertheless, this has not been the case with regard to religious self-definition: According to the *Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas* (the most important sociological research center for studying Spaniards' opinions and attitudes), the percentage of the native population who declared themselves to be Catholic in 2008 was still very high (73.5%). These data reflect how firmly rooted Catholicism is in Spain, although not orthodox Catholicism; rather, it is a cultural form that distances itself from the teachings of the Church. This is shown by the fact that a significant proportion of people who define themselves as Catholic do not believe in many of the dogmas of this religion. Fewer than 20% of Spaniards say they attend mass at least once a week, while about half say they never go.

Together with the decline in institutional religious practice, the indicators that best reflect the depth of the secularization process are those that refer to the importance individuals attach to religious beliefs and the extent to which these influence other aspects of everyday life. A look at the last 20 years will confirm that religious beliefs have become increasingly less relevant in the lives

of Spaniards. If the importance given to religion in 1987 attained an average of 6.11, in 2008, this had dropped to 4.76. In 1987, 44% of the native population considered their religious beliefs to be very, or quite, important when they had to make major decisions; by 2008, this percentage had been halved. Added to this is the fact that the vast majority of the native population considers that religious beliefs should not be taken into account when voting for a political party and that work is not a religious obligation. In the last 10 years, there has also been a pronounced drop in the percentage of those who consider religion to be very important in children's education. This fact is highly significant because it is in the domain of education where religion has historically had great prominence.

These data are in keeping with the growing distance between the native population and the Catholic Church. In 2008, most people said they had little or no trust in this institution (60.8%) and were against positions defended by the Church on issues such as divorce, abortion, the use of condoms, married priests, homosexual marriage, and euthanasia. Nevertheless, despite this distancing, the Catholic Church is still important to most Spaniards when it comes to celebrating rites of passage like baptism, first communion and, to a lesser extent, marriage. Along the same lines is the importance given to certain manifestations of “popular religiosity” in Spain, such as processions and festivities.

To understand the extent of the secularization process in Spanish society, it should be borne in mind that this is a process that advances as each generation succeeds the previous one. All indicators point to the fact that young people are much less religious than adults and that, at the present time, in some regions of Spain (the most developed economically, like Catalonia, Madrid, and the Basque Country), most young people between 15 and 24 years old describe themselves as being either indifferent to religion or as agnostics or atheists. These data may well be a good indicator for predicting the future of religion in Spain.

Nevertheless, these secularizing tendencies appear to be limited to the native population, since immigrants (who have arrived in considerable numbers during the last decade and now make up 12% of the total population) attach much more

importance to religious beliefs in their lives and are more likely to practice their religion.

It should be remembered that many immigrants define themselves as Catholics, which is essentially a consequence of immigration from Latin America. But the truth is that globalization, coupled with the secularization process, has led to Catholicism losing its hegemony in Spain, while the number of believers and practitioners of other religions, especially the Muslim, Orthodox, and evangelical faiths, is growing.

This new religious plurality—together with a series of actions such as parliamentary approval of homosexual marriage and the introduction in schools of the subject of Education for Citizenship—has recently reignited the debate on laicity of the state. The Spanish Episcopal Conference, in line with the postulates of Pope Benedict XVI, understands that laws should be subjected to “transcendental truth” and feels under attack from what it considers to be exclusive laicism. For their part, critics of the ecclesiastical hierarchy hold that in the present situation of religious plurality, the Catholic Church continues to enjoy privileges from the past (especially those derived from the 1979 Concordat, which is still in force) in matters concerning public financing, the teaching of religion in schools, and the presence of Catholic symbols at public events.

Jose Santiago

See also Christianity; Europe; Global Religion; Globalization; Immigration; Inquisition; Islam; Islamism (Political Islam); Laicization; Madrid; Multiculturalism; Pluralism; Religion and State; Sacred Places; Secularization

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SPIRITUALISM

Spiritualism as a religious movement centers on direct contact with spirits of the departed through mediumship and similar means. In its origin in 19th-century America and its worldwide dispersion, spiritualism offered a prototype of the modern globalization of religion.

The movement began in 1848, when the young Fox sisters reported mysterious rappings—comparable to the recently invented Morse Code—in their upstate New York farm house. They attributed the mysterious sounds to spirit communication. The sensational story was widely circulated and discussed in the print media. Soon, other such incidents were reported, spirit communication largely shifted from raps to voice mediumship, and societies devoted to its practice formed.

Spiritualism was the first significant new, independent religious movement established in the United States apart from Mormonism; and it was the first of many American spiritual exports. Moreover, it saw itself as a new kind of religion, appropriate to the new republic. Spiritualists claimed that theirs was the most democratic of faiths; anyone, whether clerical elite or not, could become a medium. Spiritualism, like Theosophy, Christian Science, and New Thought after it, offered women in particular opportunities for religious leadership closed to them in virtually all traditional religions of the time. Not incidentally, mediums of the 1850s and later often delivered messages aligned with reformist and radical movements of the day: The spirits favored abolition, feminism, penal reform, dress reform, and sometimes utopian communes.

Spiritualism also called itself the most scientific of religions, claiming to be amenable to the scientific

testing of its phenomena and of the veridicality of mediumistic messages. It did not, it boasted, depend on unprovable faith in ancient scriptures or traditional priesthoods. In this way, too, the spirits were bringing a new religion to a new nation and a new and better age.

One of the first spiritualist papers in America was significantly called *The Spiritual Telegraph*, after that just invented device, and in its imminent globalization, spiritualism was in the vanguard of most traditional faiths in its eager use of new technology and its endorsement of “progress” in all fields. It appeared in the first generation of truly widespread literacy even in “developed” countries and was no doubt the first comparable movement widely publicized by mass media in advance of its itinerant preachers. As it journeyed around the world, spiritualism followed lines of commerce and immigration, from America to England and France, then to Australia, New Zealand, and Latin America. Its spread was greatly abetted by the fact that its messengers were among the first such envoys to be able to ride with the relative speed and comfort of steam ships and railways. Famous mediums and lecturers traveled around the world, their arrival always being a sensation in distant outposts of civilization. With upsurges and declines, spiritualism has survived into the 21st century.

Robert Ellwood

See also New Age Movements; New Religions; North America; Theosophy; Unitarians; United States of America; Women’s Roles

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SPORTS

Since the emergence of religious studies as a discipline in the latter half of the 20th century, the

relationship between religion and sports has proven to be a complex subject ripe for inquiry. Whether experiencing the ritual of attending a baseball game, viewing an athlete attribute her prowess to a higher power, or evaluating the social dependence of sporting and religious institutions on one another, the cultural arena of athletic life has emerged as a rich deposit of devotional significance and popular practice.

Despite this richness, however, many of the field’s foundational matters remain unsettled; critics even continue to debate the meanings of the words “religion” and “sports.” Even with this and other ongoing definitional debates, two general patterns of assessment have emerged in the last three decades that continue to shape and structure the field of religion and sports scholarship: The first is a phenomenological approach, which regards religion and sports as separate and parallel cultural institutions with equivalent systems for mediating ultimate experience; the second is an historical perspective, which reveals the complex political and practical give-and-take of these spheres across myriad cultures, resulting in a variety of cultural institutions such as the Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA) and Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA).

Sports as Religious Phenomena

In his dissection of the cultural norms at work in the transition between true play, like running along the beach, and complex team sports like football, Allen Guttman framed out sports as nothing less than a central institution in human life. Nor does this elemental importance of sports escape the awareness of sports fans: A television program on an American travel and leisure network pitches its focus on sports tourism as a universal lust: to understand a culture, one must play its games.

This advertisement taps cleverly into the popular Western perspective that the institutions of sports, like the institutions of religion, are meaningful at their cores because of a subjective internal experience and the ways in which sports, whether played or watched, manage or mediate that experience. The experiences of scoring a winning goal or cheering one’s favored team to victory, to hear the accounts of those who lived them, often border on the transcendent. In many ways, the rules and

language of sports already structure the lives of citizens around the globe, much in the same way that the rules and codes of religion dominate the lives of their devotees as well.

Religion and sports are similar not only in that they provide for powerful subjective experiences and provide rules that structure those experiences; the ultimacy of these experiences also bespeaks of a basic cultural similarity between these two systems. Numerous scholars have sought to establish this fundamental sameness between two supposedly different spheres. Like the church, temple, or synagogue, a football stadium is a dedicated physical structure in which intentional and “ritualized” or habitual acts are performed, both on the field and among the spectators. Many sports fans disdain even wearing the colors of an opposing team, just as they promote their own colors as symbols of a social bond.

Even the basic rules governing gameplay often mirror the codes of conduct governing devotees’ lives. Stepping onto a soccer pitch, one enters a kind of sacred time: When the clock starts and stops, the universe within those white boundaries, often painted on specially grown grass used for no other purpose, governs everything. In that world, certain behaviors become paramount and appropriate, while fouls represent punctures in the order of things. The vague concept of “sportsmanship” itself conveys a just ethic resembling the Golden Rule.

Scholars have even evaluated cultures’ schedules between sports and leagues as a kind of liturgical (i.e., ritual) calendar: In America, the cycle from baseball to American football to basketball arguably imitates or reflects the cosmic changing of the seasons. American nostalgia for spending lazy summer days at the ballpark represents a more deep-seated longing than idle leisure. Instead, time spent idling at a baseball game functions as a recentering, an opportunity to watch the universe of the game play itself out in total, reinforcing values necessary to secure victory and to avoid defeat. The complex tournament structure leading to the quadrennial celebration of the FIFA World Cup soccer championships also forms a calendar, which many soccer fans worldwide observe with the utmost dedication.

Whether evaluating the structures of sporting events; the special behaviors, clothes, and catechisms

of the athletes and fans; or the transcendently effervescent phenomenon of victory, religion and sports appear in cultures worldwide as systems that resemble, imitate, or otherwise parallel religious cultural systems.

History of Competing and Complementary Systems

This systematic equivalency, however, only yields so much insight before the process of commenting critically grinds to a halt. That the reported experience of a satisfied churchgoer is the same as that of a victorious basketball fan only illuminates either phenomenon to a certain degree. In response to this static equivalency, historians have asked the question, “How have these ‘parallel sacred institutions’ changed and interacted over time?” These narratives cross-cut the spheres of religious and sporting life in a number of ways; social, racial, economic, and religious histories have sought to further clarify just what exactly religion and sports mean to one another.

Often, of course, religion and sports have appeared in the same places and at the same times: One need look no further than the feats of athleticism staged in Olympia by the ancient Greeks to witness the fusion of cultural ideals of physical prowess and the sacred. In fact, the Olympic Games as originally conceived point to an essential historical sameness between the two spheres of human life: Both religion and sports have, in various cultures across time, served to establish the boundaries of cultural recognition, of meaning and meaninglessness at the social level. In this way, religion and sports sometimes converge in the service of making other cultures and foreign persons recognizable to one’s own.

If sports and religion frame the way a society recognizes other people, they can also play an integral role in intolerant acts against other people. Scholars of Native American religion have noted that Spanish missionaries along the Gulf Coast, in an attempt to take control of the villages they encountered, sought to dominate those cultures into submission, first, by removing the game pole, typically erected at the center of the town and symbolic of the community’s cultural fabric, and, second, by replacing the game pole with a large Catholic cross. By removing the game pole and replacing it with a

symbol of a religious institution, the missionaries succeeded in disbanding the native Americans' cultural systems and imposing their own.

Since the age of empires, religion and sports have continued to emerge at the borders where cultures collide and interpenetrate. In many places, groups viewed as foreign or threatening because of their religions transformed into familiar and valued neighbors through their participation in sports; eastern European Jews, for instance, often demonstrated their civic pride by participating at local gyms. Similarly, scholars have identified the popularity of groups like the YMCA and YWCA at the turn of the 20th century in America as the product of White Protestant interest in "normalizing" the influx of immigrants to American shores. By having these new citizens participate in the YMCA and YWCA, dominant political and cultural groups could ensure that the immigrants were immersed at once in Christian values *and* American norms for fitness and health—values and norms that have contributed to one another throughout American history.

Sports and religion also contribute to the establishment (and complication) of a culture's gender norms. Few sports permit competitors of different genders to compete on the same team and typically have entirely separate leagues for men and women. Likewise, of course, religion contributes to a given culture's gender norms, similarly assigning certain culture work to one gender or the other. Scholars observe this at work most obviously in breaches of these codes, as in the case of a female mixed-martial artist or, as Carlo Rotella observed, the peculiar "sex work" of a boy circumambulating a boxing ring with a placard identifying the next round in a female fighter's bout.

In an age of information media, the relationship between religion and sports, especially the rise of global audiences for professional sports leagues and the emergence of solitary and transcendent "extreme sports" like BASE jumping, is one of complex, sometimes overlapping social structures; that these systems have so much to offer one another is itself a gift to scholars.

Adam Ware

See also Gender; Immigration; Material Culture; Men's Roles; Popular Religion; Women's Roles; YMCA, YWCA

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SRI LANKA

Located south of India along the maritime routes in the Indian Ocean, the island nation of Sri Lanka has had a long involvement with global movements of religious and cultural forms. Sri Lanka is a multireligious country with a population that is slightly more than two thirds Buddhist, with the remaining third divided roughly equally between Hindus, Muslims, and Christians. The country has been influential in the historical development of Theravada Buddhism and has maintained ties with Buddhists in other countries, particularly in peninsular Southeast Asia. Sri Lanka has also had a long history of contact with Europeans, most notably the successive colonial rules of the Portuguese, Dutch, and British between 1506 and 1948. As a result of these encounters, various Christian missions were sent to the island. At the same time, European scholars studied Sri Lankan Buddhism with the indispensable assistance of local monks, and the country's Theravada texts and practices came to exert considerable influence over how people understood the history and purported "essence" of Buddhism worldwide.

Exchanges between Sri Lankans and Westerners, both positive and negative, helped spur the rise of what has been called "Protestant Buddhism," which signifies a rational reinterpretation of the tradition in response to modern values and institutions. The lengthy colonial history also gave rise to a nationalist response that has used Buddhism as the ideological basis for mobilizing resistance to Western rule and influence. In recent decades, an

armed conflict and civil war between the military—which mainly comprises members of the majority Sinhala ethnic community—and a Tamil separatist group called the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) has cost tens of thousands of lives and sent hundreds of thousands into diaspora around the world as political and economic refugees. As a result, Sri Lankan Buddhist and Hindu religious communities are now found in many countries, contributing to the globalization of religious ideas, cultural forms, and political advocacy. This entry discusses religious exchanges in the premodern world, colonial religious history, Protestant Buddhism, Buddhist nationalism, and diaspora and virtual communities.

Religious Exchanges in the Premodern World

Ancient Sri Lankan Buddhist chronicles describe how the Buddhist religion was brought and established by a group of monks led by Mahinda who were sent from India in the third century BCE. This effort was initiated by King Ashoka, who ruled over a vast Indian empire and apparently sought to promote Buddhism and his influence in neighboring countries. Thereafter, as Buddhism became firmly established in Sri Lanka, a steady flow of monks, texts, and relics further linked the island to Buddhist communities in India. Sri Lanka obtained an important position in the ancient Buddhist world when the community of monks associated with the *Mahavihara* (“Great Monastery”) order began around 20 BCE to write down the discourses of the Buddha for the first time anywhere. Oral traditions of commentaries were also written down, leading Sri Lanka to become an important repository of texts for Theravada Buddhism. This collection of texts attracted Buddhist monks and pilgrims from across Asia.

In addition to its impressive textual and scholarly traditions, Sri Lankan Buddhists were active in promoting their tradition abroad. Sri Lankan monks helped establish Theravada Buddhism in Southeast Asian countries such as Burma (now Myanmar) and Thailand. Recognizing the antiquity of Sri Lankan Buddhism and the authority of its scriptures, numerous monks from Southeast Asia traveled to Sri Lanka to be ordained in the Mahavihara monastic lineage. Many of them

returned to their homes across the Indian Ocean to establish a monastic lineage that derived greater legitimacy and status from its ties to Sri Lanka. Later in the early modern period when generations of colonial rule weakened the condition of Buddhism in Sri Lanka, Theravada monks from Southeast Asia were invited to the island to reestablish the ancient monastic lineage originally founded in Sri Lanka.

Premodern transnational exchanges affecting the island’s Hindu and Muslim communities were arguably more limited. Close contact with India meant that not only did Buddhists travel across the straits to Sri Lanka but that Hindus and elements of Hindu religious culture did as well. The strong influence of Shaivism in South India, particularly among Tamils in Tamil Nadu, contributed to the adoption of Shiva worship in medieval Sri Lanka. Hindu temples were constructed out of stone and became centers for worship and offerings to the pantheon of Hindu deities linked with Shiva. Hindu influences in the forms of art, architecture, music, and literature were also keenly felt. And when a Tamil kingdom was established in the north of the island around the late 13th century CE, a base for Hindu practice with close ties to India was established.

The island’s Muslim population derives from different countries and periods, the oldest of which probably originated with Arab traders who settled around the port city of Colombo and maintained ties with Indian Muslim rulers from around the 14th century. During the Dutch period of colonial rule, Muslims from Java and the Malay Peninsula were brought in to assist the Dutch rulers. And subsequently, some Muslims arrived from India and settled in Sri Lanka when the island was under British rule.

Colonial Religious History

Sri Lanka’s colonial history had a profound impact on the globalization of its religious traditions. The Portuguese first arrived in Sri Lanka in 1506 and, in 1518, built a fort in Colombo to protect their trading interests. They annexed the coastal regions of Sri Lanka later in the 16th century and sent Catholic missionaries to convert the populace and to bring the island firmly under the control of the Portuguese crown. The missionary effort included

building churches, baptizing local inhabitants, and even destroying certain Buddhist and Hindu temples. Significant numbers of Buddhists and Hindus converted, although many returned to their previous traditions when it became possible to do so. Nevertheless, substantial numbers remained Catholics, and their descendents make up the largest percentage of Christians in the island. Ongoing ties between Sri Lankan Catholics and Catholic bodies worldwide have further sustained and developed the local church.

After about one and a half centuries of Portuguese colonial rule over the lowland territories, the Dutch expelled their Catholic rivals and governed the coastal territories while promoting the Calvinist church. Suspicious of their Portuguese rivals, the Dutch took stricter measures against Catholicism than either Buddhism or Hinduism, although the latter religions were also suppressed. The British followed the Dutch and extended colonial rule over the entire island from 1815 to 1948. Numerous Protestant missionaries set up schools and published pamphlets to promote Christianity and critique Buddhism and Hinduism. Some missionaries such as R. Spence Hardy engaged in close studies of Buddhism to undermine it. These 19th-century books on Buddhism by Hardy and others like him were published and disseminated abroad in the English language. Conversely, religious values and ideas from Great Britain were disseminated to the island's educated inhabitants largely through the network of missionary schools and Christian publications produced in the island.

Christian missions sponsored by or accompanying the island's European colonial powers generated considerable resistance among Sinhala Buddhists and Hindu Tamils. Members of the lower strata of Sri Lanka's simplified caste system were the ones most likely to embrace Christianity as a method to raise their social and economic standings in society. But numerous other Buddhists and Hindus rejected calls to convert. Laws favoring Christian converts, the annexation of temple lands, and the occasional looting and destruction of Buddhist and Hindu temples all contributed to resentment toward the colonial governments and the missions that were implicated in their rules. These colonial contests over religious identity have left a lasting legacy of distrust and hostility toward modern Christian missions.

Protestant Buddhism

Sri Lanka is generally acknowledged to have been the birthplace of what Gananath Obeyesekere earlier called "Protestant Buddhism." The term remains in use, although "Buddhist Modernism" has emerged as a popular alternative among scholars. Protestant Buddhism refers to the modern reform of Buddhism along rationalistic lines. The critiques of Western missionaries on the allegedly superstitious nature of Buddhism encouraged Buddhist reformers to emphasize aspects of the religion that complement the modern esteem for scientific truths and reasons. Reformers such as Anagarika Dharmapala (1864–1933) helped bring about distinctive changes in the practice of Buddhism in Sri Lanka. Greater emphasis on meditation, the study of the scriptures of the Pāli canon, and increased roles for laypersons became the hallmarks of Protestant Buddhism.

Although there is evidence that Sri Lankan Buddhists began to move in the direction of such reforms earlier, the polemics of British missionaries and the sympathetic support offered by the American Theosophist Henry Steel Olcott were instrumental in the reinterpretation of Buddhism in Sri Lanka in the final decades of the 19th century. Reacting to missionary critiques, Sri Lankan Buddhists began to cite the rational and empirical basis for Buddhist teachings. The Buddha, they claimed, avoided making supernatural claims and instead urged his followers to purify and develop their minds in order to analyze the causes of human suffering and to discover truth on their own. Laypersons too were encouraged to meditate and study the Buddha's Dharma, or teachings, without relying on ritualism or the mediation of clerics. This reformed version of Buddhism appealed most to urban, English-educated Buddhists like Dharmapala. As a result, their writings and advocacy for a reformed, rationalistic Buddhism were easily exported outside Sri Lanka, influencing a modernist reinterpretation of the tradition elsewhere.

At the same time, scholars such as T. W. Rhys Davids (1843–1922), the British civil servant who studied the Pāli language while stationed in Ceylon (as Sri Lanka was then known), supported the reformed vision of Buddhism by acknowledging the oldest Pāli texts as the authentic source for discerning the pristine form of "original"

Buddhism. Davids founded the Pāli Text Society in England, which gave more attention to the scriptures of the Pāli canon than Sri Lankan Buddhists themselves had given. Whereas Sri Lankans had historically relied more on anthologies, commentaries, and translations of Pāli accounts into literary forms of the vernacular Sinhala language, the Pāli scriptures took on new import as the standard by which one measured the legitimacy of Buddhism in the modern period. Protestant Buddhism also sought to return to the original form of the religion as taught by the Buddha himself. Legacies of Protestant Buddhism still exist today. Weekly “Dharma-school” classes offer religious instruction to Buddhist children; laypeople are instructed in meditation practices in temples and newly founded meditation centers; and a general discourse privileging the rational and scientific basis of Buddhism is still encountered in sermons, newspapers, and everyday conversation.

Buddhist Nationalism

Along with the phenomenon of Protestant Buddhism, the rise of Buddhist Nationalism in Sri Lanka appeared as another product of European colonialism. Earlier efforts to revive the state of Buddhism in the country became closely linked with aspirations for national independence from Great Britain. Dharmapala and other early 20th-century advocates for reviving Buddhism blamed the religion’s sorry state on Christian missionaries and a lack of British support for promoting Buddhist institutions. The Kandyan Convention in 1815 that formally handed over the kingdom of Kandy in the central highlands to British rule specifically called on the British to patronize the *Sangha*. The British, however, did not actively promote Buddhism, at least to the extent that local Sri Lankan Buddhists desired. Consequently, calls to reform Buddhism quickly became allied with calls for independence in Sri Lanka. Shortly after losing control of India, the British ceded their authority in Sri Lanka to a party of English-educated political elites called the United National Party (UNP) in 1948. Opposition to the UNP coalesced around a more left-leaning Sinhala-dominated political movement, which eventually took office in 1956 and pushed for various measures to revive Buddhism.

The year 1956 became an important period for fostering Buddhist nationalism in Sri Lanka. Buddhist monks and laypersons planned a series of celebrations in that year to commemorate the 2,500th anniversary of the Buddha’s final nirvana. Also in 1956, a government-sponsored commission issued a report called “The Betrayal of Buddhism” that linked colonial support for Christian schools, churches, and hospitals with weakening the vitality and position of Buddhism in the island. The commission’s report called for the government to take concrete steps to restore Buddhism to its “rightful place” as the predominant religion of the nation. Numerous Buddhist organizations advocated for increased state support for the religion after what in their eyes were the many years of neglect it endured under colonial rulers. Ancient Buddhist sites were restored, two monastic colleges were turned into national universities, and large numbers of monks began to canvass for political parties. Over the latter half of the 20th century, Buddhism and the Sinhala nation became closely intertwined as the symbolic roots of the island’s cultural heritage. Not surprisingly, such discourse only marginalized the minority populations of Tamils, Muslims, and Sinhala Christians, and it contributed to ethnic tensions that occasionally spilled over into riots and communal violence.

In the early 21st century, Buddhist nationalism in Sri Lanka remains a potent force. While the island’s other religions have received state recognition and varying measures of assistance, Buddhism continues to receive proportionately more government support and media attention as the religion of the majority of the population. Renowned monks from Colombo-based temples make public statements calling for the government to promote Buddhist values and institutions throughout the country. A new political party originally comprising Buddhist monks was founded in 2004 and ran for parliamentary seats. The National Sinhala Heritage (*Jathika Hela Urumaya* or JHU) party surprised observers by winning several seats, which allowed the new monastic members of parliament to emerge as power brokers in a divided parliament. The JHU presented bills to restrict sales of alcohol and cigarettes and, more controversially, to prohibit “unethical conversions.” The rapid growth of new evangelical Christian groups in

parts of Sri Lanka has motivated Buddhist nationalists to criminalize attempts to make people convert to Christianity by using financial inducements or other “unethical” means. This legislation, parts of which have been declared unconstitutional by the country’s supreme court, has been tabled but not before triggering international calls of protest by church groups and foreign governments like that of the United States. The anticonversion legislation is symbolic of the nationalists’ anxiety over the global intrusions of evangelical Christianity and foreign cultural forms such as Hindi movies from India. Global forces seen to weaken Sri Lankan Buddhists’ commitment to Buddhist morality and adherence to the Buddha’s Dharma tend to provoke strong opposition among politically active monks and lay proponents of Buddhist nationalist causes.

At the same time, Buddhist nationalists do not always simply reject globalization as a pernicious, immoral trend. Evincing more complex and ambivalent attitudes toward the global movements of religious and cultural forms, many Buddhist nationalists embrace opportunities to establish temples in countries such as Australia, Malaysia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Some Buddhist groups sponsor the publication of English books on the Dharma for free distribution abroad. And efforts are under way to link up with overseas Buddhist foundations to establish a Red Lotus Society that could deliver relief supplies to Buddhist victims of disasters. This initiative to engage in social service is an extension of earlier nationalist efforts to uplift the nation in accordance with Buddhist principles of generosity and compassion. Providing social service on an international scale is seen as desirable since it also helps free Buddhists from their dependence on Christian aid groups who, it is widely believed, mix proselytization with disaster and poverty relief.

Diaspora and Virtual Communities

The mass migration of Sri Lankan Tamils and Sinhalese away from Sri Lanka, due largely to the social and economic instability deriving from the decades-long civil war, adds another important perspective to the country’s global religious landscape. Following a series of violent riots that left a few thousand Tamils dead in 1983, large numbers

of Sri Lankan Tamils emigrated to Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom, and Norway as political refugees. The lengthy conflict between the LTTE and the Sri Lankan military resulted in a defeat for the LTTE and the massacre of Tamil resistance forces in 2009. This put tremendous strains on Tamil citizens living in the northern and eastern provinces, which had been claimed as an independent Tamil state by the LTTE. Some well-to-do Tamils emigrated decades earlier for economic opportunities. But the numbers of overseas Sri Lankan Tamils swelled as a result of threats of violence from both warring parties and the widespread dislocation that resulted from the fighting. Large numbers of Sinhalese have sought to emigrate to Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States among other countries to seek out better lives for themselves and their families.

Whenever these diaspora communities reach a critical mass, Hindu and Buddhist temples are established to meet the religious needs and cultural interests of Sri Lankans living abroad. Tamils in the United Kingdom, for instance, have brought consecrated images of the popular South Indian deity Murugan to be installed in British Hindu temples (*kovils*). Brahman priests perform traditional rituals, and the temples hold regular festivals to celebrate their devotion to Murugan and other deities related to Shiva. Likewise, Sinhalese Buddhists have set up numerous Theravada Buddhist temples (*pansalas*) for devotees of the Buddha in London, Melbourne, Los Angeles, and elsewhere. Such temples seek to chart a path between preserving aspects of Sri Lankan culture and adapting to their new cultural environments. Traditional rituals conducted to bestow blessings are popular with immigrants, while social service activities and meditation classes have more appeal to local Westerners. Exposure to Western cultures and technologies have also led Sri Lankan religious organizations at home and abroad to create websites to promote their activities and elicit support. For instance, the Skanda Vale Hindu Temple in Wales and the Dharma Vijaya Buddhist temple in Los Angeles maintain polished websites that inform and organize their respective supporters. Some local Sri Lankan religious organizations like the Buddhist Janavijaya Foundation have also created websites to promote their activities abroad to foreign and expatriate supporters.

Religions in Sri Lanka have experienced and reacted to global forces for several centuries. However, more recent challenges and opportunities in the political and economic spheres have increasingly led Sri Lankans to reinterpret and adapt their religious traditions to meet new and more dynamic global realities. Migration, media, foreign aid, new technologies, and other global phenomena have caused local Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims, and Christians to conceive of and practice their respective religions differently as they are confronted by new options and unforeseen pressures on traditional religions.

Stephen C. Berkwitz

See also Anglicans; Christianity; Engaged Buddhist Groups; Hinduism; Islam; Meditation; Olcott, Henry Steel; Protestant Buddhism; Sangha; Sarvodaya Movement; Shaivism; Theravada Buddhism

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SRINIVAS, M. N. (1916–1999)

M(ysoore) N(arasimhachar) Srinivas was India's best known sociologist, a scholar who helped clarify the links between Hindu ideas and India's social order. He obtained doctorates in sociology (Bombay University) and social anthropology (Oxford) and started his teaching career at Oxford. He returned to India in 1951 to establish a sociology department at Baroda University. Then, 8 years later, he became the first professor of sociology and department head at Delhi University. He became joint director of the Institute of Social and Economic Change in Bangalore in 1972 and initiated the sociology research program there. After retirement, he became a visiting professor at the National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bangalore.

Srinivas's first major publication in 1942, a study of family and marriage among Hindu castes of (southern Karnataka), devoted much attention to domestic rituals. A similar concern with ritual and social solidarity lay at the core of his classic 1952 study of the Coorg community of South India. Here, he focused on the key notions of ritual purity and impurity and introduced the notions of levels of Hinduism (local, regional, and subcontinental) and Sanskritization—the latter to describe how a lower caste may improve its social status by adopting selected elements of the widespread Brahmanical lifestyle. He thus broke open the imagined iron cage of status immobility in India and generated an enormous body of ethnography. Sanskritization was further elaborated by other scholars and Srinivas himself to bring out two major facts. These are described below.

Sanskritization is a two-way process: Not only do lower ranked status groups (castes and tribes) imitate upper-caste lifestyles and selectively internalize values, but the upper castes also pick up

elements of religious belief and practices of the others in a far-reaching strategy of their incorporation in Hindu society. Srinivas's critics have complained that in emphasizing the cohesive role of Sanskritization, he failed to bring out the hegemonic character of the process. Srinivas's well-known interest in the caste system was linked to religion inasmuch as he regarded it as the social framework for the articulation of upper-caste religious beliefs. Moreover, its traditional power dimension paradoxically opened the way for critical linkages with democratic politics.

Religiousness occupied an important place in Srinivas's own worldview. Affirming the same publicly late in his life ("Towards a new philosophy," *The Times of India*, July 9, 1993), he expressed skepticism about the capacity of secular humanism to cope with the emerging challenges of materialism and consumerism in India. He advocated a return to God as the creator, protector, and sustainer of human societies. Paradoxically, he also embraced the notions of free will and individual liberty, which he considered preconditions of democracy.

Srinivas was a thoughtful scholar, firmly grounded in empiricism (which for him meant fieldwork), contemptuous of the magic of quantification in the understanding of social life and suspicious of grand theorizing. Increasingly, he emphasized the social scientist's social obligations, but all through life, he maintained his distance from active politics and the state. He was undoubtedly the most outstanding sociologist and social anthropologist of his generation in India, with a worldwide reputation.

T. N. Madan

See also Dumont, Louis; Durkheim, Émile; Hinduism; India; Sanskrit

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ST. KITTS AND NEVIS

Located only 2 miles (1 mile = 1.609344 kilometers) apart, the Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis is a two-island eastern Caribbean nation positioned on the Leeward Islands chain in the Lesser Antilles. With a collective land mass of 261 square kilometers and a population of around 50,000 people, it stands as the New World's smallest and least populous nation. Saint Christopher (later abbreviated to St. Kitts) became Britain's first Caribbean colony in 1623, soon establishing a slave-driven economy of cotton and sugar production.

As former British colonies, and later a Britain-associated self-governing state (with Anguilla, which seceded in 1971), St. Kitts and Nevis became an independent federation in 1983. Like Canada and Australia, St. Kitts and Nevis is a Commonwealth realm and sovereign state in the Commonwealth of Nations, with Queen Elizabeth II as monarch and head of state. The nation has a governor-general, prime minister and deputy prime minister, bicameral parliament, and separately run Nevisian assembly. The fragile twin-island nation is held together despite Nevis' constitutional right to secede and dissolve federation ties if successful in a two-thirds majority vote, last attempted via referendum in 1998.

Today, the English-speaking nation is mostly African Caribbean, with small percentages of diasporic British, Lebanese, and the Portuguese residents. The Church of England and the Catholic Church established mission parishes in the 17th century, but for more than 200 years were ineffective in mass proselytization of the majority enslaved African inhabitants. Most of the country's inhabitants today practice a form of Christianity, with about 40% being Anglicans, 10% Catholics, and many worshippers belonging to various Protestant sects. Minor populations following Baha'i and Islam exist; there are also unofficially recognized believers in Obeah, which uses folklore and African-derived root practices.

Though sugarcane is still plentifully available, the industry was shut down in 2005. Plantation homes, once a reflection of the New World economy's reliance on slave labor, have today been converted into tourist sites as inns, museums, and historical attractions. Events drawing in visitors and

locals alike include independence, music, carnival, and culturama festivals; historic ruins and churches like St. George's Anglican Church on St. Kitts and Fathergill's Nevisian Heritage Village; and UNESCO's World Heritage Site, the large fortress, Brimstone Hill, on St. Kitts. The bays, beaches, and lush tropical foliage entice tourists and support the local fishing and agricultural industries.

Christi M. Dietrich

See also Anglicans; Anguilla; Antigua and Barbuda; Caribbean; Christianity; Diaspora

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STUPA

Although typically associated with monuments in the Buddhist traditions, the Sanskrit word *stūpa* refers most basically to “a heap or pile of earth or bricks” (Monier-Williams, 1899). The stupa qua Buddhist reliquary derives from earlier traditions in which important bodies were placed within burial mounds. References to similar structures can also be found in Jain and Hindu literature. The prominent Buddhist practice of enshrining bodily relics within the stupa is documented in the *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta* of the Pāli canon. Ānanda, the Buddha's premier disciple, asks what should be done with the Buddha's remains after his final entrance into nirvana. The Buddha replies that, after his cremation, “a *stūpa* should be erected at the crossroads . . . and whoever [makes offerings] there with a devout heart will reap benefit and happiness for a long time” (*Mahāparinibbāna Sutta*, 5.10, p. 264).

History, Form, and Symbolism

The Buddhist tradition holds that there were eight original stupas in India and Nepal that were

commemorative of the Buddha's earthly activities and that housed his cremated physical remains. During the reign of King Asoka, however, it is said that the Buddha's relics were more widely dispersed throughout South Asia in 84,000 stupas. Early stupas—such as the circa third-century BCE stupa at Sanchi, India—were round and domed, constructed on an architectural floorplan of a wheel, while later stupas—such as the circa ninth-century CE stupa at Borobodur, Indonesia—followed the design of the mandala. The architectural features of later stupas directly influenced the East Asian pagoda.

Stupas have an elaborate symbolic structure. Their various steps, terraces, and spires represent different realms of existence, different Buddhist deities, and the various stages of the path to enlightenment. The form of the stupa is also a microcosmic representation of Mount Meru, the central structure of the Buddhist cosmos.

Sacred Space and Religious Practice

For Buddhist practitioners, the most significant aspect of the stupa is that it houses some sort of relics. The most valuable relics are of course those of the Buddha, but stupas also enshrine the physical remains or possessions of other important Buddhist figures, collections of scriptures, or religious paraphernalia that is no longer in use but requires special disposal. Making offerings to a stupa that houses the relics of the Buddha is tantamount to making an offering to the Buddha himself, as, according to the theory of the three Buddha bodies, the presence of the Buddha endures in his physical remains. Consequently, stupas produce a sacred space within which Buddhists engage in merit-making practices, primarily through the circumambulation of the stupa. Whether constructed alongside temples and monasteries or in the vicinity of sacred lakes and mountains, stupas are a ubiquitous feature of the Buddhist landscape.

Commissioning the construction of a stupa is also considered a meritorious action both for the sponsor and for those involved in its highly ritualized construction. As the Buddhist tradition was introduced throughout Central Asia in particular, the ritual construction of stupas became a means of demarcating the boundaries of Buddhism as well as of subjugating any potentially malevolent

local deities and enlisting their support of the Dharma.

Jared Lindahl

See also Asoka; Cambodia; Hinduism; India; Jainism; Laos; Mahayana Buddhism; Nepal; Southeast Asia; Sri Lanka; Symbol; Thailand; Theravada Buddhism

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SUDAN

Deriving its name from *Balad as-Sdn* (“Land of the Blacks”), the Republic of the Sudan (*Jumhryat as-Sdn*) was until 2011 the largest country in Africa and is distinguished by historically multi-variate regimes and civilizations. Encompassing the ancient northern kingdoms of Kush and Christian Nubia, Sudan’s ethnically diverse population includes the Furs in western Sudan, and it also included the Nubians and the Dinkas in the region that became the country of South Sudan in 2011. In 640 CE, the Rashidun caliphate brought Islam to northern Africa and left Sudan overwhelmingly Muslim and ethnically Arab (with Arabic remaining Sudan’s lingua franca).

In 1821, Egypt’s Muhammad Ali Pasha’s invasion of Sudan marked the beginning of the *Turkiyah* (1821–1885) or Turco-Egyptian rule, which was challenged in May 1881 by a member of the Isma’iliyya religious brotherhood, Muhammad Ahmad (1845–1885). Calling for jihad against the

khedive (the Ottoman Empire’s Egyptian viceroy), Ahmad declared himself the *Mahdi* (“the guided one”), the messianic leader whose spiritual and temporal authority would presage the end of the world. After defeating British General C. S. Gordon’s Egyptian forces and capturing Khartoum in 1885, the Mahdi and his adherents, the *Ansar*, established the *Mahdiyyah* (1885–1898), or Mahdist state, which introduced Shari’a law and urged continued jihad. Attempting to defend imperial interests and secure control of the Sudanese Nile, British confrontations with the *Mahdiyya* also sought to reclaim khedival Egyptian lands taken after 1885. In September 1898, General Horatio Kitchener, the *sirdar* (“commander”) of the Anglo-Egyptian regulars, routed the *Ansar* outside Omdurman, and shortly thereafter the *Mahdiyya* collapsed. In January 1899, the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium (1899–1955) was promulgated and placed Sudan under both countries’ indirect, *co-domini* administration. Following independence on January 1, 1956, the nascent Sudanese state was beset with sectarian and regional conflicts (between northern Muslims, southern Christians, and the southern *Anyanya* insurgency).

Since 1956, multiple-party Muslim civilian governments and single-party military states have alternately ruled Sudan. In September 1983, Jafar al-Numeiri’s military regime (1969–1985) introduced Shari’a law with an emphasis on *hudud* (“moral transgressions”) punishments, but discontent prompted a coup in April 1985. Four years later, General ‘Umar Hasan al-Bashir, who was guided by the Muslim Brotherhood’s National Islamic Front leader Hasan al-Turabi, overthrew the short-lived multiparty civilian government and proscribed all political parties. Al-Bashir’s rule has evinced strong support for conservative Islamic groups outside Sudan. Beginning in 2003, the Janjaweed, who comprise Chadian and Darfurian Arab militiamen, backed by Al-Bashir appropriated land from non-Arab Darfurians while targeting those groups in a genocidal campaign. The Darfur Peace Agreement, which was negotiated in 2006, has not brokered an enduring cessation of hostilities. The 2005 peace accord between Khartoum and the southern insurgents, however, generated a tenuous peace and a separatist resolution to the conflict in the southern region. A referendum held in July 2011 resulted in a vote of more than 99% of the southern residents

to form an independent state comprising the Christian and the traditional African animistic cultural areas of the south. On July 9, 2011, South Sudan officially became the world's newest country.

Bobby L. Smiley

See also Africa; Islam; Islamism (Political Islam); Mahdi of Sudan; Muslim Brotherhood; South Sudan

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SUFISM

Sufism is often described as Muslim mysticism. It is a form of Islamic knowledge and piety that focuses on exceeding the obligations of Islamic worship, into the realm of the supererogatory. In this regard, Sufis have sometimes been referred to as “greedy Muslims” due to their intense desire for divine reward. The distinction between “Sufi” and “non-Sufi” Islam is scarcely black and white, though there are a number of characteristics that typify Sufi expressions of Islam: intensified spiritual practices, emphasis on student-teacher relationships, saint veneration, tomb visitation, focus on love and union, organized communities called *tariqas* (lit. “paths,” but here meaning spiritual orders), esoteric interpretations of the Qur’an, and interest in mysticism. Sunnīs and Shi’i alike have practiced Sufism, though it is historically more common in Sunnī Islam. Shi’a teachers have been venerated by some Sunnī Sufis, however, including the revered Ja’far al-Ṣādiq, the sixth Shi’i imam and Qur’anic exegete. Despite Sunnī prevalence within the Sufi tradition, almost all traditional *tariqas* trace their lineage to Prophet Muhammad (d. 632) through Alī ibn Abī Ṭalīb (d. 661), his first cousin and the first Shi’ite imam.

This entry charts the development of Sufism from the time of Prophet Muhammad to modern

times. Particular attention is given to definitions of Sufism, its historical evolution, geographical expansion, and the role of key Sufi figures and Sufi orders.

Definitions and Origins Sufism

Sufism is an English term, developed by British Orientalists in India in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. It is derived from the Arabic word *tasawwuf*, a verbal noun meaning “to become like wool” or “to resemble wool.” The term *Sufi* (an adjectival form of “*Suf*,” meaning wool) was probably first coined referring to ascetics in Baghdad who wore wool garments to express their austerity. The word *Sufi* also implies that wool is pliable and can take many forms, rendering the spiritual aspirant like wool in the hands of God. The term can also be linked to other Arabic words and phrases, including *safa’* (“purity”), *safwa* (“elite”), and *ahl al-suffa* (“the people of the bench,” i.e., close companions of Prophet Muhammad). The first records of the term *Sufi* are from the eighth century, although it was not widely used parlance until the ninth century.

Etymology, however, is only of secondary importance when compared with prescriptive meanings of Sufism. Most important, definitions of Sufism are primarily teaching tools. Sages of the early Sufi movements often defined the path didactically: “Sufism is that you should not possess anything nor should anything possess you”; or “Sufism makes you die to yourself and makes you live in Him” (Nicholson, 1914, pp. 33–34). As teaching tools, definitions of Sufism from the tradition’s great teachers signify the importance of transcending a purely mental understanding of the spiritual path, placing emphasis on the heart, the locus of spiritual receptivity. Thus, like other disciplines in the Islamic sciences, there has always been a sense that Sufism cannot be understood through books alone. Even if books do complement the process, it is paramount to learn from a teacher and gain understanding through gnosis and prayer.

As the famous maxim of Abu al-Hasan Fushanja (d. ca. 959) relates, “Sufism used to be a reality without a name, but today it is a name without a reality.” That is, a living spiritual core of Sufism has always existed, even if people did not name it. Rabi’a of Basra (d. 801), for example, came to famously represent piety in later Sufi writings

because of her devotion and focus on love for God, but the term *Sufi* had not yet taken hold during her time nor during the time of Harith al-Muhasibi (d. 857), another influential forerunner of Sufism who emphasized the importance of introspection and love. The best Sufi, in the eyes of many, is Prophet Muhammad himself, though there is no record of him having used the word.

Fushanja's maxim should also indicate that Sufis were not afraid to criticize each other. There has been a steady tendency within the tradition to censure those who consider themselves Sufis while they are in fact hypocrites. As Zia Khan (b. 1971) has stated, there has always been a recognition that because gold is so beautiful, there is always fake gold. Subsequently, Sufi thought has been neither homogeneous nor unilaterally referred to as *Sufi*. Hasan al-Basri (d. 728), for example, known for his ascetic piety, has been counted among the progenitors of the Sufi tradition in works such as the influential treatise *Sustenance of the Hearts* (*Qut al-Qulub*) by Abu Talib al-Makki (d. 998)—even though Hasan al-Basri may not have been acquainted with the term *Sufi* himself. With the famous Baghdadi Sufi, Abu al-Qasim al-Junayd (d. 910), a contemporary of al-Muhasibi, emerges one of the first figures clearly recognized as a Sufi, and almost all later Sufism refers to his authority. He is moreover responsible for developing foundational concepts of *al-fana'* (annihilation of the self/ego in God), a key term in Sufism.

By the 10th century, there was a congealed enough tradition of something broadly construed as Sufism. It should be noted, moreover, that since the origins of Sufism, followers of the tradition aligned themselves explicitly with orthodox, tradition-oriented Islam, although this, of course, did not prevent them from being criticized, from all angles, for their innovative practices and anormative doctrines. Sufism would eventually be affected drastically, however, by one man whose influence would echo for centuries—namely, Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (d. 1111).

Abu Hamid al-Ghazali and Muhyi al-Din Ibn al-'Arabi

Originally from Tus, in modern-day Iran, al-Ghazali spent much of his life studying and teaching in Baghdad at the most prestigious institutions of his

day. In his spiritual autobiography, *The Deliverer From Error*, he reveals a turning point in his life of prestige and learning when, one day, his tongue froze, leaving him unable to speak. He realized that his lifelong pursuit of knowledge had left his heart empty. He then left Baghdad in pursuit of the deeper truth for which he longed, and after studying philosophy, theology, and other branches of knowledge, he concluded that the mystical knowledge of the Sufis alone fulfilled his longing—not at the expense of ritual, doctrine, and law but in tandem with them.

Although al-Ghazali was a prolific writer before his “conversion,” his postconversion works read differently, and he proceeded to write one of the great summits of Islamic scholarship, *The Resuscitation of the Religious Sciences*. In it, he writes on many topics, ranging from etiquette and love to proper understanding of faith and the inner dimensions of ritual worship. Without the inner significance of ritual form, he argues, the purpose and meaning of each practice is lost. Among his other famous works is *The Niche of Lights*, in which he explicates the inner meanings of the famous passage in Qur'an's “Chapter of Light” (Qur'an 24:35), in which God is compared with a light within a lamp. Using the Qur'an as a source of contemplation and spiritual inspiration, moreover, has always been important for Sufis.

Besides al-Ghazali, many famous Sufis have written structured commentaries (*tafsir*) on the Qur'an to elucidate its esoteric meanings, though not necessarily at the expense of apparent meanings. *The Subtleties of Allusions* by Abu al-Qasim al-Qushayri (d. 1074) and *The Realities of Qur'anic Exegesis* by al-Sulami (d. 1021) would become popular representations of Sufi commentaries on the Qur'an. Analyzing verses from the Qur'an that lend themselves particularly to mystical interpretations or emphases on love have also been popular among the Sufis, such as Qur'an 5:54, “He loves them and they love him,” emphasizing the primacy of God's love for the human, and Qur'an 2:115, “Wherever you turn, there is the face of God,” suggesting God's presence in all things.

Another great albeit highly controversial Sufi figure is Ibn al-'Arabi—sometimes Ibn 'Arabi (d. 1240). He was influenced, notably, by two women: Fatima Bint Ibn al-Muthanna of Cordoba and Shams of Marchena. He is most famous for his

Bezels of Wisdom and *Meccan Openings*. He attained the title of “The Greatest Scholar” (*al-Shaykh al-Akbar*) from his admirers and “The Greatest Unbeliever” (*al-Shaykh al-Abfar*) from his intellectual opponents. The Andalusian Sufi claimed to receive inspiration for his writings, sometimes in the form of dreams, and referred to himself as “The Seal of the Saints,” a phrase reminiscent of Muhammad’s position in the Qur’an as “The Seal of the Prophets.” He also developed the notion of “The Perfect Human” (*al-Insan al-Kamil*). Because of his provocative character, Ibn al-‘Arabi has been both hated and loved. Sufis such as Mansur al-Hallaj (d. 922) and Shihab al-Din Yahya al-Suhrawardi (d. 1191) were even executed because of their controversial views or ecstatic utterances. Accounts like these, however, are extremely rare.

Characteristics and Development of Sufi Orders

In the 12th and 13th centuries, *tariqas* began to take shape on the basis of teachings and prescribed spiritual practices of influential and charismatic *shaykhs*. They began to attract organized groups of *murids* (“students”) and would offer them formal initiation, known as a *bay‘a*, a customized oath of allegiance to the shaykh. Three practices common to *tariqas* included *dhikr* (“remembrance of God”), often in a group setting where formulaic Arabic phrases are recited repeatedly; *sam‘a* (“audition”), usually in the form of listening to music and/or love poetry; and *khalwa* (“spiritual retreat,” “isolation”), in which the student isolates herself or himself for a period of time to contemplate God and purify the soul. The process of purifying one’s soul came to integrally characterize Sufism. Hence, the notion of a *jihad* (lit. “struggle” or “effort”) against one’s *nafs* (“lower or base self”) became a quintessential part of the Sufi path and was known as the greater struggle, as opposed to military *jihad* (the lesser struggle).

Tariqas have continually arisen and diversified since their first formations. The shaykhs of these *tariqas* traditionally authenticate their positions by using a *silsila* (“chain of transmission”), which traces their lineage of spiritual teachers to Prophet Muhammad, although because *silsilas* are also symbols of authority, they are not always historically reliable. Although hundreds if not thousands of

different *tariqas* have appeared over the years, some have become more influential and widespread. The Shadhuliyya (or Shadhiliyya) began in the 13th century and became particularly widespread in North Africa and Egypt; the Chishtiyya, which began in the 12th century, became widely known in South Asia; and the Naqshbandiya, which developed in the 14th century, became influential in South, Central, and East Asia. The Mevlevi *tariqa* also became particularly important because it traces its genealogy to one of the most well-known and well-regarded figures of Persian Sufism and literature: Jalāluddīn Rūmī (d. 1273).

Jalāluddīn Rūmī

Rūmī is most famous for his masterpiece, the *Masnavi*, a six-volume collection of poetry that earned the title of “the Qur’an in Persian” for its eloquence, beauty, and literary magnificence. In his writings, Rūmī shows great reverence for his teacher, Shams of Tabriz, reinforcing the importance of student-teacher relationships in Sufi tradition. Rūmī’s recognition extends beyond the Persian-speaking world and other Muslim countries, including Turkey, where he spent much of his life and is buried. He has also gained great repute in the West, in particular the United States, where he has ranked among the best-selling poets in the country. Despite Rūmī’s universal appeal, due in part to his focus on love and universal access to the divine, he did not advocate a Sufism devoid of obligatory Muslim rituals and beliefs. Rather, like al-Ghazali and Ibn al-‘Arabi, he sought to emphasize the importance of penetrating the spiritual reality that lies beneath the shell of ritual obligations though not in spite of ritual obligations.

Similarly, a contemporary Sufi shaykh and author, Muhammad al-Jamal, refers to the *haqiqa* (“inner reality”) as the sap in a tree and the *shari‘a* (“external reality”) as the bark. Thus, without the bark, the sap would have no life—a common perception among Sufis of various locales and epochs. Despite the many qualities that unify Sufis of different sorts, however, bitter disputes also characterize Sufi tradition. Taqi al-Din Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328) is often portrayed as typifying such disputes and is sometimes considered one of Sufism’s fiercest detractors.

Taqi al-Din Ibn Taymiyya

Raised in Egypt and buried in Damascus, Ibn Taymiyya devoted his life in large part to religious reform to purify Islam from harmful accretions, including certain expressions of Sufism. Ibn Taymiyya's critiques became reappropriated in the 19th and 20th centuries with the rise of revivalist movements. Ibn Taymiyya, however, believed in authentic expressions of Sufism, and evidence suggests his membership in the Qadiriyya Sufi order. He censured particular Sufis and Sufi practices, but he also espoused the virtues of a correct Sufism. al-Ghazali did not shy away from censuring these so-called Sufis either, whom he viewed as hypocrites. In this way, al-Ghazali and Ibn Taymiyya shared much in common, although many of their views regarding how Sufism should be defined and practiced are incompatible.

Ibn Taymiyya was intimately concerned with those aspects of Sufism that dealt with ethics, purification of the soul, and intensified expressions of Muslim piety, though he rejected wholeheartedly other expressions of the tradition. Forms of audible *dhikr*, tomb visitation, music, pantheistic conceptions of God, and antinomian practices were anathema to the Sufism of Ibn Taymiyya. But he believed in an otherwise pure Sufism, a praiseworthy expression of Muslim piety.

In the face of polemics, Sufism nonetheless continued to spread and develop throughout the globe from Ibn Taymiyya's time onward. During the 20th century, a new awareness of Sufism began to disseminate thanks to translations of Sufi texts, particularly into English and European languages. Studies of Sufi texts in numerous languages also became prevalent. Because Arabic and Persian have historically been the primary languages of Muslim literature, Sufi texts have generally been unavailable to readers uninitiated in Arabic and Persian. Sufism has flourished, though, outside the boundaries of the Arabic and Persian languages.

Since the early stages of Islam, there have been Sufis where there have been Muslims. Therefore, "Sufi" literature can historically be found in a plethora of languages, and Sufi orders themselves are found throughout the globe. Sufis and Sufi orders have left particularly significant imprints from West Africa, through western and eastern Europe, to Central Asia, the Indian subcontinent, and Southeast and East Asia. Geographical and

temporal diversity have subsequently and inevitably made expressions of Sufism diverse and dynamic.

Sufism in the Modern World

Since Sufism's formative and classical periods, the tradition gave birth to renowned poets such as Abd al-Rahman Jami (d. 1492), who wrote the much esteemed story of mystical love, *Yusuf and Zulaykha*, based on the 12th chapter of the Qur'an. Sufi movements of penetrating influence, such as the Tijaniyya order, would also play decisive roles in anticolonial movements in North Africa in the 18th and 19th centuries. And the revered Algerian shaykh, Ahmad al-'Alawi (d. 1934), became an important catalyst for bringing Sufism to the United States; he was the focus of a study, *A Sufi Saint of the Twentieth Century*, by the British scholar Martin Lings, also a Sufi.

Whether discussing Britain or other "Western" countries inhabited by Muslims, though, one must remember that Muslims occupied Spain in the beginning of the eighth century, which means that "Islam in the West" is not a modern phenomenon. As for the United States, however, records of Sufism are absent prior to the early 20th century. There were many African Muslim slaves during the colonial period in what is now the United States, and those Muslims may very well have had Sufi ties, but there is no conclusive evidence to support this hypothesis. Because expressions of Sufism have almost always followed Muslims, though, it would be strange if those Muslim slaves were *not* affiliated with Sufis.

The first documented arrival of Sufism in the United States dates to the beginning of the 20th century, when a musician named Hazrat Inayat Khan (d. 1927), a member of the Chishtiyya order, arrived from India in 1910. Khan gave rise to a new chapter in Sufism and espoused a movement specifically devoid of traditional Islamic ritual obligations, including fasting, praying five times a day, and pilgrimage to Mecca (Makkah). His influence has remained significant, and he retains followers primarily in the United States and Europe. More traditional expressions of Sufism have come to the United States as well, including the Shadhuliyya, Naqshbandiyya, and Qadiriyya, among others. In

some Muslim countries, however, such as Turkey, where Sufism has traditionally thrived, Sufism has become technically illegal, though Rūmī's tomb continues to be a major source of pilgrimage, even if it is officially considered a "museum" by the Turkish government. In the face of challenges, Sufism remains a globally present tradition, and in its various expressions, it continues to spread in numbers and in controversy.

As a source of both inspiration and heresy, Sufism will continue to be a relevant and significant component in the religious landscape of Islam. Aspirants on the Sufi path will without doubt continue inquiring into the depths of Islam, seeking to realize their ethical potentials and to know the meaning behind the forms, while looking for a reality that may or may not have a name.

Elliott Bazzano

See also Asceticism; Islam; Mysticism; Neo-Sufism (Sufi Renewal); Qur'an; Saints

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SUICIDE BOMBING

A suicide bombing is a tactic in asymmetric conflicts, whereby an antagonist turns himself into an explosive device, via a suicide belt or vehicle, with the intent of killing himself and as many of the enemy as possible at the same time or nearly the same time without warning. Suicide bombings are rarely the work of lone agents; rather, they are implemented under the auspices of a sponsoring organization and are, typically, supported by a large network of handlers, cohorts, and publicists. They have occurred not only in Middle Eastern states and territories such as Israel, Afghanistan, Lebanon, Kurdistan, Iran, and Iraq but also in well over a dozen countries outside the region, where they are carried out by various organizations from the Tamil Tigers of Sri Lanka to the separatist groups of Chechnya and Sikh militants in India. Targets can be military, but they are most often civilian. Suicide bombings are now an institution and are increasingly employed as a standard component in unconventional warfare. Their symbolic import as antipolitical modes of expressing rage and grievance sometimes rivals their realpolitik value based on benefit-cost ratios or political efficiency.

The Japanese suicide attacker (*kamikaze*) and human torpedo (*kaiten*) of World War II seem to fit the definition of *suicide bomber* as employed in common parlance; however, unlike most present-day bombers, these agents were deployed by the official military organizations of nations. Many assassins from ancient times to the present can also be considered forerunners of the modern suicide bomber, particularly if the attacker dies or intends to die during the act or as a result of it. The assassin does not die by his own hand, however, and accordingly, the suicidal element is, technically speaking, absent. Despite some degree of historical precedence, suicide bombings are a contemporary phenomenon with global political, religious, and economic impact.

Given the simultaneity of suicide and homicide entailed in suicide bombings, the English term is inadequate, yet all attempts to replace it have failed. It is largely eschewed in the Islamic world, suicide being strictly forbidden in Islam. Muslims refer rather to acts of *istishhad* or *shahada*, "martyrdom," the latter term signifying also the testimony

of faith, one of the five pillars of the Islamic faith. The *shahid* (plural *shuhada*), or martyr, is one who dies *fi sabil Allah*, “on the path of Allah,” while the term *living martyr* refers to one who has accepted the command of martyrdom but for the moment remains alive. Although Hezbollah carried out numerous suicide attacks beginning in 1982 and lasting until the Israeli withdrawal from Lebanon in 1999, widespread usage of the term *suicide bomber* in Western media began with the 1983 attack on U.S. Marine and French barracks in Beirut. Claimed by the Islamic jihad but thought by many to have been supported by Hezbollah and Iran, the attack resulted in the deaths of 241 American service people and 58 French paratroopers. Most suicide attacks that followed in its wake took place within the Israeli-Palestinian domain and were initially carried out by Hamas, although they soon became a tactic favored also by Fatah militants.

The most deadly of suicide bombings took place on September 11, 2001, when 19 jihadists associated with al Qaeda commandeered four passenger planes and then used them as manned missiles against New York’s World Trade Center and other sites. The reasons cited by al Qaeda for the attack include the occupation of the lands of Islam and the presence of non-Muslims in Arabia, particularly their over-close proximity to Mecca (Makkah). The attack on 9/11 resulted in the collapse of the twin towers as well as numerous nearby structures, with more than 2,700 fatalities. Among the casualties were citizens from more than 90 nations. The economic ramifications of the act were vast and global, amounting to billions of dollars, and the political ramifications, greater still. The American response included the enactment of the Patriot Act and the invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan. Since 2003, vehicle-borne IEDs (improvised explosive devices) and suicide bombings in Iraq have caused thousands of deaths, and the vast majority of these have been of Iraqi civilians who are their direct targets.

There does not seem to exist a single profile for a suicide bomber, although many attempts have been made to create one in terms of age, socioeconomic position, marital status, level of education, and psychological parameters. In addition, it is difficult to ascertain precisely the reasons why some groups foster suicide bombings, while others

eschew them. Typically, there is a strong and explicit ideological or religious component in both the ideation of the attacker and the program of the sponsoring organization, and the attack is prepared for and sometimes rehearsed in highly ritualistic if not cultic fashion, particularly if suicide bombings represent a novel method within the society in question. Of the two—political ideology or religion—the latter has, generally, proven to be a particularly powerful cohesive element and motivating factor, although various mixtures of nationalism and religiosity have also shown themselves to be potent. Whenever religious imperatives are cited as the major motivation for an attack, it is likely that ambitions going beyond mere territory are involved. In the case of the Islamists, the goal of a political entity that transcends nationalism while retaining notions of sovereignty and conquest finds divine imprimatur and catalyzing force in the resurrection of the scriptural notion of the *umma*, the worldwide community of Muslim believers.

Asymmetry of power in conventional military terms is an invariant feature of all suicide bombings to date, but this element is less clear-cut than it might seem in the age of chemical, nuclear, and biological warfare. With the advent of new technologies and new media, the conventional distinction between war and terror has become increasingly blurred. The waging of war has always entailed the possibility of killing and dying at roughly one and the same time; however, the survival of the soldier has long signified in and of itself a fundamental victory. In contrast, the distinguishing mark of a suicide bomber is certain death through a radical inseparability of human agency and means of weapons delivery. Judgment of suicide bombings depends largely on religious and cultural understandings of suicide as well as attitudes toward the acceptability or unacceptability of targeting unmarked victims. In those cultures in which suicide is prohibited or frowned on, emphasis is placed on the homicidal element of the act. The use of strong explosives serves to make the religious prohibition of suicide less problematic by ensuring a virtual simultaneity of suicide and homicide; however, this type of death is also theologically problematic and must be reconciled with prevailing concepts of postmortem corporal integrity through innovative exegeses of scriptural texts

and cultural traditions, particularly in societies in which a doctrine of the full resurrection of the body remains operative.

Organizations that sponsor suicide missions utilize traditional media such as newspapers, magazines, and newscasts as well as theater and film to advertise and disseminate their goals and ideology to the general public on whose support they depend. Political ephemera and underground media, including leaflets, audiotapes, videotapes, and graffiti, are employed for the same purpose, generally with far greater efficacy, and are also used to recruit, reward, and commemorate bombers. Increasingly, sponsor organizations and their armed wings possess strong web presences and make use of a variety of social media as well. Themes of glory, *amor fati*, revenge, martyrdom, self-sacrifice, and apocalypse are, typically, encoded even in new media in highly formal historical modes of expression, including poetry, song, and scriptural exegesis.

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See also al Qaeda; Hamas; Hezbollah; Islamism (Political Islam); Martyrdom; Shi'a Islam; Sri Lanka; Terrorism; Violence; War on Terrorism

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SUNNĪ ISLAM

Sunnī is a term designating the largest sectarian grouping of Muslims today, who are sometimes identified as the “orthodox.” Sunnī Muslims, or “Sunnīs,” comprise roughly 85%–90% of the world’s Muslim population and can be found all over the globe. What can be called the Sunnī understanding of Islam gradually emerged in relation to

other Muslim sectarian groups, specifically the Shi’i (*Shī’a*) and Kharijites (*Khawarij*), and became recognizable as a distinctive orientation beginning in the third century AH/ninth century CE. The term *Sunnī* is short for *Ahl Al-Sunna wa Al-Jama* (“People of the Sunna and the Community”), indicating that the Prophet’s authoritative example and the preservation of the unity of the *umma* (“Islamic community”) are two important cornerstones of what came to constitute Sunnī Islam. Of course, Sunnī Muslims have continued to interpret and elaborate on their particular understandings of Islam, such that a truly astonishing variety of doctrines, interpretations, and practices exist among Muslims who consider themselves Sunnīs. Nevertheless, certain broad characteristics typify those who fall under the rubric of Sunnī: recognition of the first four caliphs as legitimate, refusal to attribute any special political or religious role to the descendants of Alī ibn Abī Tālib (the Prophet’s son-in-law, regarded as the first legitimate leader of Shi’i, d. 40 AH/661 CE), adherence to one of the four recognized legal schools, and broadly distinctive positions on legal theory and theology.

Historical Development

The Question of Leadership

The foundations of Sunnī Islam were laid after the death of Prophet Muhammad, though something discernable as Sunnī Islam proper would not fully mature until several centuries later and after much development. According to Islamic sources, on the Prophet’s death, disagreements surrounding the succession to Muhammad split the early Islamic community into those who supported the caliphate of Abu Bakr al-Siddiq (d. 13 AH/634 CE), a prominent early companion of the Prophet and member of the Prophet’s tribe of Quraysh, and those who regarded Alī’s familial relation to Prophet Muhammad as giving him exclusive rights to rule the Islamic community. Those who supported Alī and later looked to his family for leadership of the Islamic community became the Shi’i. After Abū Bakr, ‘Umar b. al-Khattāb (r. 13–23 AH/634–644 CE) and ‘Uthmān b. ‘Affān (r. 24–35 AH/644–656 CE), both Qurayshīs, successively led the Islamic community as caliphs before a mutiny resulted in ‘Uthmān’s killing and prompted

sections of the Islamic community to call on Alī to assume leadership. When he did assume leadership, however, Alī faced significant resistance to his rule. During this period, known as the first Islamic civil war or *fitna*, Alī faced resistance from ‘Ā’isha, Abū Bakr’s daughter and wife of Prophet Muhammad, who along with her supporters lost to Alī’s army at the Battle of the Camel in 35 AH/656 CE. Alī then faced ‘Uthmān’s kinsman, Mu‘āwiya b. Abī Sufyān, the governor of Damascus, who claimed that Alī had not punished the killers of ‘Uthmān and who refused to recognize Alī as caliph. Mu‘āwiya and his army escaped defeat at the Battle of Ṣiffīn in 36 AH/657 CE by enticing Alī to accept arbitration of the battle, an event that shortly thereafter caused a significant portion of Alī’s army to desert him. These secessionists became the Kharijites, who rejected both ‘Uthmān and Alī and elected one of their own, ‘Abd Allāh b. Wahb al-Rāsibī, a non-Qurayshī, to lead them as their imam. After a Kharijite murdered Alī, Mu‘āwiya assumed leadership of the Islamic community, ushering in the Umayyad Caliphate.

Despite the fractious nature of early Islamic history, Sunnīs came to look on the first four leaders (Abū Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthmān, and Alī) as especially pious and legitimate, referring to them as the “rightly guided” caliphs (*al-khulafā’ al-rāshidūn*). Unlike Shi’i, Sunnīs did not posit any special religious or political role for Alī beyond his being one of the rightly guided caliphs. Likewise, Sunnīs did not place any extra significance on his familial relation to Prophet Muhammad or look to Alī’s progeny, known along with Alī as the imams, for religious or political guidance. The terms *caliph* and *imam*, for Sunnīs, both refer to the political leader of the *umma*. Shi’i and Kharijites, however, tend not to use the term *caliph*, and instead use *imam* as a way of distinguishing their particular leaders and their specific view on leadership, from the Sunnī caliphs and the Sunnī conception of the caliphate (for all Muslims, the term *imam* also designates a leader of prayers in a mosque or a particularly authoritative religious scholar). Moreover, Sunnī jurisprudence later codified the requirement that the caliph be from the tribe of Quraysh, in contrast to the Kharijites who accepted (in theory) any pious Muslim as leader and rejected as illegitimate ‘Uthmān and Alī. Abū al-Ḥasan al-Mawardī (d. 450 AH/1058 CE) penned the classic work on the

Sunnī view toward the caliphate, *al-Aḥkām al-Sultāniyya* (The Ordinances of Government).

Legal and Theological Foundations

Along with the issue of leadership, distinctive answers to legal and theological questions helped form what became Sunnī Islam. Mu‘āwiya, who remained unpopular with many Muslims, nevertheless bolstered his claims to legitimacy with appeals to the principle of *jamā’a* (preserving the unity of the Islamic *umma*). In the wake of the first civil war, this approach proved effective and continued to animate (in part) Umayyad claims to legitimacy in the face of the many rebellions that transpired during their roughly 100 years of rule. When a Shi’ite-inspired revolution finally toppled the Umayyads in 132 AH/750 CE, installing the ‘Abbāsids as the rulers of Islamdom, the term *jamā’a* came to imply the unity of the community under the leadership of the ‘Abbāsīd caliphs, in opposition to those Shi’i and Kharijites who refused to recognize their legitimacy. In this way, the concept of preserving unity came to be associated with those who would become known by the term Sunnī. Among jurists, the notion of communal unity found its reflection in the concept of *ijmā’*, the consensus of the religious scholars on a point of law, as one of the legitimate sources of legal reasoning after the Qur’an and *sunna*.

At the same time, the ‘Abbāsīd era witnessed among the nascent Sunnī movement a narrowing of the concept of *sunna* to denote the example of Prophet Muhammad almost exclusively. The pre-Islamic concept of *sunna* originally indicated the authoritative conduct of a person: pre-Islamic northern Arabs, for example, were said to have looked to Ismail (Ishmael) as an exemplar of pious behavior as early as the fifth century. In the early Islamic period, the notion of *sunna* included a wide field of persons considered worthy of emulation: Prophet Muhammad and his companions in particular, but for some Muslims, even the Umayyad caliphs were sources of *sunna*; the Shi’a included Alī and some of his progeny among those considered worthy of emulation. In the ‘Abbāsīd era, the jurist al-Shafi’i (d. 204 AH/820 CE) restricted the notion of legitimate *sunna* to Prophet Muhammad alone (though in reality, several of his companions continued to function as sources of

emulation). al-Shafī'i's notion of Prophetic sunna became the standard for subsequent legal thinking and was adopted more or less by the four legal schools that came to be accepted as part of the Sunnī fold: the Shāfi'ī (named after al-Shafī'i), Mālikī (after Mālik b. Anas, d. 179 AH/795 CE), Ḥanbalī (after Ahmad Ibn Ḥanbal, d. 241 AH/855 CE), and Ḥanafī (after Abū Ḥanīfa, d. 148 AH/767 CE). Today, the Shāfi'ī school is prevalent in Southeast Asia, the Mālikī in Africa, and the Ḥanbalī in the Arabian Peninsula. The Ḥanafī school is perhaps the most prevalent due to its adoption by various Islamic states such as the Ottomans and Mughals and can be found throughout Islamdom.

Concurrent with changes in the concept of the sunna, 'Abbāsīd-era jurists gradually did away with the notion of personal opinion (*ra'y*) on points of law in favor of analogical reasoning (*qiyās*), a form of legal judgment (*ijtihād*) that seeks equivalences with legal principles that have been established by the Qur'an and sunna. Together with the Qur'an, Prophetic sunna, and *ijmā'*, *qiyās* became one of the four "sources of law" (*usul al-fiqh*) that form the basis for Sunnī Islamic legal thought. However, it is important to note that the "sources of law" are recognized by non-Sunnīs as well, and thus, the distinctive Sunnī approaches to law are often a matter of emphasis rather than absolute difference. For example, Shi'ite Muslim jurists look to the sunna of their imams in addition to the Prophetic sunna as sources of law and devotion. Shi'i also tend to favor the *ijtihād* of the imams, or that of a jurist considered the imam's representative, over *ijmā'*. Moreover, both Sunnī and Shi'ite Muslims practice the "five pillars" of Islam (with some minor differences in actual practice).

Along with the flowering of Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*), the 'Abbāsīd era likewise witnessed the maturation of Islamic theology (*kalām*). In the Umayyad period, a variety of religious questions, such as the nature of belief, the status of the unrepentant sinner who professes Islam, the character of religious leadership, and the freedom or determination of human action, arose as the result of the actions (or inactions) of various sectarian groups. As 'Abbāsīd-era theologians continued to debate these questions, one group of rationalist theologians, the Mu'tazila, enjoyed caliphal support between 189–218 AH/833–847 CE for their doctrine of the created Qur'an. In what became

known as the *mihna* (ordeal or inquisition), the caliph al-Ma'mūn questioned, flogged, imprisoned, and even tortured those who refused to accept that God's speech, the Qur'an, was created in time and separate from God's essence. Among those imprisoned and tortured was Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal, the eponymous figurehead of the Ḥanbalī legal school and associate of those who eschewed formal theology in favor of textual guidance in questions of practical piety. This group looked to the Qur'an but also to the reports about what Prophet Muhammad said, did, or silently confirmed—the Hadith. The People of Hadith (*ahl al-ḥadīth*), as they came to be known, reflected popular discontent with the intellectualism of the Mu'tazilites by championing a more accessible interpretation of Islamic doctrines, including the notion that the Qur'an was eternal, coexistent with God. The cruelty of the *mihna* harmed the popularity of the Mu'tazilites and bolstered the position of the *ahl al-ḥadīth*.

Yet it was the Ash'arī school of theology, founded by a former Mu'tazilite named Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ash'arī (d. 324 AH/926 CE), that gradually replaced the Mu'tazila by defending traditional Islamic beliefs using theological methodology. Al-Ash'arī argued that God created all action, including human action, but that human beings nevertheless possess the ability to act (and thus, to be judged for their actions) through a process called "performance" (*iktisāb*). Though some nascent Sunnī Muslims followed another school of theology—that of Abū Maṣū'ir al-Māturīdī (d. 333 AH/944 CE)—by the middle of the 4th century AH/10th century CE, the essential ingredients of Sunnī understandings of Islam were in place: the popular piety of the People of Hadith, the four legal schools, the theologies of al-Ash'arī and al-Māturīdī, and the ideal of Islamic unity promoted by the 'Abbāsīds.

Various written creeds (singular *'aqīda*) testify to the emerging (and continuing) articulation of Sunnī Islam: the *Fiqh Akbar* I and II, both ascribed to Abū Ḥanīfa; the *Waṣīya* (Testament) of Abū Ḥanīfa; *al-Ibāna 'an Usūl al-Diyāna* (Clarification of the Foundations of Religion) by al-Ash'arī; the *'Aqīda* of Abū Ja'far al-Ṭaḥawī; al-Taftāzānī's commentary on al-Nasafī's *'Aqīda*; and al-Jurjānī's commentary on al-Ijī's *al-Mawāqif* (The Stations). Also significant to the elaboration of Sunnī Islam

were works of heresiography—encyclopedic manuals that sought to identify the doctrines and practices of the “saved sect” (meaning, for Sunnī authors, the Sunnīs) in comparison to those that were to be damned. Important heresiographical works from the Sunnī tradition include al-Ash‘arī’s *Maqālāt al-Islamiyyīn wa Ikhtilāf al-Muṣallīn* (“The Discourse of the Proponents of Islam and the Differences Among the Worshippers”), al-Baghḍādī’s *al-Farq bayn al-Firaq* (“The Differences Between the Sects”) and al-Shahrastānī’s *Kitāb al-Milal wa’l-Niḥal* (“The Book of Religions and Sects”). These creeds and heresiographies attempt to create minimum standards for what constitutes Sunnī Islam and in the process seek to promote Sunnī Islam as the “orthodox” form of Islam. However, the conceptual range of what can be said to constitute Sunnī forms of Islam combined with a lack of centralized authority to ultimately fix doctrines and practices complicates the idea of “orthodoxy” as such. Indeed, the term Sunnī might more fruitfully be understood as an umbrella concept that allows for considerable leeway in its actual application.

Modern Developments Among Sunnī Muslims

Many of the central concepts of Sunnī Islam have evolved and continue to develop in light of modern conditions in which Sunnīs find themselves. Specifically, contemporary Sunnī thought has been conditioned by the experience of colonialism, which convinced many thinkers of the need to reform or revive various aspects of Islam long cherished as central to Sunnīsm. Furthermore, Sunnī Muslims now live in an age dominated by globalization: Travel and an easier flow of information have created both opportunities and crises for Sunnī Muslims. Important to Sunnī responses has been a tendency among some Muslims to look to the earliest era of Islamic history, the time of the pious forefathers (*salaf*), for inspiration and guidance. Equally important to contemporary expressions of Islam have been notions of secularism, reason, and natural law.

Final abolition of the caliphate by the Turkish Republic in 1924, for example, brought renewed attention to the issue of legitimate Sunnī Islamic government. One prominent thinker, Muhammad

Rashīd Riḍā (d. 1935), had already written in 1923 of the idea of the Islamic state (*al-ḥukuma al-Islamiyya*), which would rejuvenate the caliphate by placing a supreme *mujtahid* (legal expert) at its head, ruling in conjunction with a consultative council (*shura*). In counterpoint to Riḍā, ‘Alī ‘Abd al-Raziq (d. 1966) argued in 1925 against the idea that the Qur’an and sunna required a specific form of government, thus, leaving room for Muslims to choose any form of government that suited them. ‘Abd al-Raziq faced criticism from the scholars of Al-Azhar University, a bastion of Sunnī learning, who banned his work. In the late 1920s, al-Ḥassan al-Banna (d. 1949) founded the Muslim Brotherhood (*al-ikhwān al-muslimīn*), which aimed at the re-Islamicization of Egyptian society, culminating in an Islamic state. Although al-Banna was killed and the movement persecuted, the Muslim Brotherhood with its ideal of political transformation became ensconced in most Arabic-speaking countries. The Brotherhood’s near parallel in Pakistan, the Jamaat-e-Islami (Islamic Party) founded by Abū al-A‘lā al-Mawḍūdī (d. 1979), focused on the (re)introduction of Shari‘a through an Islamic state—a project that enjoyed state support for a time but was never fully realized.

Saudi Arabia followed an altogether unique political path, with the family of Sa‘ud establishing a monarchy based on the dramatically reformist teachings of the 18th-century personality Muhammad Ibn Abd al-Wahhab (d. 1792). The followers of Ibn Abd al-Wahhab, the Wahhabis (who were originally considered outside the fold of Sunnī Islam), saw themselves as purifying Islam of illegitimate innovations, especially Shi‘ism and the Sufi expressions of Islam, and basing themselves more completely in the Qur’an and sunna (often by rejecting *ijmā‘* and *qiyās*). Contemporary Wahhabi thought has been split between a reformist branch (associated with the monarchy) aimed at bringing Saudi society and law more in line with global norms and an isolationist wing that views these norms either as irrelevant in the face of God’s perfected law or as dangerous innovations that have no place in an Islamic society.

Since the 18th century, many Sunnī Muslims have also reinvestigated the role that reason should play in the realm of law and theology. Early Sunnī thinkers such as Rifa‘a al-Taḥṭawī (d. 1873), for example, found harmony between natural law and

the Shari'a, as did later reformers like Muhammad 'Abduh and Sayyid Aḥmad Khan. In many cases, reformers have called for a revitalization of *ijtihād* to provide religiously sanctioned solutions to modern problems, as opposed to relying on previously determined legal norms. 'Abduh, for example, advocated a reasoned comparison of the four Sunnī legal schools (as opposed to following only one) when deriving legal decisions. Intellectuals such as Muhammad 'Imāra, Fazl ur Raḥman (d. 1988), and Ḥasan Ḥanafī have argued for a new rationalism among Sunnī Muslims, with Ḥanafī rejecting theology and advocating notions of human freedom and progress.

Although Sunnīs and Shi'i have at times in their history experienced bitter polemics and intercommunal violence, on the whole, relations have been amicable. Recent decades have witnessed an increase in tensions between Sunnī and Shi'ite Muslims as the result of the Iran-Iraq and Gulf wars. While outright violence has only been advocated by extremist elements in both groups (with tragic consequences in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan), popular polemics have mushroomed in Internet chat rooms, bookstores, and on television throughout the Islamic world. Fears of a "Shi'ite Crescent" from Iran to Lebanon have found some traction among Sunnīs, and it remains to be seen whether sectarian identity will continue polarizing the Islamic world or return to its status as a secondary concern among Muslims.

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See also 'Abbāsīd Caliphate; Islam; *Khariji*; Liberal Islam; Muslim Brotherhood; Qur'an; Shi'a Islam; Umayyad Dynasty; Wahhabis

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SURINAME

Now a republic on the northern coast of the South American continent, Suriname was until 1795 exclusive property of the Suriname Society and then a Dutch colony. Colonization, immigration, and missionary activities determined the unique religious makeup of the country. Prior to independence in 1975, a great deal of Suriname's culture and religious practices migrated to the Netherlands. This circumstance further contributes to the relevance of Suriname as an example of the globalization of religion.

The first colonization was by the British after 1650. In the Anglo-Dutch wars later in that century, the Dutch conquered this area around the Suriname River—a location settled in 1674. Since then, Suriname has been private property. The Indian population with its indigenous religion was soon outnumbered by African slaves and marginalized by the new rulers. The religions of the slaves developed into Winti and included African and Christian elements. Among the first settlers were Sephardic Jewish plantation owners, who fled from Pernambuco (Brazil) after the Portuguese had reconquered this city; later their community gained members from Amsterdam Jews. These settlers are responsible for the first stone synagogue in the New World. Already in 1735, the Moravian Brothers (*Herrnhutters*) arrived via Zeist (the Netherlands) in Suriname, but only after 1830 did the plantation owners allow them to convert the slaves. Their pietistic message about the equality of man before God had great appeal. The Calvinist rulers suppressed Catholic missionary activities, but when the Catholics gained freedom in the Netherlands, the mission in Suriname was handed over to the Redemptorist order in 1866.

Table I Religious Composition of Suriname

Christian	40.7%
Hindu	19.9%
Muslim	13.5%
Traditional and other religions	5.8%
No religion	4.4%
No religion given	15.7%

Source: Suriname Census 2007.

After the abolition of slavery in 1863, the Dutch government recruited labor power in Northern India and Indonesia, which further contributed to the religious diversity in Suriname: The country gained a substantial proportion of Hindu and Muslim inhabitants. In the last decades of the 20th century, Charismatic Churches entered the country.

Table 1 gives the religious composition of Suriname as of 2007.

Suriname is often seen as an example of a country where religions coexist peacefully. Indeed, churches, mosques, and synagogues are situated close to each other, and various religious feasts are public holidays. The historic center of Paramaribo with its many religious buildings is placed on the world heritage list.

The religious history of Suriname is itself an example of the globalization of religion, but even more so prior to independence in 1975. Many Surinamese profited from the possibility to migrate to the Netherlands, and so did their religion. As a consequence, the Netherlands were confronted with substantial minorities of Dutch-socialized Hindus and Muslims. The Moravian Brothers transformed from a White into a Black church organization. And at a time of increasing liberalization, the Catholic Church was confronted with more traditional believers.

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See also Hinduism; Islam; Latin America; Netherlands; New Religions in South America; Roman Catholicism

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SUTRAS

Sutras are important texts in the Hindu, Jain, and Buddhist traditions. In the northwestern region of India, during what is commonly regarded as the late- or post-Vedic period (roughly the seventh century BCE through the fifth) and prior to the advent of literacy, there developed a method of instruction for facilitating the memorization and oral transmission of teachings of various branches of knowledge that took the concise form of aphorisms, or a collection of them, known in Sanskrit as *sutras* (lit. “thread”). By organizing teachings into a more succinct and assimilable structure, the *sutra* emerged as a new genre valued precisely for its ability to codify and distill the essence of a given subject of study into a systematic sequence of mnemonic pronouncements that made possible the progressive acquisition of vast amounts of knowledge. In and of themselves, however, these compendia of terse, formulaic statements were often far too condensed, or else too technical, to be meaningfully understood by the novice who relied, instead, on the commentarial traditions (*bhāṣya*) and exegetical insights amplified by a teacher (*guru*). For this reason, a measure of the degree by which a particular *sutra* gained authority within a given tradition or social context is the weight of commentarial and subcommentarial material attached to it. One of the foundation texts of Indian philosophy, for example, the *Yoga Sutra* attributed to Patañjali, has exercised the interpretative skills of scores of scholars and practitioners for nearly two millennia and continues to inspire new translations and commentaries, both in India and in the West, where physical, psychological, and spiritual discipline remain a perennial concern.

Ritual and juridical matters are addressed in the earliest collections of aphorisms, the *Kalpa Sutras*. They form a part of the auxiliary sciences known as *vedāṅga* or “limbs of the Veda” and are divided into three groups: The *Śrauta Sutras* outline the ceremonial guidelines attending the public performance of solemn rites; the *Gṛhya Sutras* focus on the private sacramental rites of the householder; and the *Dharma Sutras* deal more broadly with moral and social concerns attending each stage of life (*āśramas*) from conception to cremation, including duties ascribed to the various classes of

society, proper occupations, rules of conduct, hospitality protocols, daily oblations, dietary regulations, purification rites, punishments and penances, and funerary rites. These were later elaborated on in the Dharma Shastra and served as the basis of Hindu law. But it was the comprehensive linguistic work of Pāṇini, the famed Sanskrit grammarian, that elevated the sutra to its highest level of sophistication.

With the emergence of Jainism and Buddhism during this same period, the apothegmatic precision of the sutra assumed a more extended expository and homiletic style. The Ācārāṅga Sutra, regarded as the oldest work in the extant Jain canon, combines rhetorical lyricism with a host of trenchant observations into human nature. Similarly, the exploration of a viable lifestyle and practice for lay and monastic disciples is a prominent theme in the sutra (*sutta* in Pāli, or “discourse”) section of the Theravada Buddhist canon found in South and Southeast Asia. The technology of writing on birch bark and palm leaves coincided with the rise and development of Mahayana Buddhism and facilitated its spread to Central and East Asia, where the translation and copying of sutra literature became a major preoccupation. In this context, the manuscript itself became an object of worship. The veneration of sutras also inspired a rich and varied tradition throughout the Buddhist world of adorning and illuminating manuscripts. In modern times, expressing reverence for a sutra is central to the global appeal of various Nichiren Buddhist sects, which have popularized a vestige of the aural experience of the sutra by emphasizing devotion to the Lotus Sutra and the efficacy of repeatedly chanting its name—*nam-myōhō-renge-kyō*.

Todd LeRoy Perreira

See also Brahmanical Hinduism; Gautama, Siddhartha; Hinduism; Jainism; Mahayana Buddhism; Scripture; Soka Gakkai; Theravada Buddhism; Veda; Yoga

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SUZUKI, D. T. (1870–1966)

Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki was undoubtedly more influential than any other single individual for the popularization of Zen in the West in the early and mid-20th century and thus an important figure in the globalization of religion. Fluent in English and other languages as well as his native Japanese, his many translations, essays, and lectures helped make *Zen* a household word by the 1950s.

Although never a Zen priest or monk in the strict sense, Suzuki received intensive Zen training early from the famous monk Shaku Soen, who also represented the tradition at the important World’s Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893. There, he recommended Suzuki to Paul Carus, a publisher who wanted help in translating Asian spiritual classics. Suzuki spent 1897–1909 in America living and working at Carus’ home in LaSalle, Illinois. He married the American Beatrice Lane in 1911.

After 1909, Suzuki spent the remainder of his long life teaching, writing, and lecturing both in Japan and abroad. His interests included not only Zen itself but also Shin (Pure Land) Buddhism, the Christian mystics Emanuel Swedenborg and Meister Eckhart, and the Japanese traditional Zen-related arts. It is Suzuki’s interpretation of Zen, however, for which he is best known. In his view, the keynote of Zen is nonduality, the oneness of reality, which he contrasted with a Western emphasis on duality, self and others, right or wrong, and the like. Zen oneness is beyond the power of words to define, since words are intended to make distinctions; it can only be realized, in the experience called *satori*, “surprise.” Indeed, Suzuki sometimes went so far as to claim that Zen is really this experience, and is not Buddhism, not philosophy, not religion.

Drawing on Zen’s relation to Chinese Daoism as well as Buddhism, Suzuki stressed the lineage’s naturalism: the high place it gives harmony with nature, and realization in the context of living a natural life, including manual labor, and in the

Japanese traditions of painting, gardens, architecture, and even swordsmanship. Occasionally, verging toward the chauvinistic Japanese nationalism of his times, he alleged that Zen was now more highly developed in Japan than elsewhere and was the essence of Japanese culture.

Suzuki's interpretation of Zen history and meaning is to a considerable extent his own. This has subjected him to some criticism, but others have praised him as an innovative contributor to Zen's evolution, especially as a viable spiritual path for the West. Suzuki's real legacy must be the Western Zen vogue of the 1950s, when he taught for several years at Columbia University, and his influence on distinguished writers such as Carl Jung, Thomas Merton, Erich Fromm, Alan Watts, Allen Ginsberg, Gary Snyder, and Jack Kerouac was most strongly felt.

Robert Ellwood

See also Japan; Mahayana Buddhism; World's Parliament of Religions; Zen Buddhism

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SWAMINARAYAN MOVEMENT

Swaminarayan Hinduism is an early 19th-century reform movement in Gujarat that is a significant transnational movement in the early 21st century. Sahajanand Swami (1781–1830) was a Brahman born in Chhapi, near Ayodhya, in North India, who traveled as a youth throughout India as a spiritual seeker before taking initiation and residence in Gujarat in 1802. As leader of a small band of world renouncers, he built temples, initiated *sadhus*, and preached reforms of conduct and theology that attracted followers at a time of social and political turmoil when the British were establishing control over Gujarat.

He codified his moral reforms in the 212 verses of the *Shikshapatri*. His followers take five vows:

(1) to practice nonviolence and not to eat meat, (2) to avoid all intoxicating drinks and drugs, (3) to avoid adultery and sexual impurity, (4) to respect the personal and property rights of others and not to steal, and (5) not to defile oneself. The *sadhus* who propagated his message and practices took more stringent ascetic vows to “renounce the world”: (1) celibacy and strict avoidance of women, (2) renunciation of family and social ties, (3) renunciation of attachment to objects of the senses, (4) nonattachment to money and material possessions, and (5) avoidance of pride caused by attachment to ego. He opposed the self-immolation of widows (*sati*) and the infanticide of girls.

The *sadhus* preserved his theology in the *Vachanamrit*, which follows the basic philosophy of modified nondualism of Ramanuja and the Krishna devotion common in Gujarat. He placed images of Nar-Narayana (Krishna and Arjuna) and of Lakshmi-Narayana in the two major temples in Ahmedabad and Vadtal. He received the title, Swaminarayan, and his images were placed in the temples. He adopted two nephews and appointed them and their descendents as householder *acharyas* to administer two dioceses with headquarters at the major temples in Ahmedabad and Vadtal.

Divisions later created new Swaminarayan groups. A *sadhu* named Shastri Maharaj left the Vadtal temple in 1906 and established the Bochasanwasi Akshar Purushottam Sanstha (BAPS) in the following year. He emphasized the strict discipline of Swaminarayan and the theological principles of Purushottam (the highest divine reality) and Akshar (the abode of god in the chief devotee). Muktajivandas Swami, a prominent *sadhu* in the Ahmedabad temple established the Swaminarayan Gadi. He rejected the claims of the householder *acharyas* to be legitimate successors of Swaminarayan and built a new temple in Maninagar. He died in 1970 in Bolton in the United Kingdom while visiting his followers. Dadubhai Patel and his brother, Bapabhai, separated from BAPS in 1960 and formed the Yogi Divine Society. The group rejects the authority of the BAPS leader and maintains an order of female ascetics who follow a discipline similar to male *sadhus*. These Swaminarayan groups have institutions, temples, schools, medical clinics, and other institutions in India, East Africa, Britain, the

United States, and other countries, attracting support primarily from Gujarati migrants.

Raymond Brady Williams

See also Hinduism; Meditation; New Religions; New Religions in the United States; Pramukh Swami; Reform Hinduism; Sacred Places; Yoga

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SWASTIKA

The swastika (from the Sanskrit, “well-being”) is best known in the West for its 20th-century incarnation as part of Nazi propaganda. However, images of swastikas go back to ancient times. Some scholars trace the swastika as far back as the Neolithic Period in Asia Minor; it was certainly in widespread use in Europe by the Bronze Age. The dominant view is that the swastika originated in Asia Minor, then spread to India and Europe, although there is still considerable, lively debate on the details. Variations on the image can be found in architecture, pottery, decorative and utilitarian artifacts, coins, and clothing, often as a merely decorative ornament and at other times as a religious symbol.

The swastika conveys a wide variety of meanings. In ancient Indian traditions, it was generally associated with the sun. In the *Ramayana* epic, an image of a swastika appears on a ship, and over time, it became a widely recognized aniconic representation of Vishnu. Artifacts that included the swastika were found in ancient Greece (many images were found at the great excavation of Troy); the symbol seems to have been associated with fertility, although some scholars associate the image with death. In the Far East, the swastika has meant many different things, including representing the seventh Saint in Jainism and eternity in Chinese Buddhism. In the West, the symbol has had less symbolic value, usually conveying nothing more specific than a general wish for good luck. The swastika also appears in several Native

American tribes (especially in the Southwest), with varying interpretations.

In the modern period, one commonly finds swastikas throughout India and in other parts of South Asia, with a generally positive association. In Europe, linguists in the 19th century identified connections between Indic and European language families. Certain scholars used this information to argue for a link between the ancient Aryans and certain modern European communities. These scholars, believing that the ancient Aryans invaded northern India and conquered its indigenous peoples, argued that these Aryans were the ancestors of modern Germans. A kind of “folk nationalism” began to develop around the symbol. Eventually, the Nazi party tapped into this association and appropriated the swastika for its own use. Since the mid-20th century, the swastika has been associated with Nazi ideology broadly and anti-Semitism specifically, so much so that its use has been officially banned in certain cultural settings. The negative connotations currently associated with the swastika in the West are unfortunate, because they overshadow centuries of positive meanings.

The term *swastika* first appears in the Hindu epics and was later appropriated into English in the 18th century. The same image has also been called *fylfot*, meaning four-footed, as well as *gam-madion* or *Croix Gammé*. In certain contexts, the direction of the swastika (right or left facing) is insignificant. In other contexts, however, the direction changes the meaning of the symbol. For example, in Buddhism, the right-facing image signifies strength and intelligence, while the left-facing image signifies love and mercy. It is important to note that throughout the world, particularly in the East, the swastika frequently appears in combinations with other images.

Kathryn McClymond

See also Aryans; Hinduism; Mahayana Buddhism; Material Culture; Symbol

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SWAZILAND

Swaziland is almost completely surrounded by the Republic of South Africa, though its eastern border touches Mozambique. It is the smallest African country south of the Sahara, covering an area of approximately 17,000 square kilometers and with an estimated population of 1,123,913. Since the 1880s, globalization in the form of the arrival of Christian missionaries had a great influence on the development of religion in the Swazi Kingdom. Legend has it that one of the early kings of Swaziland (King Somhlolo) had a vision of a strange man with long hair who would bring two things into the country: *umculu* in one hand and *indilinga* in the other hand. *Umculu* is a Swazi word literally meaning something rolled up in a bundle and was interpreted to mean a book—in this context the Bible. *Indilinga* literally means a round, disc-like object and was interpreted to mean money. A voice directed King Somhlolo to choose the *umculu* above the *indilinga*, and so it came about that Christian missionaries were allowed to settle in Swaziland to begin their labors to convert the Swazi population into Christians.

Although there has been a breakdown in the relationship between some of the former Swazi kings and the missionaries from time to time, the missionaries have in general been successful in their endeavors to convert the majority of the Swazi population to Christianity. Nowadays, approximately 35% of Swazis are Protestant, 25% Roman Catholic, and 30% Zionists. Zionism is an African blend of Christianity and indigenous ancestral worship. The remaining 9% of the population practice other religions such as Anglicanism, Baha'ism, Methodism, Mormonism, Judaism, and Islam.

In 1996, there were attempts by Christian clergy to push for the constitutional recognition of Christianity as the state religion of Swaziland, but their attempts were foiled by the current King Mswati III who confirmed the equal status of all religions in Swaziland. In line with this viewpoint, section 20 of the 2005 Swazi constitution prohibits discrimination on the grounds of, among others, religion, and section 23 of the same recognizes that a “person has a right to

freedom of thought, conscience or religion,” which includes

- freedom of thought and of religion,
- freedom to change one’s religion or belief, and
- freedom of worship either alone or in community with others.

The constitution does allow for the limitation of one’s enjoyment of his or her religion by consent, national defense, public safety, public order, public morality, public health, and to protect the rights of others. Nevertheless, to date, the exact scope and meaning of these concepts have not been interpreted, and it is foreseen that the courts would have to play an important role in doing so in the future.

The requirement that new religious groups or churches have to register as nonprofit organizations with the Swazi Ministry of Home Affairs and that this can happen only when they can demonstrate that they are organized and in possession of substantial cash reserves might also hamper future effects of globalization on religion in Swaziland.

Christa Rautenbach

See also Africa; Indigenous Religions; Missions and Missionaries; Mozambique; New Religions; New Religions in Africa; South Africa; Syncretism

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SWEDEN

The northern European Scandinavian country of Sweden has gone through a transformation from a poor agricultural society to an advanced industrial society in the latter part of the 20th century. Although the majority of Swedes belong to the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Sweden, profound changes have taken place in church-state relations, and traditional Christian beliefs are declining in an increasingly religiously diverse society.

In 2000, a law introduced in *Riksdagen* (Parliament) defined the Church of Sweden as an open, democratic Lutheran Evangelical church, free from the state. Although membership has declined from 95% of the population in 1973 to 80% in 2003, the Church of Sweden is the country's largest organization, with 7.2 million members in 2002. A large majority participates in rites of passage arranged by the Church. In 2003, 70% of all infants were baptized, and 58% of all weddings and 87% of all funerals took place there. However, only 39% of all 15-year-olds were confirmed.

Some of the declining church membership can be explained by demographic changes due to immigration. In 2001, 3% belonged to free churches (Pentecostalism the largest with 90,000 members), and 2% to Roman Catholic (160,000) and Orthodox churches (100,000). The largest community of faith outside the church practices Islam (250,000–300,000). Other religious minorities are Jews (20,000), Buddhists (10,000–15,000), Hindus, Sikhs, and Baha'i (a few thousand each).

Most Swedes have a formal lifelong affiliation with the Church of Sweden, but church attendance is low. In 2002, 1.3% of Swedes attended church on an ordinary Sunday. The church also offers additional services (musical or thematic), so that 10% of Swedes attend church once a month or more. Private faith is widespread. In 1997, 75% reported that they had some sort of faith. More than 30% believed that God exists inside human beings; 20% believed in an impersonal power and 18% in a traditional Christian God. The remaining had serious doubts (15%) or were atheists (12%). More Swedes have faith in "something" after death (36%) than in Christian notions of heaven and hell (10%). Many seriously doubt the idea of life after death (25%) or reject it (24%). Gender and generation affect religion. Swedish women are more religious than men. Atheism is primarily a masculine affair and more widespread among persons 50 years and older. Traditional forms of religion are slowly being replaced by a more personal and subjective form, especially among younger Swedes. Religion is changing in Sweden, not by disappearing, but by finding support in new forms among the younger generation.

Inger Furseth

See also Christianity; Gender; Generational Change; Nordic Countries; Protestant Christianity; Religion and State

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SWITZERLAND

The central European country of Switzerland is characterized by linguistic, ethnic, and religious diversity. The Swiss "model," if it exists in terms of religion, is distinguished by a management of pluralism inscribed in the history of the country. A biconfessional land since the 16th-century Protestant reform, like Germany and Holland, Switzerland showed its inclination for independence from the German Roman Empire very early and adopted an imposing federal system regarding religious matters.

Remarkable statistical and analytical material is available in Switzerland due partly to an official record of the population's makeup that is taken every 10 years, including data about religion, and partly to numerous studies in religious sociology, a discipline that developed late but steadily in Switzerland. The last available figures from 2000 indicate that membership in the two largest Christian churches—Roman Catholic (41%) and Reformed (33%)—is largely stable, representing by far the majority in the confederation in spite of a slight erosion in practice and affiliation, which is more evident among Protestants than Catholics. The number of Muslims and Orthodox Christians has increased as a result of migrations, specifically from the former Yugoslavia, and the number of people not belonging to any religion has increased as well, as has been the case in all Western countries.

Changes in the religious domain occur at a slower pace than in social and cultural fields.

The federal state was born in 1848 and presently acts under the constitutional rules in effect since January 1, 2000, which brought the previous constitution of 1874 up-to-date. Apart from the reference to “the all powerful God” maintained in the preamble and the guarantee of fundamental religious freedom (Article 15), the federal constitution does not deal with religion.

Unlike in Germany, church tax in Switzerland can only be levied on a voluntary basis. The Swiss “model” consists, therefore, of a double architecture, involving two principles—one touching on the protection of fundamental liberties and representing the pole of abstract universality and the other, which is communitarian, based on respect for both historical tradition and the democratic ideal, pertaining to the majority.

This system thought of by some people as a complex balanced model, leads to what some people perceive as unfair treatment of minority religions. For example, concrete shortfalls exist in the recognition of rights for religious minorities. Switzerland is an example of unsteady laicization, a strange mixture of changes in the Christian West.

Sylvie Le Grand

(translated by Denise Le Boëdec)

See also Christianity; Islam; Laicization; Liberal Protestantism; Multiculturalism; Pluralism; Protestant Christianity; Religion and State; Roman Catholicism; Tolerance

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SWORD

The symbol of the sword is found in several religious traditions, including Islam and medieval Christianity, but it enjoys a significant position within the Sikh belief system. When the tenth and final living Guru, Guru Gobind Singh (1666–1708), declared the Sikh community to be the *Khalsa* (“the pure”), he established a normative code of personal and collective behavior. In the process, he prescribed every Sikh to have a visible identity, which meant carrying five items whose names start with the Punjabi letter *kaka* (*k*). These items include: unshorn hair (*kes*), comb (*kangha*, to keep the hair clean), a large steel bracelet (*karha*), sword (*kirpan*), and a pair of long shorts (*kachha*). Both men and women were expected to display this identity at all times and this was seen to represent their rebellion against the political persecution of the Mughal state.

The prominence assigned to the sword at this point in Sikh history had evolved over time. In his compositions, Guru Nanak (1469–1539), the founder of the Sikh tradition, often refers to the sword of knowledge (*gian kharhag*) that could cut through the snares of an ego-centered life in the world. The sword also came to be seen as an

instrument of divine justice in the temporal world. After the execution of Guru Arjan (1561–1606) on the order of the Mughal emperor Jehangir, the office of the Guru was seen increasingly as both temporal (*duniya/miri*) and spiritual (*din/piri*). A contemporary poet sings of Guru Hargobind (1595–1644) as carrying two swords—*miri* and *piri*—as part of this dual responsibility. By the period of Guru Gobind Singh, then, the preeminence of weaponry moved to the center of the Sikh imagination, and the arms were understood as the instruments that would bring welfare, justice, and victory (*degh, tegh, fateh*) to the world.

The injunction to carry a sword has been part and parcel of Sikh identity since 1700. However, there is a great variety in the sizes and shapes of these swords, and several names were assigned to them (*bhagauti, khanda, kirapn, saif, and talvar*). While the swords of Guru Gobind Singh's period are generally 3 feet in length, the length of the sword that is carried as part of the Sikh identity was reduced to about 1 foot in response to the British Arms Act of 1912. Movement overseas has also generated a new set of concerns for Sikhs who wish to carry a sword as part of their identity. They have attempted to litigate its ban in schools, courts, and public places and sought to carry it as part of their religious expression. There are efforts at compromises as well. In one instance, the Sikhs have offered to rivet the swords with the sheath so that children cannot use it as a weapon, and some have even suggested reducing its size to a few inches and wearing it around one's neck. The history of this important Sikh symbol continues to unfold in the global era.

Gurinder Singh Mann

See also Christianity; Cosmic War and Cosmic Conflict; Islam; Sikhism; Symbol; Violence

SYMBOL

Abstractly, symbol is understood as a representation of a thing, concept, or quality. Typical symbols might be drawings, shapes, or any kind of object that represents an idea. Many symbols can be pictorially represented, though not all symbols

are visual in nature. Human society is full of symbols and symbolic systems that help us to make sense of our experiences. Symbols are purveyors of meaning. While symbols are not necessarily religious, some scholars have claimed that religions are particularly effective at marshalling symbolic codes to grapple with complex subjects, such as the meaning of life, death, suffering, love, and forgiveness. Examples of religious symbols might include the Christian cross, the Jewish Star of David, or the Muslim crescent moon and star. These symbols are recognized by people all over the world as referring to religious traditions that carry great meaning and cultural significance. Numerous secular symbols are also internationally recognizable. The American Statue of Liberty and the Soviet Communist Party's hammer and sickle convey myriad ideas, and not just for Americans or those who lived in the Soviet Union. All these symbols—religious and secular—represent larger ideas or even systems of ideas that are laden with meaning.

Scholars working in different fields have typically analyzed symbols within the context of their discipline's unique theoretical and methodological frameworks. Thus, scholars working within the fields of structural linguistics, cultural anthropology, and symbolic interactionism would not be expected to approach the study of symbols in precisely the same way. There are, however, certain basic characteristics of symbols that are commonly accepted. To illustrate the core features and functions of symbols, it is helpful to consider how symbols are different from other conveyors of meaning, such as signs.

Humans constantly interact with both signs and symbols, but the former do not embody meaning to the same degree as the latter. Consider a simple mathematical formula such as that used to determine the perimeter of a rectangle. If

$$P = 2L + 2W,$$

we know that *P* stands for perimeter, *L* for length, and *W* for width. The letters in this formula act as signs because there is a one-to-one correspondence in meaning. We do not interpret *P* in this formula as standing for a broad array of social meanings. Signs convey what the sociologist Wendy Griswold calls "simple meaning" because they have a single

referent, and they work through denotation, rather than connotation. According to Griswold, symbols, in contrast, connote, suggest, or imply a range of complex meanings that often evoke powerful emotions.

Another way of thinking about the difference between signs and symbols is to consider what people do when the telephone rings. We generally do not stop and inquire as to what the sound of a ringing telephone might mean. Rather, we take it as a simple cue, or sign, that someone is trying to contact us by telephone. Joel Charon explains our reaction to the telephone by noting that signs are usually distinguished from symbols in that humans do not give substantial meaning to signs or reflect on them but instead habitually respond to them. If we hear the telephone ring, we habitually answer it. When driving automobiles, people habitually stop at red lights because the red light conveys a simple meaning, “stop,” that is not open to broad interpretation. According to Leslie White, another distinction between signs and symbols is the fact that symbolic exchange, or the intersubjective sharing of symbolic meaning, is a human activity. Other animals understand signs, but they are unable to grasp the complex meanings generated through symbolism. According to White, a dog may comprehend basic verbal commands, such as “roll over,” but no nonhuman animal can be brought to any comprehension of “holy water.”

Therefore, we can distinguish symbols from signs by noting that signs tend to have a single referent and convey simple meaning; they denote rather than connote; they are usually reacted to in a habitual or unthinking manner rather than interpreted; and they are understood by both humans and other animals. Symbols, on the other hand, have multiple referents and convey complex meaning; they connote rather than denote; they are actively interpreted instead of reacted to in a purely habitual manner; and their use and interpretation is a fundamental characteristic of human interaction.

People use and interact with symbols constantly to communicate and make sense of their surroundings and experiences. In fact, it would be impossible for human society to function without symbols of all kinds. Symbols are in some ways like signs in the sense that they help us navigate the social world, but unlike signs, they are laden with complex

meaning that is often contested or at least open to interpretation. While some symbols are subtle and concrete, many others stand for complex, abstract, or multifaceted concepts in the way a flag symbolically represents a nation. Thus conflict over symbols is common.

Moreover, while many symbols are understood almost universally, many others are quite specific to their immediate social and cultural environment. Take the example of laughing. While responding to a ringing telephone is fairly simple, knowing when to laugh in an unfamiliar cultural setting is not as easy. Laughing at a certain moment or laughing at a certain subject matter may be symbolically interpreted as rude or offensive depending on the meanings conveyed by laughter in that context. In other words, laughing can be understood as a complex symbol that does not mean the same thing to all people in all cultural contexts.

It is therefore important to recognize that the meanings associated with symbols are variable; symbols do not have the same meanings across all cultures, and their meanings can change over time. In fact, if the meanings associated with various symbols remained forever fixed or constant, cultural and social change would be almost impossible. While some symbols are more or less unique to particular cultures, globalization has allowed for symbolic diffusion on an unprecedented scale. The fact that symbolic meaning can shift or completely change is true even for symbols that are almost “universally” recognized as a result of these globalizing processes.

Take, for example, the Christian cross. The cross is recognized all over the world as the primary symbol of Christianity. Despite its near universal recognition, the cross connotes vastly different meanings to different groups of people. Moreover, these meanings can change over time. Scholars of syncretic religions have documented the processes by which symbols are sometimes appropriated and then reinterpreted in light of their incorporation into new cultural contexts. For example, the anthropologist of religion Leslie Desmangles explored the meaning of the cross for Haitian practitioners of Vodou (or Vodun), a Dahomean religion with roots in West Africa. Due to the historical influence of European Catholicism on Haitian society, many scholars believed that the

use of the cross in Vodou ceremonies was Christian in character. Desmangles, however, demonstrated that Vodouists did not interpret the symbol of the cross in the context of Christian theology but in the context of Dahomean mythology. Desmangles showed that Vodouists consider the cross a sacred object because for them it symbolizes *Legba* (the medium or intermediary) through which contact can be established with the realm of the *Loas* (spirits). Desmangles went further by arguing that the cross symbol in Vodou has its roots in African mythology, not in the Catholicism that entered Haitian culture during the colonial era. Regardless of its origins in relation to Vodou, this scholarship documented the complex and variable meanings that have been associated with the symbol of the cross.

Other anthropologists of religion, such as Clifford Geertz and Victor Turner, are widely recognized for their contributions to the symbolic analysis of religion. One of the goals of scholars of religion has been to understand the symbolic system through which the religious devotee understands his or her faith and the world. For both Geertz and Turner, this kind of understanding is best apprehended through a close analysis of the role of symbols in religious and ritual practice. While Turner concentrated on the multivocal nature of symbols in Ndembu ritual, Geertz focused on symbols as extrinsic sources of information that, when combined with other symbols into symbolic systems or complexes, form culture patterns. For Geertz, a symbol is any object, act, event, quality, or relation that serves as the vehicle for a conception, where the conception is the symbol's meaning. It is through careful interpretations of symbols that we attempt to comprehend the complex webs of meaning that characterize the human condition.

Jason J. Hopkins

See also Art; Bellah, Robert; Geertz, Clifford; Material Culture; Myth

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SYNAGOGUE

The term *synagogue* may refer either to a building that serves as a site for Jewish prayer and study or to a collective of Jewish community members who constitute a congregation. Since the origins of synagogue buildings, likely in the first century CE, they have formed an essential component of Jewish community life. Synagogues have facilitated the preservation and innovation of Jewish practices and traditions in historical and geographical contexts in which Jews often constituted a persecuted minority of the population. Today, synagogues exist all over the world and serve as important prayer and meeting spaces for Jews both in Israel and in the Jewish Diaspora.

In Greek, “*synagogē*” means “gathering” or “assembly,” and although it is usually translated as a gathering *place*, it can also refer to a gathering of people or objects. In the Septuagint, the Greek version of the Hebrew Bible, the term is used in reference to many different Hebrew words. The Hebrew term for assembly place is “*beit kneset*,” or “house of assembly,” but other terms used for “synagogue” include “*beit tefila*,” which means “house of prayer,” and “*beit midrash*,” which means “house of study.”

In the early centuries of its existence, the synagogue referred specifically to an assembly of Jews who congregated for what scholars might today deem both religious and nonreligious purposes. Such purposes have included prayer and rituals, studying and debating texts, discussions regarding legal decisions, economic exchanges, social events, and informal meetings. Early references to synagogues exist in the writings of Josephus and Philo

and in the Gospels of the New Testament. For instance, Josephus referred to a large gathering in Tiberias, and Philo described a place where Jews met to study the law every 7th day and in every city. Philo also quoted an Egyptian official who wrote about Jews meeting regularly to sit in enclaves, read holy books, and discuss them.

Although the origins of the synagogue are ambiguous, some contemporary Jewish sources assert that synagogues originated during the Israelites' exile in Babylon after the destruction of the First Temple in Jerusalem in 586 BCE. As synagogues became an institutionalized part of Jewish life, their presence in the tradition was emphasized in texts, such as the Babylonian Talmud, as having originated at the time of Moses. Synagogues from the first few centuries of the Common Era had what were called "seats of Moses," small raised platforms at the front of the synagogue where esteemed community members sat and perhaps expounded on biblical texts.

In the archaeological record, the earliest synagogue buildings date to the first century CE. Archaeological evidence has uncovered three buildings that seem to have been synagogues that pre-date 70 CE, but these three did not have an ark that housed the Torah scrolls, which was an essential component of later synagogues. Synagogues became important meeting places after the destruction of the Second Temple in Jerusalem in 70 CE, but they did not replace the temple. The temple served as the site for sacrifices and for thrice-yearly pilgrimages, on the Jewish holidays of *Pesach* (Passover), *Shavuot* (Festival of Weeks or of First Fruits), and *Sukkot* (Feast of Booths or of Tabernacles), and it is ascribed a deep sense of holiness that synagogues do not replicate.

Some scholars argue that there is no evidence for what we now deem synagogues prior to the third or fourth century CE, because modern conceptions of synagogues involve types of structures and activities that are different from the earliest ones. Beginning in the first century CE, Jews gathered in houses and small spaces to study and pray as well as to socialize and to conduct political and economic activities. By the third or fourth century CE, many of these small buildings had been converted to or exchanged for larger structures that could house more people. By the fifth or sixth century CE, large buildings were established for

the purpose of meeting, study, and prayer. Thus, over the centuries, conceptions of the "synagogue" changed, such that the space itself became increasingly significant, and small homes and buildings were remodeled or exchanged for larger structures whose main purpose was to serve as a center for prayer and study.

According to tradition, male Jews must pray three times a day, and although Jews are not required to pray in a synagogue, a *minyan* (a quorum of 10—traditionally male—Jews) must be present to recite certain prayers. Although synagogues can be used for a variety of purposes in addition to prayer, behavior has long been circumscribed, such that people who enter them must clean their bodies first and must behave respectfully.

Synagogue buildings have no fixed form and usually resemble the architecture of the surrounding area and culture. No evidence exists that the earliest synagogues employed a particular directional orientation, included any particular items or structures, or divided congregants by sex. Beginning in the third century CE, however, particular spatial configurations and physical components appear in archaeological sites, including a Torah shrine on the eastern wall and a raised platform from which the Torah is read (*bima*). In synagogues that separate the sexes, women sit in a section either next to or behind men or in an upstairs gallery overlooking the first floor. Since Jewish emancipation in Europe, which occurred during the 18th through the 20th centuries, orthodox and some conservative synagogues retained traditional spatial divisions, whereas reform and liberal synagogues transformed them in various ways to accommodate changes in the format of prayer services.

Annalise E. Glauz-Todrank

See also Churches; Israel; Jewish Diaspora; Judaism; Sacred Places

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SYNCRETISM

Syncretism is an important element of global religion, one that denotes amalgamation, exchange, synthesis, and a fusion of diverse beliefs and practices. Originating in religious studies, the term has been growingly used in history, anthropology, philosophy, and cultural studies. Until recently, it has been postulated on the assumption that civilization, culture, and religion are endowed with unity, coherence, and boundary but that their interaction produces mixed, syncretic forms. Most frequently, syncretism has been identified in religious belief and practice particularly in “heterodox cults”—for instance, African Americans who might combine Islam and the Baptist religion or the Baul singers of Bengal, whose culture brings together Vaishnavism and Islam. It is also used in architecture, in the visual and performing arts, and in the world of ideas, ideologies, and individual and cultural identities to refer to groups as Hindu-Muslim or Hindu-Buddhist.

The syncretic is identified with change produced from cultural encounter that can sometimes yield great cultural florescence as in the case of the Turko-Persian encounter with India and, to a lesser extent, the Arab-Islamic with Europe. It is associated with elite and courtly cultures imbricated in the multiculturalism of premodern empires, such as those of the Mauryan emperor Asoka, who became a Buddhist, the Chinese Tang Dynasty, or the 16th-century Ottoman and Mughal empires under Suleyman and Akbar. Syncretism is often located in folk cultures of peasants and pastoralists, in frontier regions or borderlands, and among people relegated to the margins. That syncretism can be a site of resistance for the colonial subject has been emphasized by anthropologists such as Michael Taussig, Jean Comaroff, and Aihwa Ong. In Taussig’s work, for example, spirit possession and magic suggest spaces where a

spirit queen might preside over “the amputees of history.”

Nonetheless, the critique of syncretism has been a lively one pointing out its pejorative connotations that refer to it variously as confusion, contamination, spuriousness, and deviance. Having come into currency with Protestant discourses, it had often signified the otherness, or distinctiveness, of pagan worlds.

Furthermore, the point has been powerfully made that civilization, culture, and religion are themselves grounded in forms of encounter, learning, and exchange and do not represent any presumed pure domains. This goes for the period following globalization but also for the centuries preceding. Thus, the Judaic was important for early Christianity. Popular Christianity has been the site of many “heresies”—Christians continued with folk practices in Europe and combined Christian theology with indigenous traditions in Latin America. Christianity then has evolved in a dialectical relationship with the “pagan.” Similarly, Islam everywhere encountered indigenous cultures; hence, the existence of Indonesian, Indian, and now European Islam. That is, what is presumed as pure itself dissipates on closer examination.

Officially, the Catholic Church has only recently begun to uphold the validity of syncretisms after Vatican II. The distinction it now makes between religion and culture has allowed it to introduce the notion of enculturation or the indigenization of the Gospel. Among New Age Religions and independent churches, syncretism is conceived of as reversible and even as making possible a return to “pagan origins.”

A substantial reaction to syncretism has come from the field of Muslim Studies pointing out that empirical studies of India, Indonesia, and Egypt foregrounded syncretism at the cost of identifying Islamic theologies and models of personhood and thereby reproduced images of nominal and imperfect Muslims.

The larger point is that syncretism introduces binaries of great traditional religions and little traditions of folk cultures and notions of orthodoxy and heterodoxy. The understanding of change is often mechanistic, and the label *syncretic* denies self-representation to practitioners who might define themselves as Muslim, Buddhist, or Sikh but hardly ever as “syncretic.” Moreover, syncretism

tends to homogenize and freeze group identities, obliterating temporal shifts of affiliation in these particularly fluid spaces as also the play of contestatory identities within, which might stem from social stratification, ideological influence, networks of power, and so on.

Critics point out also its imbrication in discourses of power. In India and Sri Lanka, dominant nationalisms identify a syncretistic composite culture as a defining feature of the polity. These hegemonic syncretisms often privilege assimilation into the mainstream and homogenize both the majority and minorities.

More attention has been paid to antisyncretisms of nationalist and ethnic identities as “invented traditions.” The urge to purge and purify can be seen in many “fundamentalist” reformist movements ranging from Protestant Christianity, the Islamism of the Jamaat-e-Islami, and the Arya Samaj and Brahmo Samaj. Many of these deploy a strategic syncretism as they combine reinvented traditionalist identities and histories with an emphasis on modern state and science.

The dominant perspective views syncretism as contributing to dialogue, diversity, and aspects of sharing between cultures and as promoting tolerance and pluralism. Robert Hayden has argued that syncretism does not imply tolerance and that sacred sites might exhibit competitive sharing and antagonistic tolerance and culminate in segregated spaces.

A series of alternative conceptual formulations to syncretism have been postulated. In the French political tradition, there has been a preference for the use of the terms *acculturation* and *acculturated minorities*. M. J. Herskovits was a pioneer of acculturation studies who identified a movement toward syncretism and assimilation. Nathan Wachtel points out that Peruvian Indians actually rejected the acculturation imposed on them by the Spanish. In the United States, the melting pot model of assimilation became significant in the postwar era until it was replaced by multiculturalism. Multiculturalism has likewise tended to create monolithic ethnic identities with potential consequences for national cultural unity.

Hybridity is the preferred category for poststructuralists, being identified as the celebrative counterpart of globalized diasporas. Its critics have pointed out the violent, antic cosmopolitan, nationalist politics

that can be embedded in such hybridities as also its origins in scientific genetics. Indeed, the politics of migrants often stems from fears and anxieties that can hardly be characterized as what Homi Bhabha would call transgressive or liberatory.

Other theorists have advocated *creolization*, which has etymological origins in imperialism and slavery but has been used in a good deal of work on the Caribbean. Jean Comaroff used the term *bricolage* to suggest the making of new cultural forms.

The term *liminality* has been advocated to get away from an essentialized view of culture and indicates the creative character of identities. The liminal interrogates binarism itself and seeks to transcend it. The liminality of collective identities is contextualized within ever-changing cultures—the way in which staircases are part of buildings, which are themselves composites of various types of materials, or bridges relate shores of rivers that are themselves composites of many streams. These generate new cultural spaces and highly creative theologies and hence are seen as dangerous from the point of view of state and religious authority. The “realm of the between,” then, is no syncretism of minorities and does not arise from obscure religious cults but is constituted right at the heart of cultures and relates to the multiple belonging of communities that do not see identities as singular and exclusive. Thus, for the Japanese, it was possible to be both Shinto and Buddhist, and the Chinese combined Buddhism with Confucianism, while Tibetans combined it with Bon religious practice.

The debate on syncretism is significant then for its interrogation of the idea of fixed and immutable boundaries, mutually exclusive cultures, and the effort to read singular identities back in time through ethnonationalist histories that continue to fuel violent ethnic conflict. To date, there is no theoretical resolution of the conundrum. The challenge to develop a conceptual vocabulary to capture the fluid interaction between religions and cultures and the intimacy of shared spaces that would transcend religious conflict and difference remains.

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See also Bricolage; Diaspora; Global Religion; Hybridization; Indigenous Religions; Multiculturalism; New Age Movements; New Religions; Pluralism

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SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC

The Syrian Arab Republic is located in south-western Asia (the Middle East) and surrounded by Turkey, Iraq, Jordan, Israel/Palestine, and the Mediterranean Sea. In ancient and medieval times, the name *Syria* or its equivalents *al-Sham* or *Bilad al-Sham* were used to encompass a larger area that included Palestine and some parts of the present neighboring countries. The Syrian region has important historical value for both Christianity and Islam. Saint Paul, according to the Acts of

the Apostles, converted to Christianity on the road to Damascus. In spite of Muslim political domination beginning from the mid-seventh century, as early as the time of the Caliph Umar, Christians have constituted a major population in the region. Damascus, which was conquered in 635 CE by Muslims and is reportedly called by Prophet Muhammad *al-Sham al-Sharif* ("the Sacred Sham"), had been the capital of the Umayyads and the Mamluks. After several Muslim political dynasties, and for a short time the Crusaders, had taken it under control, the Ottoman era began for Syria in 1516 and lasted until the French mandate in 1925. Syria gained its independence in 1944.

Sunnī Muslims constitute the majority in Syria (74%). The 'Alawi (12%), Christian (10%), and Druze (3%) populations follow. In spite of a majority of Sunnīs, 'Alawis have been in power since the 1960s, especially after the military coup by Baathist 'Alawis in 1966. There had been a clash between the Arab nationalist Baathists and the Muslim brotherhood. This clash reached its peak with a revolt attempt in Hama, which was the biggest uprising that took place in February 1982 against the 'Alawi Asad regime. Baathist powers bombarded the whole city and killed thousands of people to decimate the Muslim Brotherhood. The event is known as the Hama Massacre. As a result of the Hama Massacre and the oppression of Sunnī Muslims by the intelligence agency, *al-Mukhabarat*, who made use of the emergency law, no significant religious conflict or other revolt attempt has taken place until the present time.

The Syrian constitution does not declare an official religion, and the political powers in charge have been trying to secularize the state as well as the society. This secularization project has to do with neutralizing Sunnī Muslim movements and internalizing 'Alawi administration to the Sunnī majority. Hence, the Asad regime has been following a balanced pragmatist approach between secularization and Islamic rule while it seeks legitimacy for its administration and tries to maintain political power based on national and international consensus. Even though religious minorities have the right to follow their legal systems in family law matters and enjoy religious freedom to some

extent, the state is determined to control the religious realm, especially the Sunnī practicing Muslims. The mosques can only be in service during the day within the restricted time declared by the state. This restriction has aimed at preventing the growing Islamic revivalism centered in the mosques through religious preaching and classes. The military is extremely secularized and is harsh toward those Sunnīs who do military service and want to practice their religion. There were a few attempts to ban the veil at universities and public offices in previous decades, but they were not successful. In 2010, the full-face veil, the *niqab*, was banned at universities, which has been interpreted as a sign of secularization in the face of Islamic revivalism. In 2011, the uprising against the Syrian government, which was part of a groundswell of protest across the Middle East, was interpreted in part as religious conflict between the Sunnī Muslim

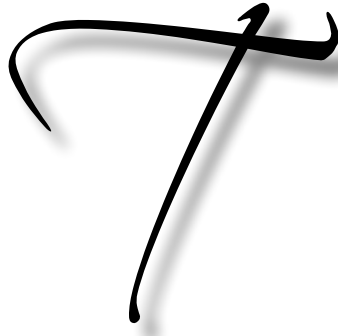
majority in Syria and the Alawite and Christian minorities.

Ahmet Temel

See also Authority; Islam; Islamism (Political Islam); Middle East; Muslim Brotherhood; Secularism; Shi'a Islam; Sunnī Islam

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TABLIGH

Tabligh is a name associated with one of the most important 20th-century Islamic reform movements. It is an Islamic term, a synonym of *da'wah*, referring to the call or invitation to Islam in particular and the call to good deeds in general. *Tabligh*, an Arabic infinitive word stemming from the root *b-l-'*, literally means to transmit, to deliver, or to convey. Even though this term does not exist in the Qur'an in infinitive form, its verb forms are used occasionally meaning "delivering the message of God" (5:67, 7:62–68, 33:39, 46:23).

Tabligh became known as the name of an influential Islamic revival movement, *Tablighi Jama'at*, that originated in the Muslim community in India in the first decades of the 20th century and spread elsewhere within the Muslim world. Shaikh Muhammad Ilyas Qandahlavi (1885–1944), a former cleric trained in the Deoband theological center and former teacher at Madrasah Mazhar al-'Ulum in Saharanpur, founded his movement in Delhi in 1927 with the goal of renewing the Muslim community by destroying common superstitions and calling on Muslims to adopt the "true" Islamic virtues. Although this movement has been described as a missionary movement in the West, it differs from Christian missionaries with its efforts aimed at Muslims rather than at proselytizing non-Muslims. Beside his famous motto "O Muslims! Be Muslims!"

Muhammad Ilyas declared six principles of the movement:

1. *Kalimah*: The famous article of Islamic faith, "There is no god but Allah and the Prophet Muhammad is His messenger"
2. *Salah*: Five daily prayers that occupy the center of Muslims' life
3. *Ilm and Dhikr*: Arranging public knowledge and recitation sessions
4. *Ikram-i Muslim*: Establishing good relationship between Muslims
5. *Tashih-i Niyyat*: Undertaking all actions for the sake of Allah, not for getting any worldly capital
6. *Tafri-i Waqt*: Devoting time to call people to the Qur'an and sunna

According to the sixth principle, each follower should devote at least 40 days in a group of around 10 persons for calling people door-to-door to join the movement and follow its principles. Because of its simple principles and effective method of expanding, the movement obtained great success, reaching hundreds of thousands of people in a short period and became known worldwide in the 1940s. After the death of Muhammad Ilyas in 1944, his son Mawlana Yusuf became the second leader of the movement. Mawlana Yusuf disseminated the movement around the world, especially in Europe, the United States, Japan, and Middle

East. It is still one of the most influential Islamic movements in the world.

The hallmark of the movement is that it strictly stays away from politics. It is the first Islamic movement that sees politics as unnecessary and unimportant for a religious life. Because of this feature, the Tablighi movement has not been seen as a threat by local governments and is even supported sometimes. During the British period, the leader of the movement issued a fatwa against Mawlana Abul Ala Mawdudi, who was the leader of Jamaat-e-Islami, another influential Islamic movement in India, which was effective in the sphere of politics.

Ahmet Temel

See also Fundamentalism; India; Islam; Islamic Modernism; Islamic Reform; Islamism (Political Islam); Jamaat-e-Islami; Liberal Islam; Modernism; Pakistan

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TAGORE, RABINDRANATH (1861–1941)

Born in Calcutta (now Kolkata) into a wealthy, prominent, and large Bengali family, Rabindranath Tagore became one of India's greatest modern intellectual figures and the first Indian writer to attain global fame. His father, Debendranath, played an influential role in Bengali society as leader of an important modern Hindu reform movement, the Brahmo Samaj ("Society of God"); thus, the environment in which Rabindranath grew up not only was steeped in the richness of

Hindu traditions but also was one on the cutting edge of India's engagement with modernity.

Sent to study law in England, Tagore returned prematurely to India and pursued writing instead; he went on to become an accomplished and profoundly influential poet, novelist, playwright, songwriter, and painter. His ideas sparked, among other things, a sense of "national" feeling that crystallized in his compositions, later being used as anthems for what would become the independent states of India and Bangladesh. That his work could be used in this way illustrates its "international" or "global" character and that of the themes on which he wrote: a deep love of God and nature; the fellowship of mankind; the nature of freedom, both political and spiritual; and socio-religious criticism. Outside India, Tagore won international fame for English translations of his own Bengali poetry, particularly his *Gitanjali* (Song Offerings), a project that helped earn him the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1913—the first Indian, or even Asian, poet to receive the award. His literary accomplishments allowed him to travel extensively and correspond with many of the towering figures of his day, including W. B. Yeats, Ezra Pound, Bertrand Russell, Einstein, and King George V, who knighted Tagore in 1915, only to see that honor renounced in protest of British brutality during the Amritsar massacre of 1919.

His personal correspondence, as well as the impact of his poetry, which circulated in the English-speaking world generally, made Tagore a prominent and deeply articulate voice of India's cultural and religious heritage. Tagore was also an important voice in India's independence movement, but he eventually took a step back from political activism, being deeply disturbed by the violence associated with blind nationalism and religious discord. In keeping with his general humanist and rationalist ideals, Tagore believed that education of the Indian masses should be a larger part of the independence movement; only then could India attain a deeper freedom—a freedom that merely Britain's exit from the subcontinent would not accomplish. To this end, Tagore started his own university, Visva-Bharati, in Santiniketan, near Kolkata, which aimed to combine the best of both Indian and European education. Despite his global

appeal, Tagore's legacy is more deeply tied to the Bengali language, of which he is the single greatest literary figure.

David Fowler

See also Gandhi, Mohandas; Hinduism; India; Reform Hinduism

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TAIPING REBELLION

The Taiping Rebellion was a major uprising during the mid-19th century against the ruling Qing Dynasty in China. The rebellion was led by Hong Xiuquan, an unsuccessful candidate in the Imperial examinations, who preached socialist egalitarianism and rigorous spiritual practice based on concepts and symbols adapted from Christianity. Before the rebellion was eventually defeated, it had gained control over a large portion of southern China and established its capital in the captured city of Nanjing.

In 1836, Hong Xiuquan traveled to Guangzhou to take the imperial exams. During his stay there, he met a Protestant Christian missionary and was given evangelical pamphlets written by Liang Fa, the first Chinese Protestant Christian minister. Hong failed the examinations and experienced an illness or nervous collapse during which time he had religious visions. After spending several years as a village school teacher, Hong studied the pamphlets and then announced that his visions indicated that he was the son of God and younger brother of Jesus Christ, charged with ridding China of demon worship and establishing a heavenly kingdom on earth. Hong and his early followers destroyed ancestral tablets at Confucian temples in nearby villages. In 1850, Hong led a successful uprising in Guangxi and founded the Heavenly Kingdom of Great Peace. Hong's followers were required to participate in regular religious practice, maintain strict separation between men and women, and share their wealth

and property communally. In 1853, the Taiping forces captured Nanjing, calling the city Tianjing and maintaining it as the capital of the movement. The same year, Hong appointed his eldest son, Hong Tianguifu, as his successor. Internal political struggles and overambitious military campaigns weakened the movement.

A military unit of Chinese troops and Western officers organized by Frederick Townsend Ward prevented the Taiping forces from capturing Shanghai. Under the command of Charles George Gordon, this force was given the title Ever Victorious Army and posed the strongest opposition to the Taiping rebels. The Qing emperor appointed Zeng Guofan to form a new army made up of locally organized militias that were funded by local landowners and regional taxes. While the Ever Victorious Army fought the Taiping rebels throughout central China, Zeng besieged the Taiping capital at Nanjing. In 1864, the walls of Nanjing were breached, and the city was taken. Taiping rebels who did not escape either died in the fighting or were executed. The body of Hong Xiuquan, who may have poisoned himself or died of food poisoning, was found wrapped in a yellow cloth and left lying in a city sewer.

The Taiping Rebellion significantly weakened the Qing Dynasty and provided encouragement for other rebellions and uprisings during the following half-century, until the abdication of the final Qing emperor to the republican revolution in 1912. The egalitarian and reform ideas espoused by Hong Xiuquan during the Taiping Rebellion influenced the thought of later Chinese political leaders, including Sun Yat-Sen and Mao Zedong.

Brendan Newlon

See also China; Chinese Popular Religion; Christianity; Communism; Cultural Revolution (China); Ethnic Nationalism; Hong Kong; Japan; Korea, Democratic People's Republic of (North Korea); Korea, Republic of (South Korea); Macau; New Religions; Religion and State; Religious Nationalism; Syncretism; Taiwan

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TAIWAN

The island of Taiwan is located in the Pacific Ocean 180 kilometers off the southeastern coast of China, separated from the mainland Chinese province of Fujian by the Taiwan Strait. Taiwan (including a number of outlying islands) covers an area of about 36,000 square kilometers and supports a population of roughly 23 million, 98% of which are Han Chinese, the remaining 2% being made up mostly of Austronesian aboriginal groups regarded as indigenous to the island. The political status of Taiwan is disputed, with the People's Republic of China claiming it as one of its provinces, while the island has de facto operated as a sovereign state, called the Republic of China, since 1949. A brief sketch of the island's history will help clarify this situation and prepare the background for its unique religious constellations.

History

Austronesian groups constituted the indigenous population by the time the first significant numbers of Han Chinese settlers arrived in the 17th century. At that time, both the Dutch and the Spanish had already established military bases and trading posts in the southern and northern parts of Taiwan, respectively. The Dutch ousted the Spanish in 1642, before being themselves driven off the island by Chinese forces in 1662. In 1683, the island came under the administration of the Qing Dynasty, which had taken over the Chinese Empire from the Ming Dynasty. The following 212 years of Qing rule witnessed a steadily growing immigration of Han settlers from the Chinese mainland, mostly speakers of Hokkien and Hakka dialects from the southern provinces of Fujian and Guangdong. The aboriginal population was progressively pushed back into the mountains, while the Chinese opened the fertile plains of western Taiwan for agriculture. In 1885, the Qing government granted Taiwan the status of a province but only 10 years later had to cede it to Japan following the Chinese defeat in the First Sino-Japanese War. For 50 years, from 1895 to 1945, Taiwan remained a Japanese colony, to be returned to China only after the Japanese defeat in World War II. As the Chinese civil war was about to end in a

Communist victory and the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, parts of the defeated Nationalist army led by Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek (1887–1975) withdrew to Taiwan. Taipei was proclaimed the provisional capital of the Republic of China, with the explicit agenda to reconquer the mainland as soon as possible. Chiang's Nationalist party (Kuomintang, KMT) ruled Taiwan unopposed until the lifting of martial law in 1987. The KMT was dominated by mainlanders and for a long time severely restricted political participation for the Taiwanese (i.e., the descendants of Han Chinese settlers who had come to Taiwan from the 17th to the 19th centuries). Mainlander dominance also expressed itself in the championing of Mandarin as the national language and the suppression of the local Hokkien and Hakka dialects. The conflict between the mainlander elite and the Taiwanese remained a key element of the political dynamic of Taiwan until recently.

At first, most Western nations continued to recognize Chiang's regime in Taipei as the legitimate government of China, but following the rapprochement between China and the United States, most transferred their recognition to the Communist government in Beijing. At present, only a handful of smaller nations in the Caribbean, Central America, the Pacific islands, and Africa, and also the Vatican, formally recognize the Taipei government. These conditions have not, however, hampered Taiwan's economic development, which has propelled it from a largely agrarian society to a postindustrial one within a few decades. Since the lifting of martial law in 1987, the Republic of China has undergone an equally rapid process of political liberalization and democratization, with an opposition party winning presidential elections for the first time in 2000.

Religions

The current religious conditions of Taiwan can only be understood with reference to these historical lines of development. The dominant religious force for much of the history of Chinese-dominated Taiwan has been Chinese popular religion, the sum total of religious beliefs and observances integrated into the lives of kin groups and villages, focusing on the worship of gods, the veneration of ancestors, and the careful management of ghosts and

demons. Popular religion continues to remain strong to the present day, with its temples and shrines dotting the landscape. At the same time, the rapid urbanization and industrialization commencing in the 1960s have altered the social structures with which popular religious practice is enmeshed and have opened opportunities for other religious traditions.

Christian missions already began under Dutch and Spanish rule but only made a larger impact starting in the late 19th century. That impact increased dramatically after 1949, when many missionary societies were expelled from the Chinese mainland and therefore focused their activities on the island. Many converts were made among the aboriginal tribes (the majority of whom are now Christian, both Protestant and Catholic) and to a lesser extent among the Han Chinese population. However, the proportion of Christians in the overall population never exceeded the single-digit percentage range and hovers currently around 4%. In spite of their limited numbers, Christians have played an important role in Taiwanese politics, both among the ranks of the ruling KMT and in the opposition movement prior to the lifting of martial law. The Presbyterian Church in particular has long championed the interests of the Taiwanese against the once politically dominant mainlanders.

China's partition in 1949 occasioned the influx of other religious personnel from the mainland as well. The nominal head of the Daoist tradition, the Celestial Master, relocated to the island, as did many eminent Buddhist monks and nuns as well as members of various sectarian movements. Buddhism and popular sectarianism were strongly affected by this infusion of new leadership and new ideas.

Due to the frontier nature of Taiwan during the Qing Dynasty and the resulting scarcity of surplus resources, the island had never developed a strong Buddhist monastic tradition. Furthermore, during the Japanese period, Taiwan was cut off from the reform movements that shook up the Chinese Buddhist community, which produced a number of charismatic new sangha leaders on the mainland. The coming of some of these to Taiwan in 1949, together with the social changes brought about by the rapid urbanization and industrialization of the country, created the conditions for an

unprecedented flourishing of Buddhism. A number of large-scale Buddhist organizations developed around charismatic figures such as the monks Yinshun (1906–2005), Hsing Yun (Xingyun, b. 1927), Wei Chueh (Weijue, b. 1928), and Sheng Yen (Shengyan, 1930–2009) and the nun Cheng Yen (Zhengyan, b. 1937). Some of their organizations have expanded globally by founding temples and chapters across the world. Particularly noteworthy are the successes of Hsing Yun's Fo Guang Shan order and Buddha Light International Association, and Cheng Yen's charitable Tzu Chi Foundation. The global spread of Taiwan-based religious associations is closely linked to the massive development of Taiwanese diaspora communities, especially in North America, Australia, and New Zealand. Taiwanese Buddhist groups have also been very active among the Chinese of Southeast Asia.

A similar picture presents itself with regard to new religious movements. The Yiguandao (I-Kuan Tao, lit. "Way of Unity") movement shall here serve as an exemplary case. It was founded in Shandong province of mainland China in the 1920s but is rooted in an older sectarian tradition active since the 15th century. Its key teachings include the belief in an imminent apocalypse and the advent of a savior who would open up a path of salvation in this final world period. Spreading rapidly in war-torn China, the movement came under pressure from both Communists and Nationalists after 1945. While it was completely eradicated in the People's Republic during the 1950s, it survived unhampered in Hong Kong and managed to take root and flourish in Taiwan, even though it remained officially banned by the KMT government until 1987. Today, the various branches of Yiguandao make up one of the largest religious denominations in Taiwan; like its Buddhist competitors, the religion has also spread globally in the wake of Taiwanese emigration.

In the beginning of the 21st century, Taiwan-based religions are thus increasingly expanding beyond the island's shores, helping globalize Chinese religious traditions, even as these same traditions are still struggling with many political and legal restrictions in the People's Republic of China.

Philip Clart

See also Buddhist Compassion Relief Tzu Chi Foundation; China; Chinese Popular Religion; Confucianism; Daoism; Diaspora; Fo Guang Shan; Mahayana Buddhism; Protestant Christianity; Roman Catholicism; Theravada Buddhism; Vajrayana, Tibetan

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TAIZÉ

The village of Taizé (Burgundy, France) is the location of an ecumenical and international Christian monastic community with the same name. Founded in 1940, the community became a focal point for the renewal of Christian traditions and churches in the 1960s and has duplicated its spirituality and liturgy all over the world via regional conferences and filial communities since the 1980s. Taizé thus contributed significantly to the development of (Christian) world spirituality.

The community of Taizé was founded by Roger Schütz, a Protestant lay person from Geneva, Switzerland. At the outbreak of World War II, he realized his vision to help refugees from occupied French territories, mostly Jews. After 2 years of hiding in Geneva, he returned with several companions in 1944 and helped orphans and prisoners of war, most of them German. In 1949, the first brothers took their vows, and in 1952 to 1953, Frère Roger wrote a rule for the community. In the 1960s and 1970s, Taizé was visited by

thousands of young people searching for renewal of Christian tradition and churches in an undogmatic and ecumenical way, making Taizé a symbol of renewal. It is still visited by thousands of people, young and old, each year. In 2005, Frère Roger was murdered and was succeeded by Frère Alois. Taizé is not affiliated with a specific denomination and maintains a good relationship with Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox church leaders alike.

The prime activity of Taizé, besides prayer and communal life, is to receive people in their community and engage with them in Bible studies, discussion groups, liturgy, and prayer. Since the 1980s, Taizé has started regional conferences in Europe and later in other parts of the world, making it easier for people to participate in Taizé's spirituality. These meetings, held in Europe between Christmas and New Year, are also attended by thousands. Third, Taizé has started filial communities in other parts of the world such as Bangladesh, Brazil, and Korea, where brothers are engaged in prayer and social action alike. Finally, Taizé spirituality is present in local groups that assemble around its spirituality and typical liturgical forms.

Taizé has contributed extensively to the formation of a world Christian spirituality and culture. Its songs—simple texts and melodies that can be sung in different languages at the same time and are meditatively repeated over and over again—have found a place in the songbooks of various denominations. The absence of preaching or Holy Communion in their services has become a model for ecumenical meetings and offers a way of participating that relativizes and at the same time respects denominational differences. Through their meetings and discussion groups, young people broaden their view and learn to respect other traditions as well as their own. The regional meetings and filial communities further contribute to the globalization of its spirituality. Not in the last place, the international and ecumenical community of brothers in Taizé is a model for the global coexistence of Christian denominations.

Erik Sengers

See also Christianity; Ecumenicalism; France; Liberal Protestantism; Monasticism; Protestant Christianity; Roman Catholicism

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TAJIKISTAN

Tajikistan is one of the new Central Asian republics that emerged as an independent state in the wake of the demise of the Soviet Union. As its name implies, it is distinctive in consisting almost entirely of members of the Tajik ethnic group. The name “Tajik” is synonymous with “Persian,” and the language spoken by the Tajiks of Tajikistan and northern Afghanistan is a variant of modern Persian, Farsi. Unlike the Persians in Iran, however, the Tajiks in Tajikistan and northern Afghanistan are Sunnī Muslims rather than Shi’a. Of the 8 million inhabitants of Tajikistan (2010 estimates), 95% are Sunnī Muslims, 3% are Shi’a Muslims, and the remaining 2% are mostly Christians of various denominations, with a small number of Buddhists and Jews.

Though Islam was repressed during the Soviet period, Muslim activists have been involved in politics after the end of the Cold War. In 1992, shortly after the end of the socialist government in Afghanistan, a coalition of Muslim political activists and prodemocracy politicians attempted a political takeover. Tajikistan was proclaimed to be a Muslim state. The revolutionary Muslim government did not last long, however, and in the 21st century the involvement of religious activists in politics has been much more discreet.

Religious History

Religion has been an important aspect of the social and political life of Tajikistan, a Central Asian nation north of Afghanistan, long before the creation of the modern nation-state. In the fourth century BCE, the armies of Alexander the Great helped establish the Greek kingdom of Bactria in

Central Asia, bringing together Eastern and Western cultural influences. The Silk Road flowed through the area, carrying eastward Greek thought, Persian Zoroastrian and Manichean ideas, and later the teachings of Nestorian Christians. At the same time, Buddhist culture was travelling from India northward to Asia, and Chinese concepts were flowing west. Tajikistan and other parts of Central Asia were in the midst of this cultural ferment.

Islam came to the region in the seventh century CE from Persia in the southwest, bringing with it the ethnic people, language, and culture that became the Tajik tradition. Nearby Uzbekistan became the center of Central Asian Muslim culture, especially the cities of Samarkand and Bukhara. The Mongol Empire in the 13th century seized political control of the region, though Islam survived, and in the 14th century the Mongol leaders became themselves Muslim, and Islam again thrived in Central Asia.

Most areas of Central Asia fell to Russian control in the latter half of the 19th century. At that time, most of Central Asia was administered together under the name of Russian Turkestan. The 1917 Russian Revolution emboldened the indigenous political leaders in the region to proclaim their freedom from Russian control, and in 1918 they proclaimed the Turkestan Independent Islamic Republic. Lenin and the new Communist government did not look kindly on the emergence of an independent state in what he regarded as part of the Soviet sphere of influence, and by 1925 the independence movement had been crushed. The nascent Turkestan was separated into different ethnic countries, which became the five republics of Soviet Central Asia.

During the Soviet era, religion in general was suppressed. In the initial stages of the Soviet era, some Muslim leaders joined the Communist movement, but after 1928 the Soviet government embarked on a major effort to control religion, and some Muslim clergy were put in jail. In 1912, there had been more than 26,000 mosques in Central Asia, but by 1968, after Khrushchev’s antireligion campaign, fewer than 500 mosques remained. During the Afghan-Soviet war in the mid-1980s, Muslims were held in suspicion by the Russians. But their lot improved after Gorbachev came to power in 1985 and instituted a series of reforms. After 1988, Islam in Central Asia experienced a considerable expansion and has flourished with the establishment of independent states such as Tajikistan in the early 1990s.

Religious Politics in the Post-Soviet Period

In Tajikistan, Islamic political parties were outlawed during the Soviet era, but after the thaw in the Soviet Union's antireligious attitudes in the late 1980s, Muslim political activists came to the fore. The old Communist leader, Rakhman Nabiyev, was deposed in 1991 by a protest movement that was supported by Muslim leaders, who even supplied the materials to create a tent city for the protestors from a local mosque. Among the new political parties that emerged in post-Soviet Tajikistan was the radical Islamic Renaissance movement, which received support from the Muslim militia that had been fighting the Soviets in adjacent Afghanistan during the Afghan-Soviet war in the 1980s. The Muslim religious parties gained much of their popular strength by being presented as an alternative to the old Communist politicians, who were still trying to cling to power in the post-Soviet period. One Muslim leader in Tajikistan described this political conflict between the old Communists and the new Muslim parties as an "ideological struggle" between Islam and communism. The "Revolutionary Council," which ruled in Nabiyev's place, was a coalition between the Islamic Renaissance Party and a secular democratic movement.

One of the leaders of the Islamic movement was Qazi Hajji Akbar Turadzhonzoda, who was based in the main mosque of Dushanbe, where he communicated with his followers through a cell phone and fax machine. His vision of religious politics in Tajikistan was different from that of Iran, however. He explained that although the people of Tajikistan and Iran were both ethnically Persian, the Iranian population was largely Shi'a, a Muslim tradition that has a stronger pattern of authoritarian leadership and martyrdom than the Sunnī tradition, which most Tajikis followed. For this reason, he said, the political involvement of Muslim activists like himself would not lead to an Ayatullah Khomeini style of autocratic Muslim rule. He envisioned a Muslim politics that would be open and progressive.

Nonetheless, the Islamic political movement increased the fears of many secular politicians, who were able to mount a successful counterattack against the Muslim coalition government. As it turned out, the new Revolutionary Council lasted less than a year. It had not enjoyed the support of the whole country, particularly the Kulyab region

in the south, which became a base for the old pro-Communist activists. In December 1992, the old pro-Communist leaders were able to regroup their strength and conquer the capital, Dushanbe, and oust the Islamic coalition. In the following year, 1993, the counterattack against the Islamic opposition was so severe that many of the Muslim leaders fled to Russia and Afghanistan. They accused the government of genocide.

In the subsequent years, the conflict continued as Muslim political activists were able to restore some of their former power. Pro-Islamic parties joined forces in a coalition movement, the United Tajik Opposition, which negotiated with secular parties to establish a power-sharing arrangement in the year 2000. This allowed some Muslim leaders a role in the government and brought a certain calm to the political conflict. About a third of the government positions have been assigned to Islamic-leaning members of the United Tajik Opposition, including several cabinet posts. Since then, Muslim political groups, including the Islamic Rebirth Party, were allowed to submit candidates for the elections for parliamentary seats. Particularly since the overthrow of the Taliban in Afghanistan in 2001, the major Muslim political movements in Tajikistan have grown more moderate and have secured a comfortable place in the coalition politics of Tajikistan's governments. In 2010, however, a group of 25 imprisoned Islamic activists escaped from jail and, in a series of clashes with the Tajikistan army in the eastern part of the country, killed dozens of soldiers and raised the specter of challenges from a new Islamic extremist movement. Religion, therefore, continues to play a varied role in the public life of the country.

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See also Afghanistan; Iran; Islam; Islamism (Political Islam); Mongol Empire; Politics and Religion; Russian Federation; Silk Road; South Asia; Uzbekistan

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TALIBAN

The Taliban (Persian “Madrasa Students” or “Seekers of Knowledge”) is a fundamentalist Islamist movement that ruled Afghanistan from September 1996, when they captured Kabul, through 2001, when a U.S.-led coalition forcibly removed them from power. Though the Taliban governed all religious, political, economic, and social aspects of Afghan life, only three countries, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates, recognized them as a legitimate autonomous political entity. Other nations refused to establish diplomatic relations with the Taliban after learning of their frequent institutionally sanctioned human rights abuses, particularly in reference to the harsh punishment of detractors, the execution of “criminals” without due process, the suspension of nearly all women’s rights, and the suppression of nonreligious cultural activities (music, the arts, entertainment, etc.). Ultimately, their autocratic control over the thought, will, and spirit of their constituency, long seen as brutal and unacceptable by the international diplomatic community, along with the explicit endorsement of (and direct support of) the September 11 terrorist attacks led to their ouster. In the months following their removal from power, Mullah Mohammed Omar reorganized the Taliban as an underground guerilla militia intent on conducting a sustained insurrection against any non-Islamist Afghan ruling authority.

The Taliban was formed in 1994 when Omar banded together several small, heavily armed militias in the southern Kandahar Province with the intent to restore order and discipline via the implementation and strict enforcement of Shari’a law.

At that time, after years of jihad—the Islamist resistance to the Soviet occupation (1978–1989) by the mujahideen—and violence as the Najibullah government and remnants of the mujahideen fought for control in the ensuing political vacuum, their dedication to the establishment of a totalitarian Islamic order was inspired by a combination of rural Pashtun tribal norms and a desire to reestablish a medieval Islamic theocracy. Between 1994 and 1996, the Taliban gained control over the vast majority of Afghan territory through forming alliances with warlords, conducting localized military coups, and incorporating harsh intimidation tactics. With logistical and political support from Pakistan, the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan was created after Kabul fell in September 1996.

Life under the 5-year Taliban regime was heavily restricted by institutional interpretation of the Shari’a law. Women were not allowed to work or attend school, strict dress codes came into effect, the display of any images of living things was banned, and ownership of any nonreligious media was prohibited. These policies, among many others, were regulated by the Ministry for the Promotion of Virtue and Suppression of Vice (PVSV) and made compulsory by its “religious police.” Those deemed criminals by PVSV enforcers were subject to public beatings, amputations, and even execution in town centers and soccer stadiums. On the international relations front, the Taliban formed an alliance with Osama bin Laden (d. 2011) and al Qaeda in an effort to promote the “Talibanization” of Central Asia and beyond. Led by Ahmad Shah Massoud, the Northern Alliance of Tajik and other non-Pashtun tribal groups resisted Taliban rule in the remote northeastern corner of Afghanistan until he was assassinated, likely by al Qaeda operatives, shortly before the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks and the subsequent invasion of Afghanistan by the U.S. coalition military forces in October 2001, which led to the Taliban’s fall from power. The movement survived, however, controlling large sections of Afghan territory, and was buttressed by a Pakistan Taliban of largely Pashtun ethnic forces that resisted U.S. military efforts to stabilize Afghan society and establish a sympathetic and democratic secular regime in Afghanistan.

Michael W. Anderson

See also Afghanistan; al Qaeda; Islam; Islamism (Political Islam); Politics and Religion; September 11, 2001; War on Terrorism

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TAMBOR DE MINA

Tambor de Mina is the most common name for the religion of African origin in Maranhão and the Brazilian Amazon region. From the 1950s, due to the migration of African descendants, it spread to other areas, mainly Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Brasília, and Paraná. The name *tambor* (drum) derives from the importance of this instrument in the rituals and *Mina*, from the former Portuguese fort of São Jorge da Mina, a warehouse for slaves established in the region where Ghana is located today, that is, West Africa. *Mina* is also the name of an African ethnic group, and many slaves brought to Brazil were known as *Mina Negroes*.

It is an iniciatic religion, meaning that one enters via rituals of initiation, and it is a religion of trance in which those adept enter an altered state and receive supernatural entities: *voduns*, *orixás*, and *caboclos*. It was brought by *jeje* and *nagô* slaves from what are today the countries of Benin, Nigeria, and other parts of West Africa; they came to Maranhão, mainly after the middle of the 18th century, to work in the cotton and sugarcane fields.

In São Luís, Maranhão, in the first half of the 19th century, two base houses of this religion were founded by slaves: the Casa das Minas (*jeje*) and the Casa de Nagô, which are still active today. The Casa *jeje* is unique, but other houses were born out of Casa de Nagô, some influenced by other African traditions (*cambinda*, *tapa*, *cachéu*, *congo*, *angola*, etc.) and also by Amerindian and European traditions.

The worshipped entities of Tambor de Mina are named *voduns* or *encantados* (enchanted); they are grouped in families and have African or Portuguese names. Many Mina songs are in African languages. The trance is quite discreet, and everyone uses the same clothes. The musical instruments used are drums, iron (*agogô*), and *cabaças* with strings of beads tied on; there are variations depending on the origins in Africa and the traditions of the worship center.

The participants of the religion are usually working-class women of African descent. The public rituals take place on the dates of the saints of the Catholic calendar. This syncretism is common with Catholicism, *kardecism*, and African traditions, and nowadays *umbanda* is largely found spread through the groups of Tambor de Mina.

Among the values associated with Tambor de Mina are respect for the objects in the religion, the description and preservation of the secrets of the ritual, submission to elders and valuing of the hierarchy, fulfillment of the obligations of worship, and tolerance for those who are different.

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See also Africa; Brazil; Candomblé; Ghana; Indigenous Religions; Santería; Vodou

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TANZANIA

The United Republic of Tanzania, located south of Kenya in East Africa, has existed within its current boundaries only since 1964. At that time, the former, largely Christian, British colony of Tanganyika merged with the Muslim island nation of Zanzibar, combining the two names into a new one, *Tanzania*. Tanzania continues to be a

Christian and Muslim nation, and its shoreline has been a part of religious exchanges in the western Indian Ocean for centuries. Christian missions have been active on the mainland since the late 19th century. In recent decades, Tanzania has, like many African countries, become a laboratory for trans-regional religious movements, both Muslim and Christian. Concurrently, indigenous religious practices persist.

While most Tanzanians—approximately 38 million in 2007—profess either Islam or Christianity, the exact proportion of Muslims to Christians is poorly known but estimated around 40:60; however, the government has not held a census since 1967, to avoid politicization of religious loyalties. Among Christians, Catholics reportedly form the largest group, and Anglicans, Lutherans, Methodists, and other Protestant denominations have substantial congregations. Most Muslims are Sunnī (of the Shafii School) with South Asian Shi'a and Bohra minorities.

Among Christians, globally connected religiosity tends to take the form of born-again/Pentecostal churches. Present since at least the 1940s, Pentecostals remained relatively weak until the 1980s, due partly to the relative scarcity of non-denominational missions. Subsequently, increased funding from U.S. Pentecostals combined with the social upheaval created by national development policies (“villagization”) aided their growth. Presently, among the most influential Tanzanian Pentecostal congregations, the Full Gospel Bible Fellowship Church, led by Zachary Kakobe, counts several thousand members. Tanzanian Pentecostals appear less interested in the prosperity gospel than west African Pentecostals and more so in healing, partly reflecting the pervasiveness of AIDS in this country. Tanzania’s Catholic Church has recently been threatened by schism over the “charismatic” activities of one of its bishops in Dar es Salaam.

Trans-regional networks among Muslims take two distinct, temporally subsequent, forms. Two Sufi brotherhoods, the Qadiriyya (imported from the Somali coast) and the Shadhiliyya-Yashrutiyya (imported from Lebanon via the Comoro Islands), gained followers between 1880 and 1960 and became instrumental in the spread of Islam beyond its coastal urban nuclei. Focused on ritual performances, they continue to operate but have lost patronage and membership due to economic

depression in their coastal bases. Politically, they are quiescent and marginal.

In contrast, loosely affiliated Islamic youth movements have emerged since the late 1970s that oppose Sufi rituals as “innovation.” Often known collectively under the term *Ansar Sunna* (also pronounced *Ansuari* or *Ansuaru*), they are influenced by Saudi Arabian Wahhabism. Besides Saudi sponsorship, the Ansar are also in contact with Islamists in Sudan and Somalia and attentive to the rhetoric of the “War on Terror.” They propose a literal interpretation of the Qur’an and accuse the Tanzanian state of discrimination against Muslims, especially in education. There have been occasional clashes between the Ansar and both Christian groups and security forces. The Tanzanian state is trying to manage these tensions and the international connections of Muslim groups, with partial success.

Felicitas Maria Becker

See also Africa; Anglicans; Islam; Islamism (Political Islam); Missions and Missionaries; Pentecostal Movements; Protestant Christianity; Roman Catholicism; Sufism; Wahhabis

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TAOISM

See Daoism

TATTOOING AND PIERCING

The distinction between religious rituals that involve tattooing or piercing of the body and cultural practices that include tattooing and piercing is often difficult to make as tattooing and piercing are common in rites of passage and as a mark of status and rank that may reflect spiritual prowess. Tattoos may also serve as a sign of religious devotion or as a talisman or amulet providing protection.

Tattooing is an ancient practice. Tattoos were found on the natural mummy of a man called Ötzi the Iceman, dating from 3300 BCE, which was found in a glacier in the Italian Alps in 1991. Tattooing was apparently practiced in Japan as early as 3000 BCE, as suggested by clay figurines put into tombs as attendants for the dead, which were painted or engraved in a way that resembles tattooing. However, the first written record of Japanese tattooing is from a Chinese dynastic history compiled in 297 CE. Russian archaeologists have found mummies with tattoos representing real and fantastic animals in the Altai Mountains of western and southern Siberia that date back 2,400 years. Julius Caesar reported that the natives of Britain were tattooed when he invaded in 54 BCE. Incan mummies with tattoos dating from the 11th century have been found in Peru, and the reports of Cortez and his soldiers show that tattooing was practiced in central Mexico when the Europeans arrived there. Tattooing was also common among the native peoples of North America, particularly the Iroquois and the Chickasaw. Inuit women were tattooed to mark their marital status and clan identity. In the societies of Polynesian peoples in the South Pacific, from where the word *tattoo* (Polynesian *tatau*) was borrowed, tattooing was part of a rite of passage for young chiefs conducted at the onset of puberty, and the spiritual power and status of a chief were conveyed by his tattoos. Scarification, which is related to tattooing as it is produced by cutting the skin and inserting special sand or ashes to make raised scars, is practiced in Africa.

Tattoos on the mummified remains of Amunet, a priestess of the Goddess Hathor at Thebes (ca. 2160–1994 BCE) suggest that in ancient Egypt tattoos were a sign of the tie between a particular person and a spirit or god. Consequently, in Leviticus 19:28, the people of Israel were forbidden to mark or mutilate their bodies as did the people of Canaan, Babylonia, and Egypt: “You shall not make any cuts in your body for the dead nor make any tattoo marks on yourselves: I am the LORD.” This prohibition was later reinforced by the idea that as humankind was created in the image of God, tattooing was a desecration of God’s image.

In Babylonia and Egypt, tattoos were also used to identify a slave with his owner’s mark. Similarly, in the Greek and Roman world, criminals and slaves were tattooed. While tattoos and body

piercing are not mentioned in the New Testament, in the Christian cultures of Europe also, tattooing was associated with criminal and marginal status. Most notoriously, the Nazis marked Jews at Auschwitz and other camps with tattoos.

Elsewhere in the world, tattoos were generally a mark of high status and often distinguished a warrior or person with spiritual power. Shamans and spirit mediums marked their bodies with tattoos, and some pierced or cut their bodies in states of ecstasy, demonstrating the power of the deity to stand above the normal human response to pain and bodily mutilation. For example, the Sun Dance (outlawed by the United States in 1904) was the main communal ritual of the buffalo-hunting tribes of North America—the Arapahoe, Cheyenne, and Dakota. During the dance, warriors would have hooks inserted through the skin on their chest and back. Then they were suspended from the sacred pole.

In small shrines and temples in Singapore, Penang, Malaysia, and elsewhere in Southeast Asia, Chinese spirit mediums, usually marked with tattoos that demonstrate the power they have accrued, are possessed by spirits during the Festival of the Nine Emperors. They take spikes with symbols of the deity and pierce their cheek or the skin of their arms or chest to attach powerful amulets. Others slit their tongues to obtain blood, which is mixed with ink to prepare amulets for their clients.

Ritual Tattooing

In Thailand, Laos, and Cambodia, Buddhist monks have adopted shamanic practices of tattooing clients with apotropaic symbols. These include spells composed from Pāli Buddhist scriptures called *katha*, yantra, and animal designs that enhance one’s power or protect one from danger. The tattoos that monks give are known as *yant*, short for yantra, a geometrical design from Hinduism that symbolically expresses the power of divine forces. Normally, monks tattoo only the auspicious upper half of the body of men, and they rarely tattoo women, whom they are forbidden from touching. It is commonly held that the mere presence of a woman, especially during her menstrual cycle, can diminish or negate entirely the “potency” of a protective tattoo. Lay mediums may place tattoos on the lower half of the body. These tattoos are

understood to transfer the power of the Buddha and the power that the monk has accrued through self-restraint (the observance of precepts) to the one who is tattooed. The desired power is usually protective and may include invulnerability. The power of the tattoo is like the power of an amulet, and it depends on the recipient observing precepts that the monk prescribes. In Thailand, Wat Bang Phra is particularly known for ritual tattoos. During the celebration of Wai Khru (Honor the Teacher), many come for new tattoos or to renew the power of old tattoos. Some are possessed by animal spirits, such as tigers and crocodiles, that have been tattooed on their skin.

Ritual Piercing

The Hindu festival of Thaipusam in Malaysia and Singapore (and in Tamil areas of South India, Sri Lanka, and Mauritius) provides a contemporary example of body piercing in a ritual context. On Thaipusam, which falls in January or February, devotees fulfill vows to Murugan (Skanda), the son of Siva. They may pierce their cheeks or tongue with replicas of the lance of Murugan or hang offerings of milk and limes from hooks embedded in the skin of the chest and back. This form of ritual vow fulfillment is best understood through the legends that tell the story of Murugan. After the demon Surapadma had been granted the boon of immortality because of his great austerities, he led a rebellion of the *asuras* against the high god. Realizing that only a son of Siva would be able to defeat the powerful demon, the gods conspired that Murugan be conceived. The goddess Parvati gave her son his invincible weapon, a lance with a leaf-shaped head. Murugan then set off to fight Surapadma and his allies. In the battle, Surapadma changed from one form to another. Murugan attacked each form, but he could not destroy the demon because of the boon granted by Siva. Finally, Surapadma took the form of a tree, which Murugan split with his lance. One part of the tree became a rooster and the other a peacock. In these last two forms, the demon was subdued and came to serve Murugan. The possession trance experienced by devotees of Murugan who fulfill a vow to him on Thaipusam is known as *avesha* (to alight or rest). When the god alights or rests on the devotee, his force is experienced as trance. Thus, the

devotee of Murugan, who carries a *kavadi* decorated with peacock feathers, is identified with the conquered demon Surapadma, who has become Murugan's peacock vehicle. Devotees may also pierce their cheeks or tongue or forehead with replicas of the lance of Murugan. In the theology of Shaiva Siddhanta, the demon is explicitly recognized as a metaphor for the impulses and desires that destroy the possibility of liberation and union with the divine. Devotees who are pierced with the lance of Murugan thus symbolically represent their victory over the demonic part of the self.

Elizabeth Fuller Collins

See also Hinduism; India; Malaysia; Mauritius; Shaivism; Sri Lanka

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TELEVANGELISM

Televangelism involves the use of television broadcasting for religious purposes, especially as an outreach by evangelical Protestant groups to teach their version of the Christian Gospel. While multiple religious groups use television to share their faith, televangelism is commonly associated with conservative Protestantism. Conservative Protestants often draw on Mark 16:15, a biblical passage

known as the Great Commission, as evidence that it is their duty to spread the word of Jesus around the world. Mass media provides the opportunity for mass evangelism; however, many scholars acknowledge that televangelism is more likely to attract committed Christians than potential converts. Common themes of televangelism include “born-again” conversions, biblical literalism, conservative morality, Christ’s imminent return, and the influence of the Devil.

While televangelists tend to reject aspects of secular culture, their success relies on their embrace of evolving technologies and adaptation of nonreligious production and marketing strategies. Televangelism is part of a larger trend of evangelical technological resourcefulness, which proceeded from an era of evangelical and fundamentalist Christian radio ministries and has more recently merged with the use of the Internet to create virtual Christian communities.

American Televangelism

American radio stations were initially resistant to allowing religious programs on the air. When the Federal Communications Commission required national stations to sell airtime to religious groups, stations restricted religious time slots to Sunday-morning Catholic, Jewish, or mainline-Protestant programming. In 1944, a group of evangelicals founded the National Religious Broadcasters to fight for their right to purchase airtime.

In the 1950s, several conservative Christian ministries paid to broadcast their religious messages over local and national television networks. Rex Humbard broadcast his weekly services and built his Cathedral of Tomorrow in Ohio to accommodate his television crews and large audiences. Other pioneers in televangelism included the charismatic preachers Oral Roberts and Billy Graham. Both led numerous Christian revivals throughout the 1950s that were aired on national networks.

In 1960, a Federal Communications Commission ruling stated that paid airtime could count toward the television networks’ public service time, which made networks more willing to sell program slots to conservative Christians. Evangelical, fundamentalist, and Pentecostal Protestants eagerly embraced the new opportunities for televangelism and soon became the majority of religious broadcasters. Some

conservative Protestants, instead of paying for airtime, began their own religious television networks. In 1961, Pat Robertson started the first independent Christian television station, the Christian Broadcasting Company. The increase of televangelism was considered a major triumph for conservative Protestantism, which had been previously rejected by mainstream media companies. The 1970s and early 1980s became what has been called the “Golden Age” of American televangelism.

Popular televangelist programming showcased various television formats. Some followed Humbard’s lead and televised regular religious services. *The Old-Time Gospel Hour* televised Jerry Falwell’s services at the Thomas Road Baptist Church in Virginia. His show followed the weekly pattern of a Baptist worship service, with Gospel songs, scripture, and a sermon. Jimmy Swaggart’s program showed a traditional Pentecostal service, which included people speaking in tongues, singing Gospel music, shouting prayers, and receiving healings. His service ended with an altar call, during which individuals moved by the Holy Spirit could come forward, experience the laying on of hands, and recite the Sinner’s Prayer.

Some teleministries borrowed strategies from secular programs. Pat Robertson’s *The 700 Club* was partially in the format of a news program. Robertson presented on current social issues, including politics, science, court cases, economics, and education, while providing conservative Protestant commentary. The other format represented in his show was the talk show. Robertson conducted personal interviews with Christians. He asked them about their marital problems, job frustrations, or addictions, and then provided advice based on his interpretation of the Bible. While there was no worship service televised for his show, he did announce mail-in prayer requests. This provided viewers with a few moments of personal attention on a nationally broadcast show, with Robertson inviting thousands of viewers to support the prayer requests.

Robertson and Falwell used their shows to support conservative Christian politics. American televangelism was in its heyday during the rise of the Christian Right and significantly contributed to its emergence. In 1979, Falwell used *The Old-Time Gospel Hour* to announce the founding of the Moral Majority, an organization created to

promote conservative Christian political agendas. His show and the Moral Majority shared the same antiabortion, antipornography, and antihomosexuality stances. Falwell wedded his concern for maintaining the “traditional” family with a concern for maintaining the Christian roots of America. Robertson became a national conservative Christian political figure in the late 1980s, when he ran for president of the United States and helped organize the Christian Coalition.

While not all of the televangelist programs supported political engagement, one thing they did share was their emphasis on fund-raising. Phone-in pledges and write-in donations supported most of these ministries. However, several “telescandals” in the late 1980s cast severe doubt on the relationship between fund-raising and televangelism. In 1987, Oral Roberts told his viewers that he must raise \$8 million or God would take him from this life. He received the enormous sum from the owner of a dog track, which led some to question the ethics of ministries supported by gambling money. The more serious events of the telescandals were linked to Jim and Tammy Faye Bakker’s *The PTL Show* (which originally stood for “Praise the Lord”) and *The Jimmy Swaggart Show*. *The PTL Show*, a Pentecostal program in the format of a variety show, was the object of scandal when Jim Bakker was accused of sexual misconduct and the couple was accused of using the money raised for their ministry to support an extravagant lifestyle. Jim Bakker stood trial and was convicted of financial misconduct against some of his business partners. Jimmy Swaggart similarly was accused of sexual misconduct after being caught visiting a prostitute. The Assemblies of God preacher asked for forgiveness from his family and his viewers on his religious program, only to be caught soon after in another extramarital liaison. Robertson’s announcement for presidential candidacy entered this atmosphere of intense suspicion against televangelists, and he was criticized in the media for his association with this group.

The scandals led to a decline in religious broadcasting viewers and viewer contributions. These events not only made issues of financial and sexual misconduct public but also revived complaints that televangelism diluted or contaminated the Gospel. Another critique was that television ministries were doing more business and advertising than religion. After the scandals, stations reduced their

televangelist programming. Some shows ended. In an effort to restore the reputation of televangelism, the National Religious Broadcasters created new accountability guidelines, including statements on the proper use of donations.

The negative effects of the scandals inspired some televangelists to broaden their business strategies. Viewers could no longer be counted on to support an entire ministry, so programs sought new sources of funding. Robertson had paved the way for these strategies when he purchased the Christian Broadcasting Network to support his show. He later expanded his empire into International Family Entertainment, Inc.

Scholar Mara Einstein argues that televangelists now use the advertising strategies of infomercials. Recent televangelists promote positive messages connected to products, namely, their shows, personalities, catchy Christian slogans, books, websites, videos, and other religious goods. These televangelists often combine their television program with website product sales rather than traditional phone-in or write-in pledges. Multiple Christian business markets are used through these marketing techniques, including the thriving industries of Christian books, Christian music, and Christian videos. Examples of these infomercial televangelists include Joel Osteen and T. D. Jakes, whose televised megachurch worship services include promotions of their books, tours, and website enterprises.

International Context

America is not the only country to develop televangelism. Brazil, for example, has its own televangelist celebrities. Other countries, such as Sweden, have had fewer opportunities to experiment with television ministries. Sweden’s religious broadcasts were controlled by the state until they established the separation of church and state in the 21st century. However, even in countries that do not produce their own televangelists—because of governmental restrictions, lack of resources, or lack of interest—viewers may still have access to global televangelists. Many American televangelists have their Christian messages translated into dozens of languages and made available through international Christian networks, such as the Trinity Broadcasting Network and the Christian Broadcasting Network. Conservative Christians continue

to take advantage of the increasing sophistication and proliferation of global electronic communications for the purpose of evangelism.

Kristy L. Slominski

See also Christianity; Conversion; Evangelical Movements; Megachurch; Missions and Missionaries; Protestant Christianity; Television

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TELEVISION

Like all forms of cultural transmission, television plays an important role in the communication and propagation of religion. When Constantin Perskyi first coined the term *television* in 1900 in an academic paper on selenium-based photoelectric capture and transmission systems, the Russian physicist could not have imagined that the phenomenon of which he spoke would one day achieve a place of centrality in peoples' lives the world over. To say that television has changed human life as we once knew it is to make a gross understatement. In fact, humanity still has a long way to go before we fully understand the capacities of television as a communicative, informative, and entertainment medium. There is no doubt that the human habituation to television has induced in us a peculiar set of devotions: Families gathered in front of a television eating "TV dinners" at regular times throughout the week appear eerily similar to devout religious practitioners performing rites that shape their lives. Even "secular" television

culture, some scholars claim, is distinctly religious in this respect.

That global TV audiences can unite virtually in their observance of local events (e.g., think of the New Year's celebrations in New York's Times Square) was not lost on the religious leaders of communities who welcomed the new medium into their homes. Almost since the earliest popular embrace of television in the 1950s, the shrewdest religious leaders of the era sought to take advantage of the format's potential for reaching new believers. For nearly 30 years, radio, which itself benefited from an early interest by American ministers who realized its capacity to reach "those with ears to hear," demonstrated the viability of new media technologies in the service of religion. Today, television effectively blankets the globe and plays a critical role in the phenomenon of global religion, but for reasons that will become manifest, the story of religion and television is a distinctly American one, or at least a Western one.

Popular Television's American Roots

One of the reasons why the story of religion and television, even in its modern global iterations, is such an American one is that television's technology developed using first-world technologies and perspectives on knowledge common in post-Enlightenment western Europe and America; this cultural location, in effect, determined its interaction with religious communities, notably upper-middle-class White America. American evangelical Christians, who for years had put radio and print literature to the service of getting their message out, jumped at the opportunity to reach believing audiences in new ways. Aimee Semple McPherson, the Pentecostal minister and founder of the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel and who in 1926 became the first woman granted a broadcasting license by the Federal Communications Commission, had begun investing in an experimental television station prior to her death in 1944. By 1950, more than 5 million Americans had television sets.

One of the first ministers to reach this growing audience, albeit at the regional level, was the Roman Catholic theologian Bishop Fulton John Sheen. From 1930 to 1950, Sheen had hosted *The Catholic Hour*, a popular radio show that served

in some ways as a counterpart to McPherson's evangelical Protestant performances on KFSG. In 1951, however, Sheen made the move to television and began broadcasting *Life Is Worth Living*, which often depicted Sheen seated before a live studio audience and discussing the active social issues of the time, placing Sheen in the same mold of Catholic activism as Dorothy Day. The series only lasted 6 years, but during that time, Sheen picked up an Emmy award for Most Outstanding Television Personality. As the first person of faith to use both radio and television in the service of advancing the Gospel, Sheen earned the title of "first televangelist" from most scholars of religion and media.

The social activism and Roman Catholicism of Sheen's televangelism, however, bear little resemblance to the images of emotional fervor, grand staging, and modern technology often conjured by the highly charged term *televangelist*. For while Sheen was television's earliest religious success, his style was not its most common. Instead, television largely became the domain of a distinct brand of charismatic evangelical Christianity, whose perpetual focus on finding new ways of spreading the Gospel in accordance with Christ's "Great Commission" fused itself to television only shortly after Sheen's earliest successes. The earliest television minister cut from this more effusive Christianity, and whose television presence set the standard for future marriages of religion and television on a global stage, was without doubt Rex Humbard.

Humbard began his television ministry in 1952 in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, when he inaugurated *The Cathedral of Tomorrow*. Humbard's early televangelism also truly globalized, broadcast at its peak on more than 600 stations to Canada and Latin America as well as as far afield as Saudi Arabia and Australia. With an audience of millions, Humbard's standard would not be bested for nearly 30 years. Preaching enthusiastically and mixing his message with staged musical performances by soon to be famous groups such as the Gaither family and Johnny Cash, Humbard captivated audiences worldwide, including a budding Memphis musician and fellow Pentecostal Christian named Elvis Presley; Humbard and Presley would become close, with the former eventually officiating the latter's funeral. To house such a spectacular performance of ministry, in 1954 Humbard

built the first-of-its-kind Cathedral of Tomorrow, also in Cuyahoga Falls. As the first religious structure expressly built for a television broadcast, Humbard's new church represented the fusion of religion and television at the material and architectural levels.

Religious Intolerance in the 21st Century

Since the late 1990s, the emergence of round-the-clock cable news service has changed how Americans see the religious traditions that predominate elsewhere, particularly Islam. If American evangelicals dominated 20th-century religious content on television through the construction of media empires, in the 21st century fundamentalist enclaves across the world have sought to dominate television and mass media through the abject acts from which the camera eye cannot turn away. Through the elaborate staging of demonstrations, acts of violence, and the shrewd release of videotaped invective, groups such as al Qaeda have revealed a new, bottom-up way of commanding the attention of the television media.

The importance of the news services' depictions of unfamiliar religious traditions has a formative effect on American conceptions of those traditions. As most public high schools do not develop religious literacy in their students, most Americans' first experiences with religions and religious groups come from the news. In their desire to depict sensationally any foreign religious groups and those groups' interest in being depicted exotically, television's multiple frames of gaze dissolve any attempt at critical engagement.

Likewise, the self-awareness that First World nations have cultivated in the so-called Information Age has proven useful to domestic intolerances as well. Consider Fred Phelps, pastor of Westboro Baptist Church in Topeka, Kansas. Notorious for dispatching his congregants to protest the funerals of U.S. soldiers in order to protest the American government's "liberal emphasis," Phelps's unrepentant insulting tone bears the marks of a television-ready spectacle; in many ways, the pastor's vitriol guarantees his message airtime, even if it is negative.

Adam Ware

See also al Qaeda; Brazil; Pentecostal Movements; Televangelism

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TEMPLES

See Sacred Places

TERRORISM

Terrorism is the clandestine use of violence against civilians for ideological purposes. Because the term is pejorative, its precise definition and application are contested. Disenfranchised groups employ terrorism to exert disproportionate influence by using violence in a manner that challenges prevailing social conventions. In doing so, these groups expect to elicit panic, outrage, or sympathy in their audiences.

The Role of Religion

Religion and terrorism have a longstanding relationship. As David Rapoport has shown, some of the earliest terrorist movements on record were motivated by religion: the Jewish Zealots (1st century CE), the Muslim Assassins (11th through the 13th century), and the Hindu Thugs (13th through the 19th century). The proliferation of terrorist movements motivated by anarchist, nationalist, or left-wing goals starting in the 19th century gradually obscured the role of religion as a salient influence on terrorism, a preconception that changed in the mid-1980s with the rise to prominence of several terrorist groups associated with religious movements. The attacks perpetrated by al Qaeda on September 11, 2001, have drawn increased attention to religiously motivated terrorism, with particular emphasis on groups that are associated with Islam or that use suicide bombing.

Nonetheless, political grievances, social alienation, humiliation, poverty, and mental illness

continue to form the primary focus of the study of terrorism. The challenge in discerning the relationship between religion and terrorism lies, in part, in the mixture of religious and political motivations espoused by religiously motivated terrorist groups. Even terror movements driven by an explicit religious agenda may pursue political goals in parallel or draw on a combination of politics and religion in their short- or long-term goals. Religion may provide a terrorist organization with its ultimate rationale or merely serve the proximate purpose of attracting recruits, indoctrinating members, or enhancing the group's appeal to a wider audience.

One means of disentangling these factors is to place terror movements on a continuum, ranging from those least influenced by religion, at one extreme, to those that derive most of their methods and goals from religious precepts, at the other extreme. For some separatist or revolutionary movements, such as the Shining Path (*Sendero Luminoso*), the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (*Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia*, FARC), or the Earth Liberation Front, religious doctrine seems to play no role at all. In other groups, members may identify with a religious movement without drawing on religious beliefs as a rationale for their activities. Such groups include the Irish Republican Army (IRA), the Basque *Euskadi Ta Askatasuna* (ETA) in Spain, the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka, or separatist movements in Chechnya and Kashmir. In yet others, religion can have a significant impact on all aspects of identity and doctrine. A sampling of such groups across religious movements might include Hamas (Islamic), Kach (Jewish), the Lord's Resistance Army (Christian), Babbar Khalsa (Sikh), and Aum Shinrikyô (Buddhist).

Religiously Motivated Terror Movements

Terror groups that conceive of religion as a primary motivator for their actions rely on scripture, revelation, and theology to determine both their means and their goals. This results in constraints on action and in justifications that are absent in secular terrorist organizations. An examination of the religious beliefs that influence such terrorist movements can thus illuminate their past and future actions.

This combination of faith and violence raises a question regarding organizational decision making.

Why do some religious movements choose to adopt terrorist methods while others do not? Rapoport has argued that the path to violence struck by certain millenarian and messianic movements begins as these movements separate themselves from society to prepare for the end-time. This separation often occurs as auspicious dates draw near or in response to portents and prophecies. When this period of migration, purification, and waiting fails to deliver the results expected by members of the group, they may resort to violence in order to transform the world by means of human agency. Millenarian movements that resort to force expect their actions to bring the world into balance by ushering on a divine promise or by bringing about the end of days.

Mark Juergensmeyer has argued that these religiously motivated groups perceive of their attacks as dramatic performances that are intended, at least in part, for symbolic effect. Members of the group understand the deity to be orchestrating as well as observing these performances, which are often reenactments of the primordial violence of cosmic war documented in sacred scriptures. The group perpetrates mundane violence, but these acts are designed both to reflect and to affect a greater cosmic struggle between forces of ultimate good and their satanic opponents.

Such violence is particularly likely when the group perceives the cosmic war to be characterized by the following conditions: The struggle is mythic, but it occurs, at least in part, in this world as well; it is a war in defense of essential notions such as identity or dignity; the struggle has reached a point of crisis in which victory by conventional means is no longer possible; loss of this struggle is unthinkable, and human agency can make a difference between defeat and victory.

Rationalist Approaches

The multitude of influences shaping the goals and methods of terrorist movements, from the secular to the religious, produce substantial variation across groups, which has complicated the search for patterns. Rather than attempt to unravel these factors, mainstream political science has sidestepped ideological explanations for terrorism in favor of rationalist approaches that emphasize the cost-benefit calculations motivating even the most

religiously devoted of terrorist groups. The question motivating these analyses is thus not why religious groups espouse terrorism but rather why terrorist groups mask their actions with a religious veneer. Rationalist logic suggests that terrorists do so to achieve strictly political goals, such as obtaining financial support, coercing political concessions, or expanding recruitment. Religion may perform other relatively minor roles, such as inflaming preexisting conflicts or motivating individuals to join terrorist movements.

In this vein, Robert Pape has argued that terrorist movements do not deploy suicide bombers due to conceptions of martyrdom but because such attacks send a costly signal about the undeterrable nature of the movement. This argument is, in part, borne out by the profiles of suicide bombers. While some suicide bombers were recent converts, few hailed from religious backgrounds, underwent religious education, or displayed high levels of religious zeal. Several secular terrorist movements have used suicide bombing, and several religiously motivated movements have not done so.

The Microeffects of Religion

Even when religion is not the primary source of a terror movement's doctrine, it can influence the behavior of a movement and its members in myriad ways. Religious doctrine may specify the choice of targets or weapons, the time and location of attacks, the identity of persons immune from attack, and even how assailants are to prepare or dress for an attack. The ritualistic manner in which religious reasoning prescribes the details of terrorist action can lead to a fixity in goals and methods that distinguishes religiously inspired terrorist movements from their secular counterparts. Whereas secular terror movements can learn from their mistakes and adapt their tactics, religiously motivated terror movements are often constrained in their choices by the dictates of faith.

Religious precedents and important events in the founding period of a religious movement can influence a terrorist movement's strategy. For example, Muslim movements such as al Qaeda were inspired by Prophet Muhammad's retreat to a place of safe refuge to prepare for his military campaigns. Hezbollah, the first terrorist movement to employ suicide bombing as a tactic, drew

on the model of martyrdom offered by the imams Ali and Hussein, who died in defense of their faith. This precedent confers a religious title on participants, qualifying the actions of those who commit suicide to promote the group's goals as a form of martyrdom.

Finally, religious interests can motivate the individual activist. Whereas the organization may well be driven by political goals, individuals may sanction its actions due to a religious rationale. Religious reasoning can help a movement's leadership frame participation in terror acts as a form of religious redemption or even a religious obligation. Leaders employ religious language to channel the frustration of individuals into devotion for the group's cause. If the organization succeeds in equating personal grievances with sin, it may persuade individuals to sacrifice themselves in the hope of securing rewards in the afterlife.

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See also al Qaeda; Apocalypticism; Aum Shinrikyô; Cosmic War and Cosmic Conflict; Fundamentalism; Hamas; Hezbollah; Khalistan Movement; Martyrdom; Millenarian Movements; September 11, 2001; Suicide Bombing; Violence; War on Terrorism

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of Malaysia, Cambodia, Laos, and Myanmar. Known as Siam until 1939, Thailand has been a part of transnational religious processes for centuries, including the traditions of Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity. With more than 92% of its population Theravada Buddhist, Thailand retains the highest population of Theravada Buddhists in the world and is the third most populated Buddhist country in the world, behind China and Japan. This entry will briefly cover the development of Thailand's modern nation-state, the growth of religious traditions in Thailand, and some changes to Thailand's religious landscape in contemporary times.

Thailand's population reflects its legacy of shared borders and international trade routes with various countries for more than 700 years, with its earliest inhabitants migrating from southern China and the Malay Peninsula and archipelago. Thais from southern China migrated into Thailand as well as adjacent countries and India. By 1229, Thais had traveled as far as eastern Assam and had set up their own kingdom, which remains an important religious and cultural heritage of Assam in contemporary times.

Since the early phases of globalization, the region of Thailand has served as a space for numerous transnational movements that include, among others, a long history of interchange between the people of India and China. South Asian Brahmans, Sikhs, and Muslims traveled through Thailand on their way to China, congregating in the populated northern province of Chiang Mai (Kingdom of Lanna), the central province of Ayutthaya, and the southern province of Pattani (Kingdom of Patani). Throughout the centuries, Chinese ethnic groups, particularly the Hokkien, Hakka, Teo Chiu, and Hainanese, have continued to immigrate to Thailand in large numbers. Chinese ethnic groups made a significant impact on Thailand's religious landscape, chiefly by supporting Mahayana Buddhist and Roman Catholic traditions. Malays were among the first Buddhists to live in what is now Thailand, but most converted to Islam after the 15th century.

THAILAND

Thailand is a Southeast Asian nation of 63 million people, which shares its borders with the countries

Development of the Thai Nation-State

According to Thai historians, the founding of the first Tai kingdom, Sukhothai, came into existence through its separation from the Khmer Empire

(Cambodia), which had been heavily influenced by Mahayana Buddhism and Brahmanism. Shortly before Sukhothai sought to separate from the Khmer Empire, Theravada Buddhism emerged in the region and began to gain favor at the Khmer court. When Sukhothai gained its independence, its court adopted the Khmer tradition of retaining Brahman priests while also seeking to establish the religious tradition in vogue: Theravada Buddhism. King Ramkhamhaeng (r. 1277–1317) sent emissaries to Sri Lanka (Ceylon) to establish a Theravada Buddhist sangha (Thai *Mahatherasamakho*) in Sukhothai. This relationship with Sri Lanka continued with the subsequent Tai kingdom, Ayutthaya (1351–1767). Thai kings invited Sinhalese Buddhist monks to visit and establish monasteries, as well as purify the sangha when necessary. Sri Lanka reciprocated these gestures in 1753 by requesting Thai monks to come and purify the Sri Lankan Sangha, creating the Siyam Nikaya in Sri Lanka.

The Thai monarchies continued to hold significant power over the direction and development of the Thai Theravada Sangha. King Mongkut (r. 1851–1868) founded the Thammayut Order in 1833 prior to assuming the throne, deriving much of the order's discipline and practice from Mon and Burmese schools. King Mongkut's creation of the Thammayut Order became officially recognized in 1902 under his son Chulalongkorn's reign. This official recognition of the Thammayut Order led to the subsequent designation of the traditional order: the Mahānikāi. Thailand's absolute monarchy converted to a constitutional monarchy in 1932, altering the country's political relationship with the Thai Buddhist Sangha, which remained in effect in 2008.

Buddhism in Thailand

Thai Buddhism has many different beliefs and traditions, many of which are localized to specific places. Villages will have shrines devoted to local monk-saints and other venerated figures, which may or may not be officially recognized by the Office of National Buddhism, the governmental agency in charge of the development and health of Thai Buddhism in Thailand.

Different Buddhist traditions such as Vietnamese Buddhism, Burmese Buddhism, and Tibetan

Buddhism are present in Thailand. However, the largest minority Buddhist tradition in Thailand consists of Chinese ethnic groups that have immigrated to Thailand for centuries and follow a Mahayana-based Buddhism with a special emphasis on ancestor worship. They adopted the local customs of Buddhist veneration while building Chinese Buddhist shrines and temples and retaining specific Chinese rituals such as Tang-ki.

The largest religious tradition in Thailand is Thai Buddhism. It is more than a diverse, localized tradition; it is also a transnational effort to expand national interests. The Thai nation-state has sought to expand its influence through its expansion of Thai Buddhism. For over three centuries, Thai Buddhist monks have been sent to the countries of Southeast Asia as well as Europe. As early as 1686, there is record of Thai Buddhist monks being sent to western European countries. Thailand has continued its missionary efforts into the 21st century with the Thammathut Program. The largest movement and dispersal of Thai Buddhism occurred in the 1970s. As of 2008, the Thai nation-state had facilitated the construction and maintenance of 233 monasteries in 28 different countries.

Christianity in Thailand

Christian traditions made their way into Thailand through various channels. One of the earliest missionaries was the Portuguese Jesuit Balthazar de Sequeira, who visited the country in 1606. The Portuguese lost their religious authority thereafter. In 1669, the Roman Catholic Pope Clement IX issued a bull relegating Thailand and its neighboring kingdoms to the jurisdiction of the French Church of Ayutthaya. In addition to the missionaries of European colonialism, Japanese and Chinese Christian missionaries also made a significant impact on Thailand's Christian population. Many early Chinese and Japanese Christians immigrated to Thailand after fleeing their countries due to persecution and played a critical role in assisting the Portuguese and French missionaries. Christian missionaries reported a scarcity of converts in central Thailand and found the different nations in northern and northeastern Thailand much more receptive to their cause. In more recent years, Burmese Christians such as the Kachin have immigrated to

northern Thailand, many of whom are seeking refuge from religious persecution.

Islam in Thailand

Some of the earliest Muslims in Thailand were the product of the Malay peninsular principalities' conversion to Islam. The center of activity was the kingdom of Patani, a vassal to Thailand, which had declared itself Islamic in 1457. During sporadic wars for independence, Patani Muslims were captured and sent to the Thai capital, engendering a sizeable diaspora of Malay Muslims in central Thailand. Patani would later become portioned off to form the southern border of Thailand and the northern part of Malaysia. Malays are not the only Muslims in Thailand. Chinese and Champa traders brought Islam to the regions of Thailand as well. Persians settled in Ayutthaya in the early 1600s, and in the 1700s the Thai armies recruited Cham Muslims from Cambodia. By the 1800s, numerous South Asian Muslims traded and settled in the Thai urban center of Chiang Mai and Bangkok.

Thailand in the Global Era

Thailand's economic growth and decline has made a significant impact on its global religious outreach. After the 1997 Thai bank collapse, prompting a global economic crisis, the business decline was coupled with a slight decline in Thai Buddhist outreach—both within the borders of Thailand with the different religious communities and outside the borders of Thailand. Since the southern region's (Patani) conversion to Islam, there have been efforts to separate itself from Thailand. This effort was recently renewed in 2004 as a guerilla struggle against the Thai nation-state, which continued into 2009 with a loss of more than 4,000 lives.

In the 1970s, two new Thai Buddhist schools emerged: Santi Asoke and Dhammakaya. Santi Asoke represented a more ascetic approach to the religion. The Dhammakaya Foundation has become a massive global organization, with branches in more than 18 different countries. Another development is the Order of Nuns. Dhammananda Bhikkhuni became Thailand's first ordained nun in 2003 and has made Songdhamma

Kalayani Center—International Centre for Buddhist Women in Nakhon Pathom province into a global center for Buddhist women's issues. Without a doubt, Thailand will continue to be the epicenter of Theravada Buddhist growth and development for years to come.

Michael Jerryson

See also Cambodia; Laos; Malaysia; Myanmar (Burma); Sangha; Singapore; Sri Lanka; Stupa; Theravada Buddhism

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THEOSOPHY

The word *theosophy*, “divine wisdom,” is ancient, but the term is now most frequently used in reference to the teachings and work of the Theosophical Society, established in New York in 1875. Its principal founders were Henry Steel Olcott (1832–1907), the first president, who served until his death; Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831–1891), the leading articulator, in voluminous writings, of the Theosophical worldview; and William Quan Judge (1851–1896), a later president of the Theosophical Society in America.

Theosophy was a significant agent in the globalization of religion.

Many original Theosophists had been Spiritualists, but under the guidance of Blavatsky were led to probe more deeply into ancient and cosmic mysteries of which that novel faith seemed only to scratch the surface. In particular, Theosophists believed that an “ancient wisdom” could be uncovered that underlay philosophy and religion around the globe but of which India was now a major reservoir. Among the chief tenets of this wisdom were cosmic oneness, the interactive spiritual and material evolution of the universe, karma and reincarnation, the journey of the individual “pilgrim” through life after life, and the existence of advanced souls called “mahatmas” or “masters,” who guide the evolution of the world and who can assist others in their pilgrimage.

In the East, the work of Blavatsky, Olcott, and others enhanced Hindu and Buddhist understandings of their faiths as legitimate world religions with much to offer others. At the same time, Theosophical lecturers and writings popularized awareness in the West of concepts such as karma, reincarnation, and spiritual masters not only in major cities but in smaller places as well. (In 1900, there were Theosophical lodges in towns such as Pierre, South Dakota, and Sheridan, Wyoming.)

Theosophy, like Spiritualism just before it, epitomized globalism in another sense also. Those two were among the first significant independent spiritual groups to originate in America. They claimed to be, like the new nation, democratic. They also emphasized, in a new scientific age, that they were amenable to scientific verification, not dependent on “blind faith” in traditional authority. Moreover, at home and around the globe, they popularized themselves by employing dramatic new technologies: the print media, in the first years of truly widespread literacy, and travel by trains and steamships, with their relative speed and comfort. (On their first journey to India, in 1879, Blavatsky and Olcott passed through the Suez Canal only a decade after its opening.) On another level, unusual for the 19th century, Theosophy saw the pluralism of global religion, not as grounds for missionary competition alone but as a means to the deepening of wisdom.

Robert Ellwood

See also Blavatsky, Helena P.; Global Religion; Globalization; Olcott, Henry Steel; Religious Nationalism; Spiritualism

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THERAVADA BUDDHISM

Theravada (Doctrine of the Elders) is a self-chosen label for one of three main divisions within contemporary Buddhist traditions (Theravada, Mahayana, and Vajrayana). With a global population of more than 150 million followers, it is the predominant religious affiliation in Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, and Sri Lanka. Theravada is also of central relevance to the religious traditions of contemporary Sakya and Vajracharya of Nepal; the Khmer Krom of Vietnam; the Baruas, Chakma, and Magh ethnic groups of Bangladesh; the Assamese of India; and the Shans of southern China. Among its most distinctive qualities are the liturgical practices of the Pāli language, the authoritative use of the Pāli canon (*tipitaka*), and rituals such as ordination lineages (*nikaya*) and the meditation of *vipassana* and *samatha*.

Theravada’s most recent transformation and globalization came in the 19th and early 20th centuries through the assistance of European colonialists who had influential posts in academics and Buddhist colonies. In the postcolonial era, Buddhist nation-states have sent monastic missions around the globe, and Theravada *vipassana* meditation centers have globalized through commercialized retreats and prison rehabilitation treatments. Nation-states such as Cambodia and Sri Lanka retain Theravada as their official state religion, and others possess robust forms of religious nationalism, which draw on Theravada Buddhist

principles. This entry will briefly review the diverse history, scriptures, practices, and politics of Theravada.

History

Early historical accounts of Theravada are contested by contemporary Buddhist scholars, with notable differences between accounts from within and outside the tradition. According to traditional accounts, Theravada derives from the Sthaviravada lineage, which formed along with the Mahasamghika after the Great Schism in the fourth century BCE. Its inchoation continued in the third century BCE, largely through state support. According to its commentaries (*atthakatha*), Theravada's earliest and most prolific advocate was the Mauryan Emperor Asoka (r. 269–232), who established Theravada Buddhist forms of governance within his South Asian empire and sent vassals to Sri Lanka (Ceylon), Myanmar (Burma), and neighboring kingdoms in mainland Southeast Asia. As one of the most powerful Buddhist rulers of his time, Asoka became a model of a just ruler (*cak-kavatti*) for subsequent Buddhist kings throughout Asia.

In Sri Lankan accounts, the next early focal point for Theravada's diffusion into Asia began in Sri Lanka. Asoka convened the Third Buddhist council and sent his ordained son and daughter, Mahinda and Sangamitta, to Sri Lanka and beyond to spread the doctrine. Mahinda and Sangamitta were successful in establishing a Theravada lineage in Sri Lanka, which is sustained in contemporary times through the Mahavihara school. In the fifth century CE, the eminent South Asian monk Buddhaghosa wrote his commentaries in Sri Lanka, which remain the most authoritative commentaries in Theravada. Sri Lankan monastic lineages and Buddhaghosa's writings were subsequently transmitted to the Malay Peninsula and Southeast Asian archipelago, which had oceanic trading routes with South Asia as early as the fourth century CE.

One point of departure between historical narratives is Asoka's dissemination of Buddhism. Traditional accounts indicate Myanmar and Southeast Asia as points of destination in the third century CE. However, the earliest evidence dates from the fourth century CE, when different

Buddhist practices and scriptures existed in the Burmese kingdom of Pyu and the Thai kingdom of Dvaravati. Initially, Chinese, Indian, Sri Lankan, and Malay travelers brought their Buddhist practices to Myanmar; but it was the sustained and concerted effort of Sri Lankan missionaries in the 11th century that enabled Theravada to take root in the kingdom of Pagan.

Sri Lanka also sent forth Buddhist emissaries to the Khmer Empire (802–1431 CE) in the 13th century CE, establishing political and trade relations in the process. Similar to Myanmar, the Khmer Empire already had encountered Buddhist traditions. Its capital city of Angkor was built in the 12th century and later became an archaeological testament to both Buddhist and Hindu notions of cosmogony. By the time the Sri Lankan emissaries had made their mark on the Khmer religious landscape, the Khmer Empire had passed its zenith. However, the Khmer Empire became a second nexus of Theravada transmission. One of the lasting impressions of the empire was the introduction of Theravada to the nascent Thai kingdom of Sukhothai (1238–1438 CE) in the 13th century.

After the 13th century, historical accounts become more uniform in their narrative. From Sukhothai, Theravada practices spread to other parts of Southeast Asia. Over the subsequent centuries, the religious connections between Thailand (Siam), Myanmar, Cambodia, and Sri Lanka were sustained through the periodic purifications of monastic communities (*sangha*). These occurred wherever newly minted rulers deemed the monastic community in need of a revitalized orthodoxy. Sri Lankan monks journeyed to Thailand and Myanmar to reestablish their lineages, and Burmese and Thai monks went to Sri Lanka to rejuvenate its monastic order. Vietnam's relationship with Cambodia sustained its Theravada community, but Vietnam's relative proximity to China enabled Confucian and Mahayana Buddhist traditions to dominate its political arena.

The spread of Theravada Buddhism continued into the 19th century, but at this point the loci of dissemination emerged from the United States and Europe. The French and British colonization of Southeast Asia introduced European statesmen, theologians, and traders to Theravada beliefs and practices. Many European colonialists brought the tradition back to their mother countries to be

studied, most notably at the Collège de France and Oxford University. New centers for the study of Theravada Buddhism continued to emerge in the United States and Europe. The most notable of these centers was the London-based Pāli Text Society (1881–) by the colonialist-turned-scholar T. W. Rhys Davids (1843–1922). In 1891, the Mahabodhi Society was founded in Colombo, Sri Lanka, under the guidance of the English-educated Sri Lankan monk Anagarika Dharmapala. Among its initial goals was to help restore the Mahabodhi Temple in Bodh Gaya, which is considered the site of Siddhartha Gautama's awakening (Buddhahood). To generate international awareness, Dharmapala introduced Theravada to an international audience at the World's Parliament of Religion held at Chicago's World Columbian Exposition in 1893. In contemporary times, the Mahabodhi Society continues to support the Buddhist traditions through its branches in India, Sri Lanka, and the United States. The Pāli Text Society's work also continues in Rhys Davids's absence. Over the past 130 years, the Pāli Text Society has fostered and promoted the study of Pāli texts worldwide.

Scriptures

Theravada scriptures (*sutta*) are primarily chanted and written in Pāli; however, one can find Theravada commentaries and sermons in the lingua franca (common language) as well as the official Thai, Burmese, Lao, Khmer, and other languages. Its scriptures vary within different localities; however, in whichever locality they are found, they are collectively called the Pāli canon. Similar to other South Asian religious traditions, the Pāli canon was initially disseminated orally. The oldest surviving written version is dated from the 15th century, and the collection was first published in its incomplete form in the 19th century. The Burmese version of the Pāli canon was the first printed in its totality in 1900, with 38 volumes. Subsequently, its contents have been translated into English, Thai, and Sri Lankan. More recently, the Pāli Text Society published a digitized version of its translation of the Pāli canon in 1996.

Buddhaghosa remains the foremost scholar on Theravada orthodoxy; his commentaries place the highest priority on the Pāli canon, seconded by commentaries on the scriptures, and followed by

monastic opinions based on logic, intuition, and inference. It is partly due to his classification that the Pāli canon has provided the ethical framework for Buddhist communities (*sangha*) and the basis of law (*dhamma*) for Buddhist states for more than two millennia. The Pāli canon is classified into three sections called baskets: the Vinaya (scriptures on monastics), the Sutta (scriptures of discourses), and the Abhidhamma (scriptures of higher knowledge). While the structure of these scriptures remains consistent throughout Theravada communities, the contents vary on a nation-state and even regional basis.

The Vinaya outlines the rules and parameters of monastic life. Unlike the Abrahamic traditions, Theravada does not contain a specific section devoted to lay ethics and morals. In the Vinaya, the Patimokkha provides the basic codes for monastic men and women. Men ordained under Theravada must adhere to 227 rules, which are delineated by degrees of importance. Women ordained under Theravada must adhere to 311 rules; most of the additional rules pertain to menstruation. Ordained men and women model the behavior as bearers of the doctrine (*dhamma*). In addition, most of the rules for secular life also derive from the Vinaya.

The Sutta is the most extensive of the baskets and contains a vast array of discourses. Among the scriptures are hagiographies of monks and nuns (*Theragatha* and *Therigatha*) and the *Jatakas* (rebirth stories of the Buddha), which didactically serve Buddhist communities. The most well-known *Jataka* is the last rebirth story of the Buddha called Vessantara. The *Vessantara Jataka* has become a transcultural phenomenon, with Buddhist communities around the world performing the story as a play and integrating the story into local sermons. While the *Vessantara Jataka* is well known throughout Asia, another scripture in the Sutta called the *Dhammapada* (Path of the Doctrine) is known throughout the world. The *Dhammapada* is a collection of 423 poetic verses on the nature of truth and reality. Monastic institutions (*sangha*) highly regard its teachings; Thai Buddhist monks are quizzed on its contents during their ecclesiastic Pāli exams. It has also received readerships from around the world with a diversified amount of translations in both text and audio formats.

Theravada monks treat the third basket of the Pāli canon, the Abhidhamma, as the most authoritative. As such, this basket has served as a reference in contemporary debates on euthanasia, suicide, female ordination, and other social issues. Much of its contents pertain to phenomenological taxonomies, which possess mnemonic devices for oral transmission, but it also consists of analytical doctrine (*vibhajjavada*) that distinguishes Theravada positions from those of Mahayana and Vajrayana. Some scholars argue that the analytical doctrine in the Abhidhamma is the quintessence of Theravada.

Rituals and Practices

Buddhists place a high emphasis on ritual and practices in Theravada. Monastic rituals are especially respected in Theravada communities and range from individual dehexing rites to communal Buddha image consecration ceremonies (*buddhabhiseka*). In many monastic rituals, objects such as amulets, talismans, or even water are infused with sacred power. It is a common practice for Theravada laity to wear amulets and talismans for protection or good luck. Monks bestow protective charms on laity through the ritual recitations of *paritta*. *Paritta* are short verses in Pāli that may heal people or even ward off angry ghosts. The laity also seek out *yantras*, which are protective Pāli words and images that monks give to the laity, sometimes as tattoos.

Theravada practices inevitably involve a degree of making merit (*puñña*). Two rituals that generate the most merit are the sponsoring of *kathina* ceremonies and becoming ordained. Modeling the practices that existed at the time of the Buddha, Theravada monks restrict their movement during the Rain Retreat (*Vassa*), which is the 3 months of the rainy season. The end of the Rain Retreat is marked by the *kathina* ceremony, in which the laity honor the monks with new robes and make donations to the temples.

In Southeast Asian countries, ordinations in the Order of Monks (*bhikkhu*) can be permanent positions or a rite of passage for Buddhist men. Similar to the followers of Mahayana and Vajrayana Buddhism, Theravada practitioners seek refuge in the three jewels (*tiratana*): the Buddha, dhamma, and sangha. Ordained men and women embody

two of the three refuges. Collectively, they represent the sangha, and their primary duty is to uphold and teach the dhamma (Buddhist teachings). Temporary ordinations are typically undertaken during the Rain Retreat. In addition to accumulating merit through the performance of monastic duties, it is commonly believed that ordination grants one's mother a space in the Buddhist heavens.

Female ordination was a point of contention in early South Asia, and it is said that the Buddha's favorite disciple, Ananda, had to request three times before the Buddha granted an Order of Nuns (*bhikkhuni*). Tradition holds that the Sri Lankan Order of Nuns was formed by Asoka's daughter Sanghamitta in the third century BCE. In the fifth century CE, Sri Lankan nuns helped constitute the first Chinese Order of Nuns, which eventually led to female ordinations in other parts of East Asia. However, the Order of the Nuns was never instituted in Thailand, Laos, or Cambodia; Burmese and Sri Lankan lineages ceased to exist by the 11th century CE. Recent attempts to revive the Order of the Nuns in Sri Lanka and Thailand have met with some success. Female ordinations require two separate monastic sessions: an initial probationary status through a caucus of nuns and, after 2 years, confirmation by a caucus of monks. Unordained female nuns exist in each country, and they generally have to take 8–10 vows and observe an ascetic lifestyle.

In Theravada traditions, meditation is both a monastic and a lay practice. The Pāli canon and Buddhaghosa's commentaries divide meditation into two methods: *samatha* and *vipassana*. *Samatha* meditation is the cultivation of concentration for the purposes of strengthening and calming the mind. This is often used as a means of preparing a practitioner for the second method, *vipassana*, which is a focused insight on the nature of impermanence (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*), and the concept of no-self (*anatman*). It is believed that these meditation methods fell out of favor in most Theravada schools between the 10th and 18th centuries CE. However, Myanmar and Thailand have witnessed a revival of the meditation methods in their monastic traditions, which has spread to lay retreats. This recent revival of meditation methods has also become a Vipassana movement (Insight Meditation movement) in contemporary

times, with centers and retreats worldwide. It has become viewed outside Buddhist countries as a secular practice for physical and mental well-being. Also, it has been used as a successful means of rehabilitating prisoners in India and the United States.

Lay practices center on the accumulation of merit. The most regular and affordable of these is the giving of alms to monks, which occurs every morning. Monks receive their daily food from the laity through this practice, which enables them to continue to live their austere lifestyle. In this fashion, monks become a “field of merit” for the laity. One of the most fundamental of lay practices is the observance of the five moral precepts (*pancasilani*), namely, abstaining from killing of sentient beings, stealing, lying, taking of intoxicants that cloud the mind, and sexual misconduct. Lay Theravada Buddhists especially emphasize these precepts during the Rain Retreat and Buddhist holidays.

Another way of making merit is through the performance of pilgrimages. Pilgrimage sites vary, with a few internationally recognized places that pertain to the Buddha’s life, such as the site of Siddhartha Gautama’s awakening in Bodh Gaya, India, and the site of the Buddha’s birth in Lumbini, Nepal. Monasteries are popular destinations for Theravada pilgrimages, especially during festivals or celebrations such as the Magha Puja, which honors the Buddha’s teachings, or Visakha Puja, which celebrates the Buddha’s birth, awakening, and death.

Regional or country-specific pilgrimages often involve visiting relics (*dhatu*), which embody the first of the three refuges: the Buddha. Often, relics are enshrined in mounds that, depending on the region, are called stupa, pagoda, or *cetiya*. In Theravada, relics are divided into three categories of importance: relics of the body (*saririka-cetiyam*), relics of use (*paribhogika-cetiyam*), and relics of memory (*uddesika-cetiyam*). It is believed that Emperor Asoka dispersed 84,000 pieces of the Buddha’s body throughout Asia in his mission to spread Buddhist teachings. One of the most well-known of these relics of the body is the Tooth Relic in Kandy, Sri Lanka. Relics of the body are considered the most powerful of relics and do not have to come from the Buddha but may derive from locally venerated monks.

Relics of use are less common and pertain to important items the Buddha or a locally venerated monk used, such as a begging bowl or robe. Buddhist images are relics of memory and, although they are the least powerful of relics, are greatly respected in the Theravada tradition. For a Buddha image’s power to become reified, a consecration ceremony should take place to open the image’s eyes and actualize its sacrality.

Modernity

Theravada has undergone significant changes due in part to European colonization and its aftermath. With European colonialism, Theravada Buddhists encountered Western forms of modernity, particularly Protestant Christianity. These encounters elicited unique methods of identity affirmations that often took the form of nationalism.

In the late 19th century, the Theosophical Society’s cofounder, Col. Henry Olcott, visited Sri Lanka and strove to counteract the growing Christian missionary work. Founding the Buddhist Theosophical Society, he worked with Anagarika Dharmapala to transform the traditional Sri Lankan method of religious dissemination. Olcott and Dharmapala developed a system that involved Buddhist catechisms, Buddhist carols, a Young Men’s and Young Women’s Buddhist Association, and other devices that proved successful and greatly changed the traditional methods of Buddhist learning. Their attempts to protect and promote Sri Lankan Buddhism succeeded.

In 1948, Sri Lanka emerged as a Buddhist nation-state with a unique set of practices, which Gananath Obeyesekere and Richard Gombrich have dubbed “Protestant Buddhism.” In addition to the new form of Sri Lankan Buddhist practices and in contrast to other Theravada societies, Sri Lankan monks engaged openly in politics, forming the *Janatha Vimukti Peramuna*. Part of this new political presence was the advocacy of a Buddhist state, which became more vocal during the Sri Lankan civil war with the LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam).

Although Sri Lanka is unique in its politicized monasticism, it is not alone in its efforts to assert a Buddhist presence at the national level. In response to the encroaching European colonialism along its borders, the Thai monarchy instituted

ecclesiastical and bureaucratic reforms in the early 20th century, which some scholars have called “State Buddhism.” Since the mid-20th century, Southeast Asian nation-states either have had significant changes to their constitution that underscore their Buddhist identity or have made multiple concerted efforts to do so.

While Theravada has become more visible within the state apparatus, it is also more visible in nongovernmental agencies and engaged Buddhist groups. One of the more globally recognized movements is the Sarvodaya Shramadana movement in Sri Lanka. This movement draws on meditation methods, Gandhian notions of truth-force (*satyagraha*), and the Theravada principle of loving kindness (*metta-karuna*) for conflict resolution and comprehensive development projects. Among the many individually engaged Buddhists is Dhammananda Bhikkhuni, the first fully ordained nun in Thailand. Dhammananda works on improving conditions for Buddhist women throughout Asia and has been at the forefront of the Order of Nun revival in Thailand. She oversees the *Yasodhara: The Newsletter on International Buddhist Women’s Activities*, which is available in more than 40 countries. She is also an active participant in the global coalition of Buddhist Women, *Sakyadhita* (Daughters of the Buddha), which was formed in 1987.

Theravada is a vibrant part of more than 150 million people’s lives and has had an even wider impact through the globalization of culture. Over the past 2,300 years, it has been a part of the political, economic, and cultural dimensions of Asia. Myriad and fluid, Theravada will continue to make a significant influence on the world in the years to come.

Michael Jerryson

See also Buddhist Law; Cambodia; Engaged Buddhist Groups; India; Laos; Mahayana Buddhism; Monasticism; Myanmar (Burma); Nepal; Olcott, Henry Steel; Protestant Buddhism; Sangha; Singapore; Southeast Asia; Sri Lanka; Stupa; Thailand; Vajrayana, Tibetan

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THICH NHAT HANH (B. 1926)

Thich Nhat Hanh is one of the greatest contemporary Buddhist teachers and the most famous master of Vietnamese Buddhism. He developed his own brand of syncretic teaching and practice and has been most successful in popularizing Buddhism in the West. He is a noted poet, artist, writer, creator, and innovator. He has written more than 85 books, including *Peace Is Every Step*, *Being Peace*, *Touching Peace*, *Call Me by My True Names*, *Living Buddha, Living Christ*, and *Teaching on Love and Anger*.

Thich Nhat Hanh was born at Tha Tien, Quang Ngai. His teacher was the 41st-generation teacher of Lamte Zen. He was ordained in 1949. In 1950, he cofounded An Quang Buddhist Institute and Phuong Boi Monastery. In 1961, he went to Princeton University and Columbia University. In 1963, he cofounded Van Hanh University and La Boi Press in Vietnam. In 1964, he founded the School of Youth for Social Services.

At the end of the Vietnam War, he was barred from returning home. He lived near Paris and then continued his international fight for peace. In 1969, he established the Unified Buddhist Church in France, which brings together Theravada and Mahayana traditions.

In 1982, he founded Plum Village, a grouping of five hamlets around Duras, east of Bordeaux, France. It is his home base and a major monastery, hosting more than 100 nuns and monks, and novices from Vietnam and the West. He teaches there publicly on Sundays. In 1983, he founded the Community of Mindful Living in Berkeley; in 1997, the Green Mountain Monastery and Maple Forest, Vermont; and then in 2000, Deer Park Monastery in Escondido, California. He has spoken for peace in many world meetings. The Vietnamese government approached him in 2004 to return and play a role in Vietnamese society, so he went back home to work toward the reconciliation of the people and their leaders.

Not only is Vietnamese Buddhism syncretic, but Thich Nhat Hanh personalized it even further. He popularized the term *engaged Buddhism*, which can be credited to the 13th-century King Tran Nhan Tong. His teaching is close to that of the eighth-generation teacher of the Lieu Quan School (1670–1742), a reformed Zen school popular in central Vietnam.

He founded the Order of Inter Being in 1964 and drafted the “14 Mindfulness Trainings.” He holds that women are equal to men. He has made Meditation Walk a common daily practice even for lay people, whereby the disciples walk as slowly as possible to attune their body to the land, the universe, and the spirit. His communities are based on a democratic management style, respect for seniority, and automatic self-regulation.

Bernadette Rigal-Cellard

See also Engaged Buddhist Groups; Mahayana Buddhism; Meditation; Monasticism; Syncretism; Theravada Buddhism; Vajrayana, Tibetan; Vietnam

3HO (SIKH DHARMA FELLOWSHIP)

In 1969, Harbhajan Singh Puri (1929–2004), a Sikh from the Punjab, India, arrived in Los Angeles and began to teach the art of kundalini yoga. He adopted the name Yogi Bhajan, built a small following of students, and legally incorporated the Happy Healthy Holy Organization (3HO) by the end of that year. The life of this small group was structured around kundalini yoga practice, strict vegetarianism, and communal living. Early students of Yogi Bhajan went on to establish yoga centers in several American cities, including San Francisco, Santa Fe, Washington, D.C., and New York City.

In late December 1970, Yogi Bhajan took a group of his students to the Darbar Sahib, the inner sanctum of the Golden Temple in Amritsar, India, the most sacred site in the Sikh tradition, where several of them underwent the initiation ceremony of the double-edged sword (*khande di pahul*). In the process, they made the transition from the practice of yoga to taking new names, wearing traditional Sikh/Punjabi dress (*bana*), and committing to follow the Sikh path with some modifications, such as strict vegetarianism and wearing only white clothes—a color associated with purity.

The Shiromani Gurdwara Prabhandak Committee, the central administrative body overseeing Sikh gurdwaras, warmly welcomed this development, honored Yogi Bhajan with the title of Sri Singh Sahib (“the Honorable Sikh”), and assigned him the responsibility of spreading the Sikh message in the West. Yogi Bhajan saw the acceptance of the Sikh path by his American followers as a step toward Sikhism turning into a world religion beyond the boundaries of Punjab and Punjabi ethnicity.

With Amritsar in the background, Yogi Bhajan established his community in Espanola, New Mexico. Organized around the importance of a holistic lifestyle, traditional Sikh practices such as study of the Guru Granth Sahib, Sikh scripture, and martial training (*gatka*) were encouraged. To facilitate the transmission of knowledge about the Sikh way of life, Yogi Bhajan arranged to send the younger members of the community to Punjab and later established the Miri Piri Academy in Amritsar,

where American Sikh children received traditional Sikh education. In the subsequent decades, the 3HO community also ventured out into businesses such as The Golden Temple Restaurant, Yogi teas, Akal Security, and so on.

With Yogi Bhaijan's death in 2004, the 3HO Sikh community is now in the postfounder phase of its growth. The community has successfully managed to address the absence of his leadership by creating an administrative structure that oversees the religious life of the community at Espanola and other centers and its multiple business concerns. Even though their numbers have declined over the years, and by the end of the first decade of the 21st century they probably numbered only a few thousand, the rise of the 3HO is an interesting development in Sikh history, and the group constitutes an intriguing component of the global Sikh community.

Gurinder Singh Mann

See also New Age Movements; New Religions; New Religions in the United States; Sikhism

TIANANMEN SQUARE

Tiananmen Square occupies a central location in both the physical and the symbolic geographies of China's capital city, Beijing. The site takes its name from the Gate of Heavenly Peace (*Tiananmen*), which is situated at the northern end of the square. Further to the north of the Gate of Heavenly Peace sits the Meridian Gate (*Wumen*), the entrance to the Forbidden City. Although Tiananmen predates Tiananmen Square by some several hundred years, both sites have played and continue to play prominent roles in the political history of China.

The Gate of Heavenly Peace was originally built in 1420, during the Ming Dynasty. At this time, the gate was given the name *Chengtianmen* to suggest that the dynasty had received the Mandate of Heaven to rule. This ancient Chinese notion, central to both the political and the religious history of the country, held that a virtuous ruler both rose to and remained in power by heavenly decree and sanction. The gate was thus from

its earliest inception designed to represent the legitimacy of Ming rule, and the site has ever since been used to the same effect by political dynasties. During the reign of the Qing Dynasty Emperor Shunzi (1644–1662), the gate was given the name *Tiananmen*, and Mao Zedong officially proclaimed the establishment of the People's Republic of China from the site on October 1, 1949.

It was the Communist Party that erected Tiananmen Square in the 1950s, and the site was often used to hold mass political rallies. Today, the site also contains both the Mausoleum of Mao Zedong and the Monument to the People's Heroes. To the east of the square lies the National Museum of China, and to the west sits the Great Hall of the People. Closing off the square to the south is the Central Yang Gate (*Zhengyangmen*), which is popularly known as Front Gate (*Qianmen*).

Of all the historical events that have occurred at the site, the most notorious remains what is referred to in China as the June Fourth Incident. In April 1989, spurred by the desire for more democratic reforms in the government of China, university and college students in Beijing held a series of escalating protest marches and rallies in Tiananmen Square. By May, growing numbers of urban workers in Beijing had joined the protesting students. On May 13, students and other protesters occupied Tiananmen Square and began a hunger strike, and on May 20, the government declared martial law, determined to end the protests before any deaths resulted. The Chinese military entered the square in force on the night of June 3, and by the next morning, the area had been cleared of protesters. The amount of violence involved in putting down the protests, as well as the numbers of dead and injured that resulted, remains a subject of debate.

Ryan J. T. Adams

See also China; Communism; Cultural Revolution (China); Daoism; Sacred Places; Social Justice

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TIBET

Tibet is a region in the Himalaya Mountains north of India that is administered by China. In the modern West, Tibet is often associated with the Vajrayana branch of Buddhism, and the name conjures up images of red-robed monks meditating amid snow-covered mountains. It is also frequently used as an example of human rights violations and the struggle to practice religion under a totalitarian state. As one might expect, religion in Tibet is more diverse and complex than what these stereotypes reveal.

Introduction of Buddhism to Tibet

The Buddhism of Tibet is a conglomeration of Indian Tantric Buddhism and indigenous pre-Buddhist practices. Prior to the advent of Buddhism, Tibet was ruled by a lineage of divine kings. Religious rituals centered on funerary ceremonies to guide the spirit of the deceased on its afterlife journey, and offerings and sacrifices were performed to ensure that the dead would have everything that they needed in the afterlife. Worship of mountains and local land deities, the performance of exorcisms, purifications, healing rites, and ransom rituals can all be traced to Tibet's pre-Buddhist past. Belief in a soul, called *la*, that may leave the body if a person experiences great shock or fright was an indigenous idea that was incorporated into Tibet's Buddhist rituals. Sometimes this pre-Buddhist religion is referred to as Bön, but for reasons discussed later, this name is problematic.

The first official introduction of Buddhism into Tibet occurred in the seventh century, when King Songtsen Gampo converted to Buddhism and sent Tibetans to India to bring back Buddhist scriptures and translate them into Tibetan. The second of Tibet's great Dharma Kings, Trisong Detsen, made Buddhism the official state religion and instituted government support for Buddhist monasteries. He brought the Indian Tantric master Padmasambhava to Tibet to "tame" the local deities and invited the Indian monk Santaraksita to Tibet to ordain the first Tibetan monks.

In the mid-ninth century, however, King Lang Darma took the throne. He and many powerful noble families favored a return to pre-Buddhist

religious practices, which were being threatened by the new religion. Lang Darma is often accused of abolishing Buddhism, but scholars believe that he merely withdrew state support from the temples and monasteries. In any case, his reign marks a 200-year period of decline during which the practice of Buddhism in Tibet virtually disappeared.

The second dissemination of Buddhism to Tibet occurred in the 11th century. Tibetans again looked to India as the source of authentic Buddhist teachings, and the Indian abbot Atiśa is credited with reintroducing Buddhist philosophy and monasticism to the Land of Snows. Many new Buddhist schools formed during this time of Buddhist revival. These sects rejected the translations and practices that survived from the eighth and ninth centuries in favor of new translations of the Indian originals. As a result, these schools are referred to as *Sarma*, meaning "new." Those who continued to practice the rituals and rely on scriptures translated during the first dissemination of Buddhism in Tibet became known as *Nyingma*, meaning "old."

Buddhism in Tibet Today

There are currently four main sects of Tibetan Buddhism. The Nyingma school considers Padmasambhava its founder. It follows a canon of scriptures that is not accepted by the three Sarma schools and does not place as much importance on monasticism. The Nyingma sect is unique in its tradition of revealing spiritual treasures called *terma* and its practice of *Dzogchen* ("Great Perfection"). The three Sarma schools are the Gelug, Kargyu, and Sakya. The Gelug school was founded by the scholar monk Tsong Khapa. It rose to power in the 17th century, when the fifth Dalai Lama took control of a centralized government. It is known for its emphasis on monasticism, philosophical study, and debate. The three great monasteries in Lhasa—Drepung, Ganden, and Sera—are Gelug institutions. The Kargyu sect traces its lineage to the great yogis Naropa, Marpa, and Milarepa. There are many subsects within the Kargyu school; the incarnation lineage of Karmapas belongs to the Karma Kargyu subsect. Mahamudra or "Great Seal" and the Six Yogas of Naropa are important Kargyu practices. Finally, the Sakya sect is named after the gray color of the

earth where its first monastery was founded. It enjoyed a period of political supremacy in Tibet when it was the sect favored by the powerful Mongols in the 13th century and the first half of the 14th century. Its main teachings are known as *Lamdre*, meaning “the path and its fruit.”

While the various Buddhist sects adhere to different scriptures and ritual traditions, there are many common practices shared by all Tibetan Buddhists. Lay practices include making daily water bowl offerings, circumambulating temples and sacred mountains, reciting mantras, burning incense, hanging prayer flags, and spinning prayer wheels. Tibetans venerate a pantheon of Buddhas and bodhisattvas. They also believe in the existence of worldly gods, local spirits such as mountain and soil deities, and zombies. Tibetan religious festivals include Losar, the celebration of the lunar New Year; Saga Dawa, the anniversary of the Buddha’s birth; the Great Prayer Festival held each year in Lhasa; and Gesar pageants celebrating the great god-king of Ling.

Because of the importance it places on the teacher-disciple relationship, Tibetan Buddhism is sometimes referred to as “Lamaism.” The basis for this name is the great reverence that Tibetans show to their highest teachers, or lamas. Tibetan Buddhists respect these lamas as living Buddhas—human incarnations of enlightened beings. The Dalai Lama, for example, is believed to be an incarnation of the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara; the Panchen Lama is the embodiment of the Buddha Amitabha. Other important religious figures in Tibet include lay Tantric priests and astrologers, highly realized women known as *khandromas*, and oracles. Nechung, the state oracle of the Tibetan government, is consulted by the Dalai Lama regarding both religious and political decisions.

While most Tibetans are Buddhists, there are also communities of Muslims and even a few Christians in Tibet. There are also followers of Bön. The Bön tradition traces its origins to a figure named Tönpa Shenrab and a region known as Zhangzhung in what is now western Tibet. The Bön tradition has evolved over the centuries, and today bears a striking resemblance to the Buddhist schools. Nevertheless, followers of Bön consider themselves members of a distinct tradition having roots in but not identical with Tibet’s pre-Buddhist past.

Tibet and the People’s Republic of China

During the Cultural Revolution and incorporation of Tibet into the People’s Republic of China, Chinese troops destroyed an uncountable number of temples and monasteries and forced many monks and nuns to disrobe. Since 1959 when the Dalai Lama fled to India, tens of thousands of Tibetans have joined him in exile. Whereas in the past different Buddhist sects and lineages were often at odds or even at war with one another, this is no longer the case. The religious oppression and discrimination that Tibetans in Tibet continue to face and the experiences of those living in exile have resulted in the formation of a pan-Tibetan identity uniting Tibetans in central Tibet, Amdo, Khams, India, and various other countries of the world where Tibetans have sought refuge. This newfound sense of kinship has taken shape around religion and Tibet’s bodhisattva of compassion, the Dalai Lama.

M. Alyson Prude

See also Cultural Revolution (China); Dalai Lama; Mahayana Buddhism; Monasticism; Mongol Empire; Mongolia; Politics and Religion; Religion and State; Religious Freedom; Theravada Buddhism; Vajrayana, Tibetan

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TILlich, PAUL (1886–1965)

A German-born Protestant theologian whose most influential work was produced in the United

States, Paul Johannes Tillich is one of the most important Christian thinkers of the 20th century. The son of a Lutheran pastor, he was born in Starzeddel, Prussia, and studied at the universities of Berlin, Tübingen, Halle, and Breslau. Also ordained a Lutheran pastor, he served as an army chaplain during World War I, and his experiences in the army reshaped his culturally and politically conservative mind into that of a religious socialist. From 1919, he taught at the universities of Berlin, Marburg, Dresden, Leipzig, and Frankfurt. In 1933, his employment was terminated because of his attack on Nazi ideology in his book *The Socialist Decision*. He fled to the United States, where he taught at Union Theological Seminary until his retirement in 1955. He then accepted a post at Harvard University and, in 1962, moved to the University of Chicago.

Primarily as a result of the publication of a short collection of sermons in 1948, *The Shaking of the Foundations*, which became an international bestseller, he became America's most widely known theologian and something of a global celebrity. His most important work was his three-volume *Systematic Theology*, still one of Protestantism's most influential theological texts.

A mixture of existentialism, neo-scholastic ontology, and depth psychology, his work is a vigorous critique of traditional orthodoxy, which he accused of confusing theological truths with a particular temporary expression of them. Instead of taking theological ideas from the past and simply applying them to situations today, which fails to take the contemporary situation seriously, theology needs to incorporate dialogue into a formal theological structure by seeking to "correlate" fundamental questions about the human condition raised in modern culture with answers provided by "the symbols" used in Christian teaching.

A theological system is supposed to satisfy two basic needs: (1) the statement of the truth of the Christian message and (2) the interpretation of this truth for every new generation. Theology moves back and forth between two poles, the eternal truth of its foundation and the temporal situation in which the eternal truth must be received (Tillich, 1951, p. 3). This "method of correlation" takes seriously the questions posed by the modern situation, as raised in philosophy, politics, and the arts, and provides answers rooted in Christian thought.

While inspiring for many, his contemporary recasting of Christian theology was criticized by conservatives for being shaped less by the Bible, which is rarely quoted in his *Systematic Theology*, and more by modern culture and philosophy, particularly existentialism. For example, God is not an independently existing being but being in itself, "the ground of being," "that which concerns us ultimately." Indeed, any human activity that demonstrates "ultimate concern," such as works of art, can be considered "religious." This dissolving of the boundary between the sacred and the secular has been enormously influential.

Near the end of his life, inspired by a visit to Japan and discussions with Buddhist and Shinto priests, he focused on interfaith dialogue. While his death prevented any significant personal involvement, he did initiate a discussion on the relationship between Buddhism and Christianity. His 1961 Bampton Lectures, *Christianity and the Encounter of the World Religions*, which include a Buddhist-Christian dialogue, provide an introduction to his thought in this area.

Christopher Partridge

See also Global Religion; Postmodernism; Secularization; World Theology

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TIMUR (1336–1405)

Timur, also commonly known as Tamerlane, was a Muslim warrior who conquered Central Asia in the 14th century and was the founder of the Timurid Empire and Dynasty. Born in the City of Kesh in Transoxiana, in what is now Uzbekistan,

Timur was a member of the Barlas tribe, Turkic Tatars who were descendants of Genghis Khan's Mongol hordes. Though Timur was considered a Muslim, and his conquests and rule took place under the banner of Islam, his relationship with the religion was mixed. Timur believed himself to be a *ghazi*, or Warrior of the Faith, and felt that Islam justified the use of violence against anyone regardless of their religion. Despite his Muslim faith, many of Timur's conquests were against fellow Muslims, and his treatment of them was savage. Timur also used Islam strategically, alternately relying on both the laws of Islam and Ghengis Khan, whichever was most advantageous for his purposes. Born into the Sunnī tradition, Timur also showed sympathy toward Sufi and Shi'a beliefs and was adept at using his affiliation with all three branches of Islam alternately to further his political and military goals.

Timur first gained power as a military leader during campaigns in Transoxiana by Chagatai Khan. In 1360, when Tughlugh Timur, Khan of Moghulistan, invaded Transoxiana, Timur was appointed leader of the Barlas tribe. Following Tughlugh's death, Timur reconquered Transoxiana and added significant territorial gains by 1370, reducing the Chagatai Khans, to whom he paid nominal deference, to mere figureheads in the process. Timur continued to make impressive territorial gains, winning campaigns in Khorezm, the Caspian Territories, Persia, the Caucasus, Moghulistan, and Georgia, among others, over the next 25 years. In 1398, Timur invaded India, ostensibly because of the idolatry and infidelity of the Muslim Delhi Sultanate but drawn largely by the Sultanate's great wealth. Timur sacked Delhi so thoroughly that it took more than a century to recover, before turning his attention back westward to sack Damascus and Baghdad and make war on the Ottoman Empire. In 1402, Timur defeated and captured the Ottoman Emperor Bayazid I at the Battle of Ankara, initiating the Ottoman Interregnum and throwing the empire into chaos. Following his success against the Ottomans, Timur rode eastward to challenge the Ming Dynasty in China but died of a fever en route. Timur's legacy is mixed, hailed as a champion of Central Asia and a military genius, his conquests of and viciousness

toward fellow Muslims had devastating consequences for many of the largest cities in the Islamic world.

Gregory J. Goalwin

See also China; India; Islam; Kazakhstan; Mongol Empire; Ottoman Empire; Uzbekistan

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TOGO

The West African nation of Togo achieved sovereignty in 1960, when 14 French-African colonies ceded from France and became independent nations. Present-day Togo is bordered by Benin to the east, Ghana to the west, Burkina Faso to the north, and the Atlantic Ocean, the Bight of Benin, and the Gulf of Guinea to the south. With a population of 6.6 million people, the country's size is smaller than West Virginia and its long, narrow shape enables its residents to experience six different ecological systems within the nation's borders. Ewe and Mina are spoken in the south, Dagomba and Kabiye are spoken in the north, and French is the official language spoken in schools, trade, and government. The nation consists mostly of Ewe, Fon, Mina, and Kabre peoples, with small pockets of Syrian-Lebanese and Europeans. French influences are seen in fashion, marketing ads, and in the readily available baguettes.

Togo is composed religiously of 20% Muslims, 29% Christians, and 51% indigenous practitioners. The capital, Lomé, is a cosmopolitan city bordering Ghana and is well-known for its Muslim

traders, Christian vendors, and smugglers from countries all across West Africa. Many Togolese Christians and Muslims simultaneously practice or combine their religious beliefs with local cultural practices, though publicly their religious leaders will often extol the exclusive adoption of one tradition. African Initiated Churches (AICs) are common, as they use charismatic religious leaders, who often combine Christian rites and biblical passages with locally embraced music, styles of service, and ceremony. Mosques are in every major city, and the call to prayer is heard over amplified intercoms.

Togolese Vodou (alternatively called Vodun, Vodun, Vodoo), has a structured pantheon that consists of numerous spirits and divinities that interrelate with human beings in daily practices, community ceremonies, rites of passage, vocational selection, marital relationships, and most other scenarios. Spirits (*vodu*) can forge relationships with humans based on a person's star, or destiny, which is brought with an infant at birth. Each *vodu* generally has associative colors, fabrics, and beads that identify a practitioner of the spirit to the community, as well as proverbs, oral histories, prohibitions, and special days devoted to the particular *vodu*. *Vodu* can be found residing in natural sources, such as water, mountains, and lightning, or at a crossroads or can be connected with man-made substances such as forged iron. Ancestors, who are seen as an extension of the living world, are also used to work on behest of religious practitioners seeking guidance, protection, or aid from one of the many spirits who work on a human's behalf.

Politically, the nation has struggled under General Eyadéma's presidency and military dictatorship, which lasted from 1967 to 2005, shortly followed by his son Faure Gnassingbé's succession. Collectively, this has led to political instability, social turmoil, acts of violence, international financial sanctions, refugee displacement, and suppression of the press. Since 2007, Togo has held what are internationally deemed as (mostly) fair and free elections, making Togo safer and more accessible as a democratic nation.

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See also Africa; Benin; Christianity; Ghana; Indigenous Religions; Islam; Syncretism; Vodou

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TOKYO

Global religions in the Japanese city of Tokyo can mostly be seen in the religion of immigrants. This entry will first look at the official data of Tokyo related to immigrants' religions and proceed to review some statistical profiles about Catholics and Muslims in Tokyo. Tokyo is not a typical city of Japan, though it is its capital, and the situation of Japan in general will be reviewed in the entry "Japan" in this encyclopedia.

Religious Corporations

Shintarō Ishihara, the governor of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government since 1999, proposed in 2000 a vision of Tokyo as a "world city." One of the aims of this vision is to have 5 million foreign tourists in 2015 (compared with 2.5 million in 1998) and 50,000 foreign students in 2015 (compared with nearly 20,000 in 1999). The present numbers reveal a relatively low level of internationalization or globalization for this city when compared with its size of 12 million residents. Official statistics of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government, however, show the steady growth of the foreign population in Tokyo and that whereas the percentage of foreigners among the total residents in Tokyo was only 1% in 1980, it was 2.9% on January 1, 2007.

In 2007, of the approximately 371,000 foreigners (among the 12,692,000 total residents), 126,000 Chinese, 110,000 Koreans, 31,000 Filipinos, and 18,000 U.S. Americans live in Tokyo. As current migration studies reveal, these people of foreign origin have carried with them, at least to some extent, their own religious traditions. If they stay in Japan long enough to have a family and to experience the birth and/or death of some of their family members, then they may follow

some form of religious rituals or ceremonies deriving from their own tradition or another form that they have found and accepted on the new soil of Japan, whether it is Buddhism, Shinto, or any of the new religious movements.

Official data about the status quo of religions in Tokyo can be available in the list of religious juridical corporations compiled and published annually by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government. According to the list dated on January 1, 2007, we can get a basic picture of religious corporations in Tokyo: The total number of religious corporations is 5,916, which consists of 2,873 Buddhist corporations, 1,604 Shinto, 454 Christian, and 985 other. The great majority (959) of the last category of "other" corporations belong to Tenrikyō, a new type of Shinto-based group.

The notable exceptions in the other corporations are the following: one Islamic corporation located in Setagaya, one Jewish corporation and three Islamic corporations in Shibuya, and one Confucian corporation in Musashino City.

If we take a closer look at Christian corporations, another feature will become visible. Among 454 Christian corporations, the great majority have derived from major Protestant missions from abroad, although their level of independence from foreign missions must be different from one group to another. There are a few exceptions to these Western mission churches. One category of the exceptions is seen in the indigenous Christian groups started by Japanese leaders outside of Western mission churches, and we will mention these indigenous groups below. Another category is seen among the immigrants' ethnic Christian churches. Three corporations belong to an ecumenical ethnic church, the Korean Christian Church in Japan (in Shinjuku, Shinagawa, and Adachi). Some of the other Korean Christians gather at another independent evangelical church in Arakawa and another corporation, Full Gospel Tokyo Church, in Shinjuku. Full Gospel Tokyo Church is a Japanese branch of the Yoido Full Gospel Church of Korea, the biggest Pentecostal church in the world. In addition to Korean churches, there is one Chinese Christian church in Sugunami. Also under the category of Christianity in the list for Tokyo, we see Jehovah's Witnesses holding their congregations at Setagaya, Katsushika, Akishima City, Koganei City, and Kunitachi City.

The indigenous Christian groups started by Japanese leaders can also be regarded as a sign of the globalization of religion or of its aftereffects. Mark R. Mullins, a sociologist, studied 13 major indigenous groups, all originating in 20th-century Japan, and the following five among them are headquartered in Tokyo: Mu-Kyokai Group (established in 1901), The Church of the Eternal Way (1907); Christ Heart Union (1927); Spirit of Jesus Church (1941); and Life-Giving Christ (1966). Although these groups have been almost unnoticed by both scholars and the Japanese general public and criticized as deviations by Protestant mission churches, they deserve special attention if we consider the problems of the indigenization of Christianity under the context of globalization. Thus, Mullins argues that the indigenization of Christianity in Japan has been dealt with more directly and freely by these groups than by many of the mainline and transplanted Christian denominations.

Catholics From Abroad

Among the total Japanese population of 128 million in 2005, there are approximately 1 million Christians, namely, 450,000 Catholics, 540,000 Protestants, and 16,000 Orthodox. The biggest diocese of the Catholic Church in Japan is the Archdiocese of Tokyo, with 95,000 Catholics. In the central area of Tokyo comprising 23 wards, they have 45 churches; Mass in English is celebrated in 10 of these churches and Mass in French, Indonesian, and Tagalog, in 2 churches each. One of the most active Catholic churches in Tokyo is St. Ignatius Church, where Mass is celebrated in Japanese, English, Indonesian, Polish, Portuguese, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

The Catholic Commission of Japan for Migrants, Refugees, and People on the Move (J-CARM) presents interesting statistics about Catholics from abroad. Since the Catholic Church does not conduct a survey of the status quo of the foreign Catholics in Japan, the commission can only estimate the number by multiplying the legally registered number of foreign residents that is issued by the Japan Immigration Association by the percentage of Catholics in their native country that is issued by the Vatican. For example, they estimate that there are 11,000 Korean Catholics and 37,000 Filipino Catholics in Tokyo Archdiocese, and apart

from the 95,000 Japanese Catholics mentioned above, they estimate foreign Catholics in Tokyo at 75,000. This way of calculation shows more interesting numbers outside Tokyo. In some dioceses where there are a large number of immigrants from Catholic countries, foreign Catholics far outnumber Japanese Catholics: Thus, in the Saitama diocese, there are 20,000 Japanese and 85,000 foreign Catholics, and in the Nagoya diocese, there are 25,000 Japanese and 107,000 foreign Catholics (both 19% vs. 81%).

There are two intriguing facts here. First, despite the fact that in some dioceses foreign Catholics occupy a substantial part of the church life and immigration will tend to continue at one place or another, the Catholic Church in Japan does not have official statistics about them. Second, although J-CARM seems to attempt to grasp the reality of the existence of foreign Catholics, they apparently do not have a suitable method to reach a certain conclusion but can only make assumptions.

Muslims

As mentioned above, there are four Islamic juridical corporations in Tokyo, but the Muslims' presence and their activities seem to be developing not only in Tokyo but also in other areas in Japan. Hirofumi Okai, a scholar in migration studies, summarizes the chronological development of the establishment of mosques around Japan. He enumerates 38 mosques existent in Japan (the one in Nagoya established in 1931 was lost during World War II), the first one in Kobe in 1935 and three in Tokyo in 1938, 1962, and 1982. The other 34 are in various areas from 1991 to 2006, and among them 4 are in Tokyo. The Kobe Mosque was established mainly by Indian Muslims, while the earliest mosque in Tokyo was supported by major financial groups of Japan, with the interest in Central Asia during the imperialist regime. Two others in Tokyo established in 1962 and 1982 were supported by the Indonesian government and the Saudi Arabian government, respectively.

Japan experienced an economic boom in the 1980s and attracted labor from foreign countries. Bangladeshis, Iranians, and Pakistanis were the main immigrants during this period, until around 1990. At that time, the Japanese government

started to impose a visa requirement for Bangladeshis and Pakistanis in 1989 and for Iranians in 1992, which greatly restricted entry from these countries. According to official statistics from the Japan Immigration Association, as of the end of 2006, registered sojourners in Japan from these three countries are as follows: 11,329 nationwide and 3,235 in Tokyo from Bangladesh; 5,198 nationwide and 1,355 in Tokyo from Iran; and 9,086 nationwide and 1,457 in Tokyo from Pakistan. In addition to these sojourners from these three countries, 18,906 Indians live nationwide and 7,396 in Tokyo, and 24,858 Indonesians live nationwide and 2,474 in Tokyo, and some of the former and the majority of the latter can with good reason be considered to be Muslims. Tokyo has a high Muslim population, but Muslims have also spread out nationwide. This explains the spread of mosques nationwide that have been established since 1991.

Michiaki Okuyama

See also Christianity; Immigration; Islam; Japan; Mahayana Buddhism; New Religions in Japan; Pentecostal Movements; Shinto

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TOLERANCE

Tolerance is in some quarters a virtue in disrepute. Its demand to abide, endure, permit, and even suffer the existence of what we find wrong and intolerable is fraught with contradictions. Tolerance involves accepting, abiding, or accommodating views that one rejects. In fact, its linguistic cognates in many languages include the verb *to suffer* (i.e., to suffer the existence of what one finds objectionable and wrong). It calls us to live in cognitive dissonance. We are obliged to *bear* what in fact we find unbearable: For, if we did not find

this, that, or the other word or deed objectionable, there would be no call to tolerate them. The whole issue of tolerance only arises when some act or speech is deemed objectionable.

Tolerance is, first and foremost, a method to live with what one finds objectionable, hence, by implication, with what is different from oneself and one's way of managing life. Tolerance as a virtue implies difference as an empirical fact. While not every difference is an objectionable difference, it is safe to assume that almost all of what we find objectionable we also define in opposition to what we are. It is in the face of what is both different and objectionable that tolerance is demanded.

To many, this demand, with the value judgment it entails (relegating certain acts to the realm of the wrong and unconscionable), is too insipid a virtue, falling far short of calls for the truly pluralistic or multicultural perspective that has become synonymous with what is right and fair and proper in the contemporary world. To these people, tolerance is not robust enough to support a shared life in a global world.

To others, however, tolerance is too broad a goal; it fails to delineate its own boundaries and cannot produce a definition of what would be intolerable. Fraught with internal contradiction, it would seem as well an unrestricted call to abide by all forms of objectionable behavior with no inherent limits on what is tolerable. After all, almost all would agree that there are actions that are beyond any moral compass and should not be tolerated. Many of the horrors of the 20th century, encompassing genocide and other crimes against humanity, would fall under this rubric. If certain sets of acts are clearly beyond what can be tolerated, we are left with the need to define the boundary of what can and cannot be tolerated. The real political and ethical debates, this group would argue, are over the definition of just this boundary, leaving the issue of tolerance as of only marginal significance.

Moreover, and to no small extent, tolerance as a virtue has in many countries been replaced with the idea of rights (individual rights, citizen rights, human rights) as the primary way of negotiating difference in the contemporary world. Rather than relying on a particular virtue—and an ill-defined and contradictory one at that—modern polities tend to organize collective life around a set of legally defined rights. Predicated most often on the

secularization of the public realm, the freedom and moral autonomy of the individual conscience, and the separation of the private from the public realm, modern liberal democratic societies have in some sense made tolerance an irrelevant attribute of social life.

Individual difference is guaranteed by rights, as are the workings of the private realm, and except in such cases where one's actions infringe on another's rights, these actions do not even enter the category of what is to be tolerated or not. The politics of rights over the politics of the good and of individual autonomy over shared public conceptions of the good inevitably leads to the diminishing of any engagement with the idea of tolerance as a virtue necessary for civic life. Modern societies have to a great extent elided the problem of tolerance—obviated the necessity to be tolerant rather than make people tolerant. They have replaced tolerance of difference with legal recognition and the entitlements of rights.

The irony of this situation is that the renewal of religious and ethnic identities in today's world, in both developing and developed countries, calls into question the efficacy of a language of rights as the sole means of negotiating difference. Resurgent religious and ethnoreligious commitments all register a need to go beyond the language of rights in order to secure our ability to abide with difference in a global world. It may therefore be wise to review the claims for tolerance, which are, interestingly enough, rooted in a religious consciousness. Indeed, with an attentive ear to the religious cadence, we can broaden the medieval idea of "bearing with" or "suffering" as defining the tolerant act beyond its initial, negative connotations of suffering evil or bearing with that which is distasteful. It can be understood rather as suffering one's own self-restraint, as bearing that which must be borne for our very life within society. What must be endured or suffered, tolerated, or permitted is our own bearing of the other.

The first move of tolerance is thus a move of restraint, of reining in. What is reined in first and foremost is judgment. To withhold judgment is to recognize the limits of knowledge and so to recognize the boundaries of self. Thus does tolerance raise the problem of restraint in the face of the other and of the other's truth claims, and so of the recognition of our own limits. This is where it

intersects with religious virtues such as humility; indeed, in the Arabic idiom, tolerance is best translated as *hilm*, that is humility, a trait associated with Abraham, Prophet Mohammad, and God himself. For indeed, without restraint there is no dialogue, without silence there is no language, and without tolerance there is no communal life.

The centrality of discussion and dialogue, and hence the self-restraint that makes dialogue possible, is evident in all traditions and emphasized in all works devoted to tolerance. Thus, the injunction of the apostle James to “let everyman be quick to hear but slow to speak” (p. 7) is quoted in the preface to Peter Abelard’s *A Dialogue of a Philosopher With a Jew and a Christian* (p. 1136). The point of Abelard’s *Dialogue* was itself less to uphold traditional Christian assumptions but rather to highlight the thread of common reason in all positions: the Law of the Jews, the natural law of the philosophers, and the supreme Good of the Christian God. Writing within a distinct genre of medieval dialogue, Abelard goes a step further in transforming the genre from a demonstration of Christian superiority to an exercise in mutual edification. More than 400 years after Abelard, Jean Bodin wrote his famous *Colloquium heptaplomeres de rerum sublimium aracnis abditis* (*Colloquium of the Seven About the Secrets of the Sublime*), which was a dialogue between a Catholic, a Lutheran, a Calvinist, a Jew, a Muslim, an advocate of natural religion, and a skeptic. Unintentionally resonant with certain Sufi views of religious truth, Bodin’s own argument posited a vision of the harmony of diverse perspectives through which tolerance is presented as an essential element of religious truth.

Bodin’s call to religious tolerance preceded many later arguments, including those of John Locke, as it ends with the argument that no one can be forced to believe against his will. (This was the central feature of John Locke’s argument for religious toleration in his 1689 *Letter Concerning Religious Toleration*.) It values discourse for its inherent differences, as all of Bodin’s fictional interlocutors keep their faith or their belief in both the existence of truth and in their own version thereof. Yet they *tolerate* difference and argument and even revel in it.

The writings of thinkers such as Jean Bodin (d. 1596) and, later, Pierre Bayle (d. 1706)

provided a critical bridge between the explicitly religious discourse of the 16th century and the increasingly natural law arguments of the late 17th and early 18th centuries. Pierre Bayle, in fact, extended toleration even to atheists, which neither Jean Bodin nor, later, John Locke was to do. (Locke also refused toleration to Catholics.) Bayle, indeed, anticipated a modern approach to toleration predicated on individual liberty and freedom of expression. Samuel Pufendorf’s (d. 1694) writings on toleration should also be noted.

With these writers, the problem of tolerance began to be understood in terms of individuals in their relations to one another. It ceased to be understood as a problem of the coexistence of different “truth communities” in a shared public space. Rather, the problem of tolerance became the logistical problem of directing the discreet acts of autonomous self-regulating agents in a market (of goods and later of ideas). The problem of tolerance became, as it is today, the problem of individuals and their acts.

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See also Equality; Ethics; Global Religion; Human Rights; Multiculturalism; Pluralism; Politics and Religion; Religion and State; Religious Freedom; Social Justice

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TONGA

Tonga is an island nation in the South Pacific between Fiji and Tahiti, north of New Zealand.

The only island nation in the Pacific still maintaining a continuous indigenous monarchy, Tonga is a predominantly Christian nation with Methodism as its state religion. The inhabitants of the archipelago reported as more than 90% Christian, with 37% belonging to the Free Wesleyan Church, a Methodist organization. The denomination has fallen in popularity in recent years and endured a schism that created the Free Church of Tonga, garnering 11% of the population, and the Church of Tonga (technically an offshoot of the Free Church of Tonga), which claims 8% of the population. Other faiths include Roman Catholic (16%), Church of the Latter-Day Saints (17%), Seventh-Day Adventist (2%), and Anglican (1%). The ethnicity of the country is almost entirely Polynesian, and Tonga remained fairly unaffected by immigration as of the beginning of the 21st century.

While the Tongan founding myth has the islands being fished from the sea by Maui, one of the three major gods, people first arrived on Tonga from Fiji around 1500 BCE. The island had a sacred monarchy seeing the Tu'i Tonga (king) as an embodiment of the islands' people, and it still remains a powerful symbol for the nation. By the time Europeans first had contact with the nation in the 17th century, the authority of the Tu'i Tonga had been greatly reduced to a mainly religious role. The infamous Captain Cook visited the island in 1773 to a welcome reception, earning the archipelago the nickname of "the Friendly Islands." The first modern king, King George Tupou I, introduced a constitution in 1875; he was a convert to Christianity, and Wesleyan missionaries played a notable role in helping construct the governing document. Tonga never suffered official colonization, though in 1900 the British granted the nation's request for protectorate status in response to attempts by other colonial powers to overthrow the Tongan monarchy. The ties thereby created were peacefully dissolved in 1970, the same year Tonga joined the Commonwealth of Nations. It would become part of the United Nations in 1999.

Though abundantly Methodist today, the first Dutch missionaries made few inroads in Christianizing Tonga in the 18th century, but missionaries of other faiths had more success in the next hundred years. The nation's Christian character is evident in

its constitution, which demands all businesses to be closed on Sunday and holds that day holy by law, forever. At the end of the 20th century, the sacred monarchical institution continued to face growing challenges to its legitimacy, mostly from Tongan students supporting a full democracy. Tonga still allows the Christianizing of its people, and many missionaries of different denominations are still active on the island.

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See also Fiji; Missions and Missionaries; Mormons; Pacific Islands/Oceania; Protestant Christianity; Religion and State

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TORAH

The Hebrew term *Torah*, according to the general consensus of modern scholars, is connected with the *hiphil* conjugation of the root *yrh*, "to point out, direct, teach," and thus literally means "teaching" or "instruction." The Torah functions in Jewish traditions as a category invested with transcendent authority that has both textual and supra-textual dimensions. As the quintessential scripture and encompassing symbol of rabbinic Judaism, the Torah continues to be revered by contemporary

Jewish communities in Israel, the United States, and throughout the transnational diaspora.

The term *Torah* is used in rabbinic literature to designate a corpus of texts or teachings in at least four different senses: (1) in its narrow sense, the term is used to refer to the *Pentateuch* (the Five Books of Moses) or *Sefer Torah* (Book of the Torah); (2) the term is subsequently extended to refer to the entire Hebrew Bible, the *Tanakh*, comprising the Pentateuch together with the *Nevi'im* (Prophets) and *Ketuvim* (Writings); (3) the term is expanded further to include not only the Hebrew Bible, which is designated as the Written Torah (*tôrāh še bi-ktāb*), but also the Mishnah, Talmud, and Midrash, which contain the authoritative rabbinic teachings that constitute the Oral Torah (*tôrāh še b'e'al peh*); and (4) Torah functions as an encompassing category that includes potentially all of the texts, teachings, and practices of the normative rabbinic tradition.

This entry discusses the distinction between the Written Torah and Oral Torah, the Torah as a supratextual category, and the methods of engaging the Torah.

Written Torah and Oral Torah

This progressive expansion of the term *Torah* is reflected in the ways in which the categories of Written Torah and Oral Torah are defined and distinguished. The Written Torah is a fixed, bounded corpus of texts, whether understood in its narrow sense as the Pentateuch or in its broader sense as the entire Hebrew Bible. The Oral Torah, on the other hand, is a fluid, open-ended category, which in its broadest sense includes not only the halakic (legal) and haggadic (nonlegal) teachings contained in the Mishnah, Talmud, and Midrash but also potentially all of the teachings and practices that are authorized by the rabbinic sages in each generation as part of the oral tradition. The distinction between the Written Torah and Oral Torah is traditionally held to derive from the original revelation at Mount Sinai, in which God gave to the prophet Moses two Torahs: (1) a written text, consisting of the Pentateuch, *Nevi'im*, and *Ketuvim*, and (2) an oral tradition of interpretation that was destined to be preserved in the Mishnah, Talmud, and Midrash as well as in the teachings of subsequent generations of rabbis.

The canonical authority of the Torah is linked in particular to the Pentateuch, which is ascribed a special status as divine revelation in that its every word is traditionally believed to have been directly dictated by God to Moses, who acted as a scribe and recorded the words of God verbatim in the *Sefer Torah*. The authority of all subsequent texts and teachings is legitimated by establishing a connection between those texts or teachings and the *Sefer Torah*, by granting them a subsidiary status as part of the Written Torah, in the case of the books of the *Nevi'im* and *Ketuvim*; allotting them a designated place as part of the Oral Torah, in the case of the teachings of the Mishnah, Talmud, and Midrash; linking them to the revelation at Mount Sinai as part of the open-ended category of Oral Torah; or otherwise aligning them with the model of the *Sefer Torah*. Through such strategies, the Torah was transformed from a limited, bounded text—the *Sefer Torah*—into a limitless, encompassing symbol that represents the entire system of rabbinic Judaism.

The Mishnah, the foundational text of the Oral Torah, is a collection of originally oral laws (*halakhot*) that is divided into six orders (*sederim*) according to subject matter, without direct reference to the *Sefer Torah*. The Mishnah was compiled and redacted by R. Judah ha-Nasi in the beginning of the third century CE and contains the halakic teachings of the Tannaim, the earliest rabbinic authorities, who lived in Palestine during the first two centuries of the Common Era.

The Amoraim, the rabbinic authorities who were active in Palestine and Babylonia between the third and sixth centuries CE, worked through the Mishnah word by word, interpreting, elaborating, systematizing, and harmonizing its legal teachings and compiled two commentaries on the Mishnah in the form of the two Talmuds: the Jerusalem Talmud, or *Yerushalmi* (ca. 400 CE), and the Babylonian Talmud, or *Bavli* (ca. 500–600 CE). The Babylonian Talmud, an encyclopedic work comprising exegeses of the Hebrew Bible along with exegeses of the Mishnah and haggadic reflections along with halakic expositions, is considered the authoritative basis of Jewish thought and practice and is the principal focus of study in rabbinic academies throughout the world.

In addition to Mishnah and Talmud, the teachings of the Oral Torah are contained in a third

category of rabbinic literature, Midrash, which is concerned with interpreting, extending, and applying the teachings found in the books of the Written Torah, the Hebrew Bible. This category includes the various Midrashic collections (ca. 4th to 12th centuries CE), which contain exegetical expositions and homiletical discourses pertaining to specific books of the Hebrew Bible. It also includes the Midrashic interpretations of biblical passages embedded in the Jerusalem Talmud and Babylonian Talmud. We can further distinguish between three types of Midrashic collections. Exegetical Midrashim provide a running commentary on one of the books of the Hebrew Bible, expounding the book consecutively, chapter by chapter and verse by verse, and at times even commenting on the individual words in a verse (e.g., Genesis Rabbāh). Homiletical Midrashim do not provide a commentary on every chapter and verse in a biblical book but instead provide homilies related to the first verse(s) of the biblical passages that are read as part of the synagogue service either on regular Sabbaths (e.g., Leviticus Rabbāh and Tanhūmā' Y'lammdēnū Midrashim) or on special Sabbaths and festivals (e.g., P'siqṭā' d'ḥ-R. Kahana and P'siqṭā' Rabbāṭī). Narrative Midrashim do not contain exegetical or homiletical expositions of biblical books but rather present a unified haggadic narrative that constitutes a kind of "rewritten Bible," retelling and expanding on the teachings and events of the biblical narrative (e.g., Pirqē d'ḥ-R. Eliezer and Seder 'ēliyyāhū).

Torah Beyond Texts

The Sefer Torah (Pentateuch) was granted sacrosanct and authoritative status in the rabbinic tradition as divine revelation, and therefore any text, teaching, or practice that wished to invest itself with divinely sanctioned authority could only do so through becoming incorporated within the ever-expanding domain of Torah. While the Torah as a circumscribed written text is a bounded category, in its status as revealed truth it functions as an open-ended symbol that extends beyond the boundaries of the text and is capable of absorbing a host of candidates whose linkage to the revelation, however tenuous, has been established.

The encompassing nature of the Torah as a symbol is linked in particular to its identification

with the Word of God, for while the Sefer Torah might be held to be the most perfect, concentrated expression of the Word of God on earth, the Word itself is not limited to that expression. The divine Word through which God manifested Himself at the time of revelation is also represented as the creative power through which He brought forth creation. In certain representations of the Torah found in seminal form in rabbinic texts and subsequently elaborated in medieval kabbalistic texts, the Torah is personified as the primordial Word or wisdom that had existed in heaven from "the beginning," prior to the revelation, as a living aspect of God and the immediate source of creation. At the time of the revelation at Mount Sinai, the primordial Torah is represented as descending from its supernal abode and becoming embodied on earth in the concrete form of the Sefer Torah. It assumed the finite form of the Book of the Torah, but the book itself is understood in this context as simply the outer body in which the primordial reality of Torah resides as its innermost soul. In this perspective, the Sefer Torah itself becomes a symbol with transcendent significations in that it points beyond its own textuality to the divine reality enshrined within.

The authoritative status of the Torah as a limitlessly encompassing symbol is thus linked in rabbinic and kabbalistic traditions not only to its historical manifestation as a divinely revealed corpus of texts and teachings but also to its cosmological status as a transhistorical, primordial reality. Among the various representations of the Torah in rabbinic and kabbalistic texts, four main complexes can be distinguished: (1) the Torah is identified with the Word (*dābār*) of God or Name (*šēm*) of God, which participates in the reality and essence of God himself; (2) the Torah is personified as primordial wisdom (*ḥokmāh*), which serves as the architect of creation; (3) the Torah is depicted as the subtle plan or blueprint of creation, which contains the primordial elements of the divine language through which God brings forth the universe; and (4) the Torah in its mundane, historical form is a concrete written text composed of words and sentences inscribed on parchment, together with an oral tradition of interpretation that seeks to clarify and elaborate the implications of its laws and teachings for subsequent generations.

Engaging the Torah

Rabbinic portrayals of the revelation of the Torah at Mount Sinai emphasize that all of the people of Israel—male and female, young and old—received the revelation of the Torah and agreed to accept and observe its commandments. The covenant was established with the entire Israelite community, which is represented as a “kingdom of priests” and a “holy nation” that was selected from among all the nations of the world as the chosen people of God. Thus, all Jews are enjoined, as part of a national eschatology, to uphold the covenant by fulfilling the commandments of the Torah. In principle, the obligation to fulfill the commandments includes Torah study, although in the classical rabbinic period the domain of those who were allowed to engage in formal study of the Torah in rabbinic academies was carefully circumscribed by the rabbinic authorities, as indicated by the existence of categories of the “other” such as the *‘am hā-’āreṣ* (lit. “people of the land”) and women. Certain practices—in particular, preservation of the Written Torah through elaborate scribal traditions and codification of the authoritative interpretations of its teachings that constitute the Oral Torah—remained the exclusive province of the rabbinic elite, who as the designated heirs of Mosaic authority claimed a special status within the larger Jewish community. Even though the *‘am hā-’āreṣ* and women could engage the Torah aurally in the synagogue liturgy, through listening to the public reading of the Sefer Torah and to its exposition in the sermon, they were not allowed to recite, study, or interpret the Torah themselves.

In the contemporary period, the Orthodox movement continues to uphold the classical rabbinic perspective, although a number of Orthodox communities have experimented with establishing venues for women to engage in Torah study. In recent decades, the Reform, Reconstructionist, and Conservative movements have introduced important reforms to open the way of Torah to women, including counting women in a minyan, the quorum of 10 required for the Torah reading; allowing them to be called to the pulpit to read the Torah; and, most significantly, ordaining women as rabbis.

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See also Bible; Halakha and Shari’a; Israel; Judaism; Scripture

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TORTURE

In the post-9/11 context, the images of the hooded Iraqi man at the Abu Ghraib prison standing on a box with his outstretched arms tied to electric wires, the goggled and muffled prisoners at Guantánamo, and the former U.S. Army reservist Lyndie England smilingly pointing to the naked Iraqi detainees have shocked the world. The shock caused by these images needs to be contextualized by recalling that torture has been a prominent part of Western and non-Western history, as both punishment and judicial torture, existing both legally and extra legally. These incidents have created challenges for the moral judgments of religious ethics. It is striking, however, that the recent debates have come up in the context of accommodating torture and cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment (CIDT) within the legal and political institutions of democratic systems, making it imperative for people to evaluate the legal history

of torture. This entry discusses the legal history of torture, international prohibitions against torture, and torture in democracies.

Legal History of Torture

The term *torture* has been variously called *quaestio*, *tortura*, and *tormentum* in Latin and the vernacular. It historically refers to an act of questioning by the infliction of suffering to get the truth. The Greeks, according to Page Dubois, used the term *basanos* for torture, which meant testing the purity of gold. The meaning of the term was later extended to test whether a person was telling the truth in a trial.

In Western history, torture was used by the Greeks and later adopted by the Romans. From the 13th to the 18th century, torture was not just being extensively used, but actually became an integral part of the judicial system in western Europe. The law of proofs in 13th-century Europe depended either on the evidence by two eye witnesses or on confessions, and since the former was difficult to ensure, the emphasis shifted to confessions. Torture was used to gain confessions and was conducted with an elaborate set of protocols that were monitored by physicians and supervised by the judges, making it a process of judicial torture. The duration, mode, and severity of torture were predetermined to ensure the reliability of the confessions. The confession even had to be repeated in the court room for it to be accepted. Thus, as Edward Peters pointed out, torture became a part of the criminal procedure system. It is widely believed that interventions by 18th- and 19th-century Enlightenment philosophers such as Beccaria and Voltaire, with their focus on respect for the human body and human dignity, led to the abolition of torture. In contrast, historians such as John Langbein point out that the abolition of torture was not entirely due to the moral criticisms by these philosophers but rather due to the developments in the laws of proof. Unlike previous times, the judges could now use a variety of punishments for severe crimes and could mete out punishments based on guilt demonstrated through persuasion rather than ascertaining truth or certainty.

The significance of this legal history of torture is twofold: First, even in the most elaborate attempts to regulate the use of torture, it was not

possible to do so, and its reliability as a form of gaining information or truth was always in doubt. Thus, when Alan Dershowitz suggests the use of torture warrants to regulate the use of torture in extraordinary circumstances in the United States, the legal history of torture reminds one of the unreliability of the act and the difficulty in actually regulating torture. Second, the legal history of torture is also a reminder that moral criticisms were not the sole reason for the abolition of torture, such that the absence of torture cannot be seen as synonymous with modern, civilized, democratic societies. In modern times, often the problem of torture has been seen as an issue in nondemocratic, authoritarian, or totalitarian societies. Thus, Nazi Germany and Stalinist Russia in the past and Egypt and Jordan in the present are often represented as countries associated with torture. That in turn distracts attention from the presence of torture in democratic countries historically and in contemporary times. For example, the use of torture as a colonial practice by the French in Algeria and the British in India is still not a prominent part of the Western narrative on torture.

International Prohibitions Against Torture

Since the very inception of the United Nations, extremely strong initiatives against torture have been developed in international law. While prohibitions against torture are a part of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the Declaration Against Torture, the most comprehensive prohibition and monitoring of the protections against torture exists in the UN Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. The definition of torture is a widely debated issue in international and national contexts, but a broadly accepted definition is the one adopted by the UN Convention:

Any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person for such purposes as obtaining from him or a third person information or a confession, punishing him for an act he or a third person has committed or is suspected of having committed, or intimidating or coercing him or a third person, or for any reason based on

discrimination of any kind, when such pain or suffering is inflicted by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official or other person acting in an official capacity. It does not include pain or suffering arising only from, inherent in or incidental to lawful sanctions. (*Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment*, 1985)

Despite the ratification of the UN Convention by more than 142 countries, there continue to be two main issues regarding the applicability of laws against torture apart from the limitations of enforcing international law. First, the applicability of laws to particular combatants and, second, whether the protections pertain only to torture and not equally to cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment. The United States, for instance, argued that international laws, especially the Third Geneva Convention, which provides additional protections against torture and CIDT during times of conflict, were not applicable to the unlawful combatants in the war on terror. In addition, only torture was seen as criminalized by the U.S. Federal Torture Statute (based on the UN Convention) and not CIDT. Furthermore, the definition of torture employed by the United States indicated in the Jay S. Bybee memo was so narrow that only the most extreme forms of physical torture that caused pain equivalent to “organ damage or death” were disallowed. As a result, despite the presence of high-level memos showing that the United States did authorize harsh interrogation methods for both Abu Ghraib and Guantánamo, the excessively narrow interpretations of the protections against torture and CIDT allowed for limited action to be taken against the perpetrators. In addition, as argued elsewhere, the popular imagery of torture with its emphasis on physical brutality in popular TV shows such as *24* also reinforces the narrow legal definition of torture adopted by the United States.

Torture in Democracies

The issue of torture has also arisen in other democratic contexts in the past, notably in England and Israel. For instance, the English used methods such as hooding, sleep deprivation, loud noise, and food

and drink deprivation on Irish prisoners. In *Ireland v. England* (1976), the European Commission on Human Rights characterized the techniques used by the English against the Irish prisoners as torture, while the European Court characterized the same techniques as inhuman and degrading treatment. The reason why it is important to distinguish between torture or inhuman and degrading treatment is because under international law, the standards for torture are higher than for CIDT. As John Parry points out, there are no conditions under which torture can ever be justified. Countries are required to come up with certain domestic protections against torture, including prosecution of offenders and providing compensation, while CIDT primarily has to be prevented.

In Israel, shaking; the *shabach* position, where the hands are tied and the person is made to sit on a small chair that is slightly tilted; the frog crouch position; excessive tightening of handcuffs; and sleep deprivation were used on Palestinians. While the Supreme Court of Israel did disallow these methods—termed as *moderate physical pressure*—in 1999, the court did not characterize them as torture. Two things have to be noted about the Israeli context. First, the Justice Landau commission set up to enquire into the use of these methods did allow for the “necessity defense” to be available for those using these methods. Second, even though the Supreme Court did disallow these methods, it also stated that while these methods were not allowed by the present Constitution they could be authorized in the future. That left open the possibility of using “moderate physical pressure,” because the methods were not considered as severe as torture.

Thus, it is not surprising that the most controversial methods in the current war on terror have been the “no-touch” torture techniques, such as sleep deprivation, standing, use of phobias such as fear of dogs, loud music, stress positions, and sexual humiliation, many of them in combination. Alfred McCoy points out that some of these no-touch torture techniques, such as isolation, hooding, and stress positions, were developed, propagated to Latin America, and used by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in previous decades. These methods have not just been a part of the CIA’s history, but according to Darius Rejali, these “clean” (nonscarring) methods are unique

because they were primarily developed by the main Western democracies—England, France, and the United States. These “stealth techniques,” Rejali states, are primarily found in democracies because of their history of monitoring human rights, thus requiring these democracies to use torture techniques that leave fewer marks and allow them to evade detection.

Finally, the debate on torture has also been an issue of philosophical concern. Michael Walzer, for instance, has suggested that torture can be used in extraordinary circumstances. At the same time, he also suggests that the politician who orders the torture should be willing to own responsibility for it and pay for it rather than be excused under the utilitarian logic of having ordered torture for the good of society. Walzer’s argument has been echoed in recent years by Jean Elshtain, who argues in favor of using coercive interrogation or torture lite in extraordinary circumstances as being preferable to an absolute prohibition of torture. Even those who acknowledge the necessity of using torture in the hypothetical “ticking bomb scenario” (extraordinary situations) point out that there is a danger of a “slippery slope,” such that even carefully regulated torture can get extended to ordinary situations. Furthermore, compounded by the history of unreliability of torture in gaining truthful information, the hypothetical assumes perfect knowledge about the disaster to be averted, which is almost impossible to ensure.

Jinee Lokaneeta

See also Ethics; Human Rights; Politics and Religion; September 11, 2001; Social Justice; Terrorism; War on Terrorism

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TRANSCENDENTAL MEDITATION

Transcendental Meditation, or TM, refers to techniques of meditation developed by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, who founded the Spiritual Regeneration movement in Madras (now Chennai), India, in 1957, following the death of Swami Brahmananda Saraswati in 1953, for whom he served as secretary for many years. The technique involves a series of instructional steps taken under the guidance of a teacher, after which the student is assigned a mantra and then works on perfecting the meditation technique through regular daily practice. Some well-known people have been associated with TM over the years. Members of the Beatles were involved for many years and were perhaps the best known practitioners of the techniques and the TM movement in general. David Lynch, the well-known film director, has been a lifelong practitioner, as well.

The meditation techniques have been the focus of much research and some controversy. Articles claiming to prove the effectiveness of the techniques have appeared in journals such as *Science*, *Scientific American*, and many other professional journals. Claims of positive effects from practicing

TM techniques include lower blood pressure, decreased anxiety and stress, reduction of cholesterol, and other health benefits. Some debate has been generated over the issue of whether it is the specific TM techniques that lead to positive health-related results or if any kind of systematically applied meditation techniques would yield similar outcomes.

TM has been involved in other controversies as well, given that it has been grouped with other new religious movements (NRMs) that garnered public attention in the 1960s and 1970s. The Anti-Cult movement (ACM) organizations targeted TM, along with other NRMs, and some ACM spokespersons specifically claimed that TM was a “cult” that was teaching techniques akin to “brainwashing.” This type of claim has been involved in one precedent-setting legal action, *Kropinski v. World Plan Executive Council* (1988). This case involved a former member suing TM in 1985 for alleged fraud and emotional and physical harm brought on by practicing TM techniques. Kropinski won a judgment at the trial court level for \$138,000, but the case was reversed as to psychological harm on appeal, and other claims were settled. This case is important because it was the first time that Margaret Singer’s testimony was found lacking scientific credibility in a federal court. Singer was perhaps the best known of the anticult psychologists who had served as expert witnesses in a similar case brought against TM and other NRMs.

TM also has been controversial with its official claim that it is not a religion but a meditation technique; thus, allowing the technique to be used in schools and other governmental agencies would not be violative of the Establishment Clause of the U.S. constitution. The techniques have been integrated into many different settings, including in churches, school, and businesses. However, there was one federal court case, *Malnak v. Yogi* (1979) that found that certain TM practices did constitute a religion. Controversy has also developed over the high cost of getting initiated into TM techniques, with some scholars and others suggesting that TM is more a business than a technique or a religion.

James T. Richardson

See also Hinduism; Meditation; New Age Movements; New Religions; Shankar, Sri Sri Ravi

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TRANSLOCALIZATION

Translocalization is a term used for the process by which cultural forms, symbols, and practices are drawn into circulation through networks that detach them away from their original national and local contexts and may amplify or diversify their meanings. The concept is used within cultural globalization theory and is closely related to the now problematic term of locality and thus to delocalization and relocalization; it is mainly a space metaphor. For some scholars, economic and technological globalization is a homogenization process that produces cultural unified symbols (the McDonaldization of society) at the same time that it delocalizes others from their original contexts, only to be transformed in merchandise. Other positions show how economic globalization translates its course of action in local conditions, grounding symbols and practices in local terms while transforming traditions by circulating them in global flows such as tourism, spectacle, migration, and media exposure. This process is what is generally called translocalization.

Other applications to the term have regarded it as the main process of locating the global (Benedict) or as the product of the forces of globalization and localization (Czarniawska). It has also been applied to the new identity formations and connections shaped by the cultural background of migrants in host societies (Kupainen).

In religious studies, Argyriadis and De la Torre consider it as a movement metaphor, in close relation to delocalization—which is the actual movement of cultural forms. Translocalization processes point to the multilocations that religious identities can reach, as they are no longer necessarily anchored to a single territory, culture, nation, or ethnicity. These identities are practiced in multiple locations such as adhesions to ritual imaginary lineages, in movements with multinational or cosmological levels, and in virtual presences.

Alejandra Aguilar Ros

See also Detraditionalization and Retraditionalization; Ethics; Global Religion; Globalization; Glocalization; Postmodernism

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TRANSNATIONAL

The world is increasingly interconnected; an event in a distant place affects those in another. The term *transnational* refers to both the morphology and optic of these cross-border flows of people, capital, information, and commodities. Though the term *transnational* seems to presume the nation-state as a coherent entity, a transnational perspective does not naturalize the nation as a primary social and political unit in the modern world. Instead, a transnational optic considers the historical contingency of borders and social fields.

Religious institutions are some of the earliest transnational formations, thriving across a great expanse before there were nation-states to traverse. Among religious scholars, the term *transnational religion* most often refers to the beliefs, practices, and organizations of transmigrant communities, but it also characterizes religious activist and militant networks in global civil society. The first section will consider the theoretical emergence of transnational theory within the framework of transnational civil society, and the second section will consider its placement in the study of immigrant religious communities.

Transnational Civil Society

As globalization theory took shape in the 1990s, anthropologists and cultural studies theorists began to refer to the global culture. These cross-border flows of capital, information, and people have been characterized as varying nonisomorphic “scapes,” network societies, and emerging hybrid cultures that have weakened the centrality of the nation-state in the social imagination. Methodologically, the transnational is often distinguished from the global by the former’s attention to the everyday and the particular or, as one anthropologist put it, the more “humble” aspects of globalization. Given this attention to the translocality of global flows, transnational ethnographies are often multisited, tracking daily life across various borders, in several time zones, and via many networks.

The study of transnational cultural forms and communities (and later the religious reverberations of the September 11 attack on the World Trade

Center) sparked a cross-disciplinary interest in religion that has produced a burgeoning body of work. One of the most prescient of these collaborations was the project of Susanne Rudolph, a political scientist, and James Piscatori, an Islamicist, to rethink Cold War conceptions of national security by exploring various expressions of a religiously informed transnational civil society. They argued that religious memberships in social movements and nongovernmental organizations challenged both the presumed secular dominance of the public sphere and the state-centric presumptions of fields from international relations to security studies.

Since then, transnational civil society has become a rich and contested concept and the religious actors in this transnational public sphere, far more visible. Given the cross-border reach of many religious institutions, religious political action has challenged a state-centric model for centuries. In the 18th century, Quakers on both sides of the Atlantic were key figures in the transnational campaign against the slave trade. They came to this shared decision through prayer, moral reasoning, and prophetic dreams. Transnational religious activism, then, presumes a multidimensional scope of action involving a wide range of actors. These have been characterized by Keck and Sikkink as transnational activist networks that have multiplied in the latter part of the 20th century as advocates for global issues such as the environment and women's rights. As scholars indicate, transnational feminist networks and environmental movements have strong religious advocates and detractors at the global, regional, and national levels. One particular forum for transnational advocacy is the American evangelical community. Their intervention in U.S. domestic and foreign policy is expressed as an "evangelical transnationalism" that has become more nuanced as they interact with Christians in the Global South, who too are projecting a new global "progressive Pentecostalism," balancing evangelism and social concern.

Finally, diaspora communities also create transnational religio-political networks that collaborate to change their home country's regime, to create their own state, or to lobby for home state trade privileges. These cybernationalists often fund insurgents from afar, maintaining a transhistorical identity (stuck in the past and planning a liberated

future). Not all these groups are nation bound. Theological treatises of multinational militant groups of political Islam such as al Qaeda reject the legitimacy of the modern nation-state in fidelity to a global *umma*, though transnational religious terrorists have exploited new technologies to support an organizational mode that is decentered, multiple, and fluid.

Transnational Migrant Communities

The second, more visible scholarship in transnational religion attends to contemporary processes of travel, diaspora, and migration. A renewed interest in religious travel includes studies of missionaries and their transnational histories, such as the dissemination of *The Pilgrim's Progress* in Africa. They consider new forms of pilgrimage, such as the virtual hajj, and the vibrant niche of religious tourism that grosses \$18 billion a year. These globalized versions of old practices re-inform and commodify ritual paraphernalia and locate sacred space in the real and virtual worlds.

Migration scholars argued that though new diasporas have joined the "old" diasporas of Armenians, Jews, and Greeks, the theory of diaspora is still confined to national territory and imagination. They argue instead for a more fluid optic, less embedded in national space. Thus, those who maintain strong, regular ties to their homelands and organize their lives across national borders are called transnational migrants. Migrant theorists have argued that migrants were polycentric, living in their host country while participating socially, economically, and politically in their country of origin. Scholars of religion and migrant studies took to this framework quite easily as a way to characterize increasingly diverse communities whose "lived religion" was influenced by multiple sites of affiliation. Transnational religion explores the belief, practices, and organizational behavior of transnational migrants as they shift across time and space.

Scholars of transmigrant communities investigate how individuals live a daily religious life that is influenced by both sending and receiving communities. One example of this is the transit of social remittances. A Cambodian Buddhist family in France may support their local *wat* and then, with relations scattered through North America,

share in the financial and ceremonial support of a *wat* in their ancestral village as a way to ensure their karma and status in both places. Religious communities may thus participate in a transnational circuit of social remittance without actually moving.

Transnational religious communities are circuits of religious connections. Such connections may be based on an imagined tradition that inspires the construction of an Oyotunji village in South Carolina modeled after its origins in West Africa. Through these circuits, communities negotiate a narrative of racial and religious belonging that links their model village to Yorubaland in Nigeria, to the Caribbean, or to the Bronx, New York. Thus, religious circulation produces hybrid practices, language, ideas, and institutions that can revise religious orthodoxy while affirming primordial identities that are either universalized or exclusionary.

The organizational contexts of these different religious networks differ in many ways. Roman Catholic hierarchy offers a habitus that, with minimal modification, is recognizable in its parishes throughout the world. Baptist migrants from Governador Valadares in Brazil to Massachusetts negotiate their denominational identity within these separate communities. The transnationally devout express multilayered subjectivities. The ethnically informed religious identity in one context shifts as migrants take on new ethnic attributions in the host country, which then informs the latter. This fluid and fragmented identity is most apparent among marginal communities such as Mexican transgender sex workers in San Francisco, who are devotees of Santísima Muerte, the saint of death. As those who trespass many territories, devotional practice to Santísima Muerte inspires spiritual agency inside the structures that ostracize them. In this way, transnational communities create a counterhegemonic space, reframing the Other as other than themselves and sacralizing their social death.

Transnational religion thus spans both the public sphere of political action and the mobile spheres of migrant communities. It attends to the constraints of the state while ultimately disregarding it as the dominant unit of analysis.

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See also Diaspora; Global Religion; Globalization; Glocalization; Immigration; Islamism (Political Islam); Translocalization

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TRANSVESTITES AND TRANSSEXUALS

Transsexuals feel an incongruity between the body they were born with and their identification as a man or a woman. Many transsexuals alter their anatomical sex, through sex reassignment surgeries or hormones, to align with their psychological gender. Transvestites, or cross-dressers, adopt the clothing and mannerisms associated in their culture with the opposite sex but may not identify *as* the opposite sex or seek permanent transformations. *Transgender* is commonly used as an umbrella term for gender-variant experiences, including transsexualism and transvestism. Although these terms are associated with specific Western contexts, they are broadly applied here to discuss a range of culture-specific phenomena related to religious traditions.

Interactions between religion and transgenderism are shaped by multiple, intersecting influences. The ways in which transgender individuals experience religion can be influenced by geographic and social locations; economic access to sex reassignment surgeries, hormones, or gendered clothing; availability of personal and institutional support systems; aesthetic norms; familial religious affiliations; and levels of social oppression, including physical dangers. Consequently, some individuals whose gender performances do not predictably match their bodies have rejected religion, while others maintain significant and complex relationships to one or more religious traditions.

Most religions have yet to state official positions on transgenderism. The lack of authoritative

pronouncements has resulted in diverse responses both within and among religious traditions around the world. Common themes among these responses include consideration of mythical or historical transgender religious figures, the sacred creation and preservation of sexed bodies, and gender-specific religious laws and practices.

Religious stances on sexuality affect how religious leaders and transgender individuals view transgenderism. Despite the fact that transgender individuals may identify with a range of sexual orientations throughout their life, some religious leaders associate all transgenderism with homosexuality. Evangelical Christians and Mormons—who believe that homosexual behaviors are sinful and homosexual desires are symptoms of psychological disorders—prescribe reparative therapy to “cure” the homosexuality that they think causes transgenderism. Some transgender individuals agree with religious proscriptions against homosexuality but do not identify themselves as homosexual. For example, some male-to-female transgender individuals see themselves as women who have sex with men rather than someone engaging in homosexuality. Other transgender religious participants associate with the asexuality of ascetics or eunuchs or choose to de-emphasize sexuality in their understandings of themselves as transgender.

Religious Roles

Some cultures have religious roles for transgender individuals. The hijras of India are a well-documented example. According to Gayatri Reddy’s study, hijras are usually individuals born male who choose to dress as women and act in an exaggeratedly feminine manner. Many excise their male genitalia through a ritual operation and are thereafter associated with the ability to bless fertility. Their spiritual power and social position are legitimized (to the degree that they are tolerated, despite ridicule) through their worship of the Hindu Goddess Bahucharamata or Ardhanarisvara, a half-man/half-woman version of Shiva. Hijras were traditionally known as celibate ascetics who tended the temples of the goddess. One contemporary group, the *badhai hijras*, still renounce sexual behaviors and earn their living singing, dancing, and playing instruments at religious ceremonies. Another group, the *kandra hijras*, engage in prostitution. In popular

opinion, both groups carry the power to curse or bless. In addition to their Hindu affiliations, many hijras identify as Muslim and follow gender-specific Islamic laws and rituals. This combination of Muslim and Hindu practices represents the hijras' ability—through their condoned social transgression—to cross multiple social boundaries.

Malaysian *mak nyahs*, male-to-female transsexuals, interact in various ways with the religions of their country, as shown in Teh Yik Koon's study. Many *mak nyahs* come from Buddhist, Muslim, Christian, or Hindu backgrounds. Buddhist religious teachers recognize the existence of transsexuals in their culture, and most have not explicitly rejected transgender behavior because it does not harm others. Muslim *mak nyahs* face the most religious and cultural resistance, due to Islamic fatwas that forbid cross-dressing and sex reassignment surgeries. Muslims who find ways of having sex reassignment surgeries illegally are not recognized by Muslim leaders or legal officials as having changed their sex. Muslim *mak nyahs* also express confusion about which gender they should take during prayer and whether they are allowed to participate in rituals. Non-Muslim *mak nyahs* do not face legal castigation in Malaysia for being transsexual. However, all *mak nyahs* face social ostracism and are required to keep their birth names in addition to their chosen *mak nyah* names.

In various Native American and First Nations tribes, transgender individuals constituted a special class of medicine men and women. They attributed their creative healing and artistic powers to dreams, selection at birth, or association with transgender myths or spirits. Traditional two-spirits, as they are now called, were usually men who dressed and behaved as women, and sometimes hermaphrodites or women who acted as men. The Lakota *winkte*, the Navaho *nadle*, and the Omaha *minquga* were examples of traditional two-spirits, whose gendered and religious roles varied by tribe. Some contemporary transgender Native Americans identify as two-spirits and have formed two-spirit organizations in North America.

New religious movements have attracted some transgender adherents. Witchcraft traditions, such as Wicca, appeal to some transgender individuals because of the emphasis on embodiment, creativity, transformation, and psychic wholeness. However, the relation of some witchcraft traditions to

women's spirituality movements and feminisms can limit openness toward transgenderism, which is sometimes viewed as challenging the sacrality of the female body.

Religious Rejections

Within Jewish and Christian traditions, there is strong evidence of resistance to transgender behaviors, which are viewed as challenging the God-given categories of gender and sex. Biblical scriptures are often applied to reject transgender behaviors. Transvestites have been commanded not to wear the clothing of the opposite sex by Deuteronomy 22:5. Sex reassignment surgeries have been condemned on the basis of passages such as Leviticus 21:20, which state that certain damaged or defective body parts render an individual unsuitable to sacrifice to the Lord. In Judaism, practical arguments against transformations are emphasized because the resulting identity creates confusion for gender-specific prayers, rituals, and divorce laws.

Christian responses to transgenderism have been mainly negative. Roman Catholicism has officially denounced transgender behaviors, especially transsexual surgeries that result in infertility. Catholics, evangelical Protestants, and Mormons, due to their emphasis on reproduction and belief that transgender individuals engage in sinful, homosexual activities, have excommunicated or chastised members who have permanently altered their sex. The psychological gender identification of transgender individuals is often dismissed among these groups as neurosis, sin, or demonic possession.

Many contemporary responses occur within the framework of improved, yet still highly oppressive, conditions for transgender individuals. In the United States and Europe, activists have celebrated legal and cultural successes that have increased mainstream transgender visibility. Modern sex reassignment surgeries have become more sophisticated since they were made available to the public in the 1950s. Academic interest in transgenderism has created the interdisciplinary field of transgender studies. However, within the growing public discourse on transgenderism, the profound influences of religion are often downplayed, ignored, or misunderstood.

Changing Relationships

Some religions associated with rejecting transgenderism have shown recent signs of increased acceptance. Some predominantly Muslim countries, including Iran and Turkey, now tend to legally tolerate transsexuality, despite condemnation of homosexuality and pathologization of transgenderism. This change is due to the distinction between homosexuality and gender variance, and the view that sex reassignment surgeries are acceptable treatments for what are diagnosed as gender identity disorders. Some Protestant denominations in the United States have displayed growing understanding and acceptance of transgenderism. The United Church of Christ, among others, began producing transgender educational literature around the turn of the millennium, and in 1995, the Presbyterian Church in the United States was the first mainline Protestant denomination to ordain a transsexual minister. Transgender support groups have also been created in numerous denominations. The first annual Interfaith Transgender Conference, held in Oregon in 2006, indicates the desire of some religious leaders in the United States to extend transgender acceptance across religious affiliations.

Despite much resistance, individuals have found ways of negotiating religious and transgender identities. Some bypass leaders and institutions and rely on personal religious authority. Sacred texts have been interpreted as favoring transgenderism, transgender identities have been claimed as divine gifts, and gender transformations have been likened to religious conversions. In Yoruba-diasporic religious traditions, possessions by male, female, or transgender spirits have been used to claim spiritual legitimacy for gender transformations. In other traditions, name-changing rituals and prayers have been used to sanctify transgender identities. While religion is more commonly associated with the oppression of transgender people, these examples show that for many transgender people around the world religion has been an important source of empowerment, legitimacy, community, and hope.

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See also Gay and Lesbian Theology; Gender; Men's Roles; Neo-Pagan Movement; Queer Theory; Sexuality; Women's Roles

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TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Surrounded by the Caribbean Sea and North Atlantic Ocean, the island republic of Trinidad and Tobago is located northeast of Venezuela on the eastern Caribbean chain. The two islands are located 21 miles (1 mile = 1.609 kilometers) apart, and together constitute a nation of nearly 1.3 million people almost evenly divided between Afro-Caribbean Christians and immigrant Indian Hindus and Muslims.

Trinidad was established by Spain in 1754 and Tobago, by Dutch, English, and later Latvians in the 18th century, as part of the New World colonies. As plantation and sharecropping economies, the two islands collectively switched colonial hands more than 30 times in two centuries. Populations soon practiced African-influenced religious traditions interspersed with European Christian practices. Following slavery's outlaw and the British Caribbean's full emancipation of Africans in 1838, large numbers of contracted immigrants from India and China were brought over to continue the harsh labor of sugarcane production. Fueled by capital colonial demand, the nation's fusion of African, Indian, Chinese, European, and Syrian-Lebanese cultures has promoted numerous locally created musical genres that have spread regionally and globally, including chutney soca, calypso, rapso, ragga soca, and other hybrid steel band genres.

Trinidad and Tobago gained independence from Britain in 1962. Eric Williams aided the nation's success in its infancy, though the ethnic politics of the country has created some tensions since. In the first decade of the 21st century, the president and titular head of the country was a Christian, George

Maxwell Richards, while the prime minister, Kamla Persad-Bissessar, was a Hindu. Though increasing crime has been an issue, the nation's wealth, strong education, and quality-of-life index make it one of the most prosperous countries in the Caribbean today.

English is the national language, though Spanish, Chinese, French, and Caribbean Hindustani are also spoken by the nation's multicultural inhabitants, who hark from four different continents and mostly reside on the island of Trinidad. Tobago mostly consists of descendants of African slaves. According to the 2000 census, the two-island nation is religiously 31.6% Protestant (Anglican, Baptist, Pentecostal, Seventh-Day Adventist, and other), 26% Catholic, 22.5% Hindu, 5.8% Muslim, and 14.1% unspecified, none, or other. Hybrid forms of African religion are still noticeably present. In diaspora, the nation's residents collectively practice many of the world's religions along with syncretistic mixes of those religions, such as the many forms of Orishas.

Recognized for innovations in the music, food, and tourist industries and having one of the highest literacy rates in the world, the nation has entered the global stage through its discovery of oil and gas reserves, which have aided the country's development for the past 30 years. The nation is most famous for its annual Carnival festivities held the day before the beginning of the Christian pre-Easter season of Lent, which bring in tens of thousands of foreign visitors to street celebrations, music venues, costume parties, and art performances, virtually doubling Trinidad's population overnight. While Port of Spain, Trinidad, is a bustling fast-paced city, Tobago's relaxed style and azure waters draw in thousands of European and South American tourists on vacation each year.

Christi M. Dietrich

See also Anglicans; Caribbean; Christianity; Diaspora; Festivals; Hinduism; Hybridization; Indigenous Religions; Venezuela

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TUNISIA

The Tunisian Republic lies on northern Africa's Mediterranean coast, adjacent to Algeria and Libya, midway between the Atlantic Ocean and the Nile Valley. Despite its relatively small size, its location at the meeting point of three distinct cultures (Arabo-Islamic, sub-Saharan, and European) and its history of openness to a wide variety of contrasting influences, including that of the Berbers, the Phoenicians, the Romans, the Vandals, and the Arab Muslims, made it a center for major world religions, mainly Judaism, Christianity, and Islam early in the religions' histories. This religious diversity has been critical in shaping contemporary Tunisian society on paths that were markedly different from those of other countries in the Muslim world. It helped nurture a culture of religious pluralism while at the same time maintaining Islam as the official religion of the country.

In 1956, after 75 years of French colonization, Tunisia had a total population of 3,527,000, including 57,800 Jews, one third of whom had acquired French citizenship and joined the rank of the majority of Jewish foreign nationals, and 250,000 settlers, 180,000 of whom were French (mainly Catholic). This suggests that more than 97% of Tunisian citizens were Muslims. Despite this religious homogeneity, the Tunisian constitution, which declared Islam the official religion of the state, guaranteed universal religious freedom and established total equality between its citizens regardless of their religion, building on the progressive reforms of the Fundamental Pact of September 10, 1857, and the constitution of 1861.

Since independence, a series of measures were taken to bring the Tunisian Jewish and Christian communities into the national fold. In 1964, the Tunisian state signed a *modus vivendi* with the Roman Catholic Church. Unique to a Muslim country, it guaranteed religious freedom to the Catholic Church in Tunisia. Today, Tunisia has

22,000 Catholics (out of 10 million inhabitants), of which around 3,400 are Italian and many are French. Overall, they hold 44 nationalities. The diocese of Tunis has an indigenous bishop, around 30 priests, and 165 nuns. The Catholics have 10 schools with around 6,000 Muslim students.

Even though Jewish presence in the Muslim world has been subject to shifts in regional and international politics since the mid-20th century, Tunisia was the only Muslim country to appoint Jewish ministers in the government (1957). Today, 1,300 Tunisian Jews, the country's largest indigenous religious minority, practice their religion in public and with devotion. They have a Grand Rabbi and five officiating rabbis and a board of directors. Annually in April, the Jewish community holds an international pilgrimage on the holiday of Lag B'Omer to Djerba. It represents the centerpiece of Jewish life in the country. Jews from all over the world come in droves to celebrate the pilgrimage festival that takes place at El Ghriba, the oldest and most famous synagogue in North Africa.

Tunisia played a critical role in helping spark the political unrest across the Middle East that has been termed the "Arab Spring" of 2011 and that has led to the ouster of Egypt's President Hosni Mubarak and major internal violence within Libya and Syria. The beginning of this wave of protest was in Tunisia, when a young street vendor in Tunis, Mohamed Bouazizi, immolated himself on December 17, 2010, in protest against government actions that prohibited him from plying his trade. His act of defiance became the symbol of brazen resistance to government authoritarianism in Tunisia and throughout the Arab world. After a month of mounting public protest involving hundreds of thousands of Tunisian demonstrators, the 23-year rule of the Tunisian strongman President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali came to an end on January 14, 2011, and the dictator fled to Saudi Arabia. New political parties have been formed, and Islamic religious interests play a role in some of them. Democratic elections were held later in 2011.

Hajer Ben Hadj Salem

See also Algeria; Egypt; Islam; Islamism (Political Islam); Libya; Morocco; Politics and Religion; Social Justice

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TURBAN

The wrapped cloth head covering known as a turban has been a marker of eminent religious and political status in the cultures of the Middle East and the Indian subcontinent for centuries, and the importance of the turban in the religious identity of the Sikh community can be traced back to the beginnings of the tradition. In all likelihood, the early Gurus wore turbans to denote their status within the community; with the ascension of Guru Hargobind (1595–1644), however, we have specific references to the majesty of his turban representing a higher order of eminence than that of Jehangir, the Mughal emperor of the time.

The turban as a distinct marker of Sikh religious identity took a new turn during the period of Guru Gobind Singh (1661–1708), the last living Guru. As a result of the execution of his father, Guru Tegh Bahadur (1621–1675), at the hands of the Mughal authorities and the subsequent confrontation with the administration, Guru Gobind Singh commanded his Sikhs to distinguish themselves by their uncut hair covered with turbans. Manuals of conduct written around 1700 that focus on detailing the personal and collective behavior expected of Sikhs highlight the importance of unshorn hair (*kes*) and how a male Sikh should tie his turban daily and keep it tidy to the utmost extent.

Over time, the turban has become the most overt symbol of male Sikh identity, and its color and shape can provide interesting sociological information. For example, the shape of a turban will distinguish urban Sikhs from rural Sikhs; the round and large turban with displays of weaponry reflect the practices of sectarian groups such as the Namdharis and the Nihangs; and the colors blue and white indicate political affiliation with religious and secular parties, the Akali Dal and Congress, respectively. Although women do not

wear turbans in the mainstream Sikh community, in sectarian groups such as the Akhand Kirtani Jatha and the largely American Sikh movement, 3HO, it is obligatory for women to wear a turban. These two groups have emerged during the 20th century, and this practice indicates their emphasis on both religious orthodoxy and gender equality.

Increasingly, debates regarding the place of the turban have become quite polemical. For instance, in the Punjab there is profound concern that young Sikhs under the influence of modernity and globalization are cutting their hair and are no longer interested in wearing turbans. Given these changing trends, efforts have been made to educate young Sikhs about their heritage and the importance of the turban. In some places, competitions are held in turban tying, with prizes given to the individual who ties the best-shaped turban.

The large migration of Sikhs overseas has created additional areas of concern regarding the preservation versus assimilation of Sikh heritage in new cultural contexts. For example, where local driving and safety laws require the use of helmets, as a result, problems have emerged given the logistical difficulty of wearing a turban and a helmet at the same time. Many Sikhs have demanded to be relieved of some of these obligations given the importance of the turban as a Sikh religious symbol. The turban has also been in the spotlight in the wake of the events surrounding September 11, 2001. Despite these pressures, the turban remains the preeminent symbol of the Sikh tradition.

Gurinder Singh Mann

See also Clothing; Global Religion; Globalization; Material Culture; Modernism; Sikhism; Symbol

TURKEY

The Republic of Turkey is the Turkish nation-state located on the shores of the Mediterranean and Black seas at the crossroads between Europe and the Middle East; it was established in 1923 after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in 1918. The 1982 constitution defines modern Turkey as a secular democratic republic and a social welfare state, respecting human rights and the rule of law. Its capital is Ankara, its flag is red with a white

crescent and a star, and the official language is Turkish. Turkey is situated in Asia Minor (Anatolia) and in a small portion in eastern Thrace, stretching from east to west between Asia and Europe. The total area of Turkey is 780,580 square kilometers (301,384 square miles), 97% of which lies in Asia and 3% in Europe. The population of the country was 74.8 million in 2009. Approximately 80% of the population is Turkish, and 15%–20% is of Kurdish origin. Turkmens, Arabs, Circassians, Anatolian Greeks, Jews, Armenians, and Assyrians make up a small portion of the population. The Kurdish population is mostly concentrated in southeastern Anatolia and in big urban centers, the Arab-origin people in the south along the Syrian border, and the non-Muslim communities in Istanbul, the largest city, and in Izmir, the port city in western Anatolia.

About 99% of the population is Muslim, the majority of which is Sunnī. There are also Shi'ite communities, mostly the Alevi population, which makes up about 20% of the Muslims. The Sunnī population belongs to the Hanefi School. The Greeks are affiliated with the Great Orthodox Patriarchate, and the Armenian Gregorian population with the Armenian Patriarchate, both located in the old imperial capital, Istanbul. There are also Armenian Catholic, Protestant, and Assyrian Orthodox churches. The majority of the Jewish community, about 20,000, lives in Istanbul, and the rest is dispersed in western Anatolian cities.

Turkish, the official language, is a branch of the Ural-Altai language family and is predominantly spoken in the country, together with some Kurdish dialects of Indo-European origin among some communities in eastern Anatolia. Turkish, written in the Latin alphabet since 1928, is a phonetic language using *o*, *u*, *c*, *g*, and *s* with diacritical marks as well. Kurdish and Armenian are also printed in Latin in dailies and periodicals.

The Republic of Turkey was established after the National Liberation War, which lasted 3 more years following the Great War. World War I ended for the Ottoman Empire on October 18, 1918, with the Mudros Agreement, and the Allied forces started to occupy strategic locations in Anatolia, depending on the interallied agreements during the war. Following the occupation of Izmir on May 15, 1919, by the Greek forces, and the partition of the country by the British, French, and Italian forces, the nationalist resistance was started in

Anatolia by Mustafa Kemal, the military hero of the Gallipoli campaign. Since the Ottoman government in Istanbul and Sultan Mehmet Vahdettin cooperated with the British with the idea of saving the remnants of the empire, the nationalist resistance was carried out both against the Allied imperialist occupation and against the Ottoman ancien régime. The Liberation War ended in 1922 with the Turkish victory, and the 1923 Lausanne Treaty became the cornerstone of the establishment of the modern Turkish nation-state.

The Turkish Revolution aimed at the secularization of the state with the abolishment of the sultanate in 1922, the establishment of the republic in 1923, and the removal of the caliphate, Shari'a courts, and religious schooling in 1924. As public education became nationalized and secularized, religious matters started to be organized by a state institution, the Directorate of Religious Affairs, which began to deal with the appointment of religious officials to mosques and religious offices and the maintenance of religious institutions. Teaching of religion was included in the curriculum of public schools, while religious sects and orders were prohibited and the social appearance of religions disappeared. The modern Turkish state separated politics and religion in accordance with the principles of laicism and applied a reform program for the secularization of society, politics, and culture. The legal order was secularized with the adoption of Western codes in civic, commercial, and penal affairs; the Latin alphabet was adopted for the integration of Turkish education with scientific developments; and reform attempts were made for the purification of language and understanding of history to enable the development of national citizens in the new nation-state. Turkish women gained equal citizenship in politics in 1934, and the first women representatives were elected to the parliament in the 1935 elections. The ideological principles of the Republican People's Party (RPP), established by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, which ruled the country as the sole party for a quarter of a century, were integrated into the constitution in 1937. Republicanism, nationalism, secularism, populism, *étatisme* (statism, state control), and reformism were thus made the standards of the state.

In the foundation philosophy, Turkish secularism required the state to maintain public affairs in equal distance to all religions while securing the religious freedom of citizens as provided by law.

Faith was considered as a conscious issue in the minds of individuals, and the intervention of any other institution in the religious faith was prohibited. The use of religion for political purposes, the establishment of a political organization based on religious premises, and forcing any faith on individuals were also ruled out, as proselytizing of any believer was strictly banned.

Turkey followed a policy of balance between the Allied and the Axis forces and remained neutral for most of World War II, but it declared war against the Axis in 1945. Mainly due to the Soviet threat following the war, Turkey took its place in the Western world and became a founding member of the United Nations. The single-party regime ended in 1946 with the establishment of the Democrat Party (DP) by the developing industrial and agricultural interests. The DP came to power in the 1950 elections, defeating the RPP, the alliance of the military and civilian bureaucrats, the intelligentsia, and the urban middle classes. The DP preferred liberal economic development and an agriculture-oriented program, depending on the conservatives and providing concessions to Islamic circles. The DP's authoritarian rule and abuses of its majority power brought about the military intervention in 1960. With a new and more liberal constitution in 1961 and the establishment of new parties, the political system became very competitive in the 1960s. Together with the RPP, the Justice Party (JP), the Turkish Right, the Left, and the Islamists entered the scene toward the end of the decade. Defeated in the 1969 elections, the Left remained out of parliament and started to be represented in street demonstrations. The Right was organized in the National Action Party, depending on extreme nationalist politics, and the Islamic-oriented political party, the National Order, then the National Salvation Party (NSP), was established with a national outlook, seeking votes from the lower-middle classes. Though the state banned religious sects and dervish orders in the early reform era, the Islamic sects continued within society and reappeared in politics in the 1960s, giving their support to conservative and Islamist political parties.

Following the military memorandum against the JP government in 1971, the RPP established a coalition government with the NSP in 1973, a new experiment for an Islamic-oriented party to share political power in Turkey. After this short-lived coalition, Turkish politics was dominated by

center-right, right, and Islamist coalitions between 1975 and 1980, at a time when political chaos was prevailing on the streets and the society was suffering from economic crises.

The 1980 coup d'état annulled the parliament, closed down parties, banned political leaders, established a military government, and made a new constitution. Having prepared the ground for two-party politics for the sake of stability, the coup leaders ended up with the creation of a conservative, liberal democrat, and Islamist coalition, unified in the Motherland Party, which came to political power in 1983. In the 1990s, however, the multiparty system and unstable coalitions returned, with the reorganization of the Islamists in the Welfare Party, the nationalist Right in the National Action, and the liberal democrats in the True Path Party, pursuing the line of the DP and the JP.

The Islamist-oriented Welfare Party established the government in 1996, but the Constitutional Court closed it down for its threat to the state. As the mainstream Islamists were united around a new party, a splinter group of leaders founded the Justice and Development Party (known in Turkey as the *Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*, or AKP) with a new Islamist orientation, benefiting from the global rise of religiosity and religious politics. After a landslide victory in the 2002 elections, the pro-Western AKP, led by the former Istanbul mayor Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, tried to expand religious influence in the public sphere and protected its power in the 2007 elections with conservative, liberal, and Islamist electoral support. In the 2011 elections, the AKP increased its share of the popular vote.

Recep Boztemur

See also Islam; Islamism (Political Islam); Liberal Islam; Politics and Religion; Postmodernism; Secularism

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TURKMENISTAN

Turkmenistan is a Turkic state in Central Asia. Formerly the Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic, a republic in the Soviet Union, Turkmenistan declared independence on October 27, 1991. The population of Turkmenistan is largely Sunnī Muslim, with Muslims representing between 87% and 93% of the population. A small population of Eastern Orthodox Christians, the state religion of the pre-Soviet Russian Empire, also exists. Islam spread to Turkmenistan during the Islamic conquests of the seventh century, with most Turkmen practicing a form of popular folk Islam that is integrated with the tribal social organization of Turkmen society.

Islam became prominent in Turkmenistan due, in large part, to the missionary activities of Sufi dervishes and shaykhs in the 11th through 14th centuries. The adulation of these holy men combined with pre-Islamic religious traditions of shamanism and ancestor worship to form a distinctly Turkmen form of Islam. Central to the Turkmen form of Islam is the concept of the *öwlat*, translated alternately as “honor group” or “holy lineage.” Traditionally, there are six *öwlat*s in Turkmen society: Khoja, Seyit, Shikh, Magtım, Ata, and Müjewür, and each traces its lineage back, through the Sufi missionaries who helped convert the Turkmen to Islam, to one of the first four caliphs of Islam. Members of an *öwlat* are revered by the Turkmen, and they give spiritual guidance, blessings, and healing, as well as serving as mediators in both intertribal and intratribal disputes.

Under the Soviet Union, Islamic institutions such as mosques and religious schools were closed or destroyed, and Islam was discouraged as part of the general antireligious policies of the Soviet state. These policies had a profound effect on Islam in Turkmenistan as they isolated Turkmen Muslims from the greater Islamic world and destroyed many of the more institutionalized elements of the religion, further increasing the unofficial and localized character of Turkmen Islamic practices. In response to economic distress and religious persecution, Turkmen Muslims took part in the Basmachi Rebellion, an ultimately unsuccessful Central Asian Islamic uprising against the Soviet Union during the 1920s. After the fall of the Soviet Union, Islam experienced a revival, influenced and supported by the state. Islamic belief has become

an important aspect of Turkmen nationalism and national pride, and being Muslim is a crucial element of modern Turkmen identity.

Gregory J. Goalwin

See also Communism; Ethnic Nationalism; Islam; Russian Federation; Sufism; Sunnī Islam

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TUTU, BISHOP DESMOND (B. 1931)

Bishop Desmond Tutu garnered world renown during the 1980s for his work as a South African Anglican priest actively opposing apartheid, South Africa's national system of racism and racial separation instituted in 1948. For his work, Tutu was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1984. He gained further international recognition as chair of South Africa's postapartheid Truth and Reconciliation Commission. As a priest, Tutu has focused on advocating against racism, sexism, poverty, violence, and, recently, homophobia.

Tutu was born Desmond Mpilo Tutu in Klerksdorp, a city in the northern South African province of Transvaal. His parents were Zachariah Zelilo Tutu, a Xhosa who worked as a primary school teacher, and Aletta Dorothea Mavoertsek Mathlare, a Motswana. Desmond began his career as a teacher, following his father's footsteps; he was trained first at Pretoria Bantu Normal College and subsequently graduated from the University of South Africa in 1954. He married Nomalizo Leah

Shenxane, another teacher, in July 1955. They had four children.

After teaching high school for 3 years, Tutu began theological training to enter the priesthood at the College of the Resurrection and St. Peter in Rosettenville, an institution run by the Community of the Resurrection (an Anglican religious community that had influenced Tutu's early life). Tutu was ordained in 1960 and then spent 1962 to 1966 in London to receive a master's degree in theology from King's College. In 1975, Tutu became the first Black to be appointed dean of St. Mary's Cathedral in Johannesburg. Shortly thereafter, from 1976 to 1978, he was ordained bishop of Lesotho. He also served as the first Black general secretary to the South African Council of Churches, beginning in 1978.

Tutu was elected Anglican Archbishop of Cape Town from 1986 to 1996, during that time continuing his opposition to apartheid by urging non-violent resistance and finally witnessing the end of that system, signified by elections with universal suffrage in 1994. After retiring as archbishop, from 1996 to 1998, he chaired South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, a government commission that met to hear testimony concerning human rights violations from both victims and perpetrators of violence and oppression during apartheid. In 2007, Tutu founded The Elders, a group of international leaders working to solve pressing world issues.

Theologically, Tutu's influences include both forms of liberation and political theology as well as a variety of African theologies and spiritualities. The African concept of *ubuntu*, for example, that a person is a person through others, or that people always exist in a relationship, often features in his writings about forgiveness and reconciliation. Finally, a recurring theme for Tutu is an expressed hope for human beings to be understood in ways deeper than simply by racial definitions or divisions.

Jacob J. Erickson

See also Africa; Anglicans; Equality; Racism; Religion and State; Social Justice; South Africa; Violence

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TYLOR, EDWARD BURNETT (1832–1917)

Edward Burnett Tylor was a 19th-century English anthropologist whose evolutionary theories of religion and culture greatly influenced subsequent generations of anthropologists and scholars of religion. He held the first chair of anthropology at Oxford University and published a number of widely praised works, including *Primitive Culture* (in two volumes, 1871) and *Anthropology* (1881), the first major textbook in the field.

E. B. Tylor was born to Quaker parents in Camberwell, London, on October 2, 1832. At the time, Quakers were barred from entering university. Thus, on completion of his secondary studies at Grove House School in Tottenham, it was expected that Tylor would help manage the family-owned brass works factory. In 1855, ill health forced Tylor to seek the warmer climates of Mexico and Central America, where his association with the archaeologist Henry Christy sparked his interest in ethnology and the emerging science of anthropology. On his return to England, Tylor published his travel notes as *Anahuac, or Mexico and the Mexicans, Ancient and Modern* (1861). This work was followed several years later by his *Researches Into the Early History of Mankind and the Development of Civilization* (1865), in which Tylor combined ethnographic research with the latest archaeological data. Tylor sought to compare the beliefs and customs of prehistoric peoples with those of contemporary tribal groups to show the progressive, though unequal, evolution of culture and religion as against the reigning theory of cultural and religious degeneration from a supposed golden age or Edenic paradise.

In 1871, Tylor published his two-volume magnum opus, *Primitive Culture*, subtitled *Researches in the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Language, Art, and Custom*. Though Tylor sought to lay out a comprehensive science of culture and civilization, in actuality, he was much more interested in the evolution of the human mind, believing that “savage” religion could be understood by examining the thought-world from which it emerged—thus according to “savages” the same rational capacity as moderns. Thus, for Tylor, religion arose from the belief in spirits, the result of reflection on the experience of death coupled with prehistoric persons’ encounters of dead ancestors in their dreams. “Animism,” as Tylor called it, rested on two cardinal dogmas: (1) the souls of individuals and creatures continue after death and (2) the world of souls is ordered in the same fashion as the world of the living. In addition, to account for the persistence of ancient beliefs and customs into the present day, Tylor developed the notion of “survivals,” time-honored traditions that hold their place by force of people’s reverence for the past. Tylor’s brilliance was shown in his ability to sort through piles of ethnographic and archaeological reports and organize those materials into a convincing argument for the progressive development of human culture that was consistent with, though not dependent on, Darwin’s theory of evolution.

Jon R. Stone

See also Durkheim, Émile; Indigenous Religions; Latin America; Material Culture; Mexico; Native Latin American Religion

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UGANDA

The Central African country of Uganda is known for a conservative Protestant Christianity that has a significant political influence. Indeed, there is hardly any separation between the sacred and the secular in its everyday life. Religion's intimate social role is not new; it is part of the society's tradition. Because life in premodern Uganda was often short and precarious, invocation of the supernatural played an important role in helping people cope with life's daily challenges. Since then, numerous natural and man-made disasters (e.g., disease epidemics, Arab slavery, political dictatorships, and civil war), poverty, the challenges of modern life, and the evangelizing activities of world religions have all played a part in sustaining the central place of religion in modern Ugandan society.

Uganda's religious landscape consists of three main groups: (1) the various world religions (mainly Christianity and Islam), (2) traditional/indigenous African religions, and (3) a plethora of syncretist religious groups (i.e., those that mix elements of various religions), including the Holy Spirit movement, the Movement for the Restoration of the Ten Commandments of God, and the Lord's Resistance Army.

Specifically, the distribution of Uganda's religious groups is as follows: Christians (85.2%, i.e., Catholics 41.2%, Anglicans 35.9%, Pentecostals 4.6%, Seventh-Day Adventists 1.5%, Orthodox Christians 0.1%, other Christians 1.9%), Muslims (12.1%), Baha'i (0.1%), traditional (1%), and the

nonreligious (0.9%). Although many Ugandans follow one main religion, it is fair to note that syncretism is widespread.

The country's dominant religions, Christianity and Islam, arrived in the country between 1840 and 1880. Islam came first in 1840, when the Buganda kingdom (the root of the country's name) started trading with the Indian Ocean Sultanate of Zanzibar, which is now part of Tanzania. Conversely, Christianity came to Uganda with the coming of British Protestant (mainly Anglican) and French Roman Catholic missionaries in 1877 and 1879, respectively. Besides being the fastest growing form of Christianity in Uganda, the Pentecostal/Evangelical movement that formally entered the country in the late 1950s is arguably the most socially, economically, and politically influential Christian group in the country.

Another thriving aspect of Ugandan Christianity consists of the African Independent Churches, whose syncretic theologies (i.e., the liberal mixing of Christian and traditional African religious elements) allegedly addresses the needs of their followers more effectively. Overall, there is greater religious diversity in Uganda's cities, being a reflection of the growing diversity of the country's urban population in this global era. With increased globalization in this century, Uganda's religious diversity is bound to increase.

Kefa M. Otiso

See also Africa; Christianity; Globalization; Islam; Postcolonialism

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UGARITIC RELIGION

Among the remains of the ancient city of Ugarit, situated just north of the modern city of Latakia on the Syrian coast of the Mediterranean Sea, are hundreds of texts that reveal an intricate and diverse religious picture of the city's inhabitants. Excavations began in 1929, and to date, around 1,500 different texts, from 17 archives, have been published, many of which were produced during the "golden age" of Ugarit in the 15th and 14th centuries BCE. Ugarit's position as a major port city made it a major center of international trade and exchange of religious ideas between the western Mediterranean, Egypt, and the ancient Near East during the Bronze Age. The likely existence of thriving scribal schools at Ugarit makes the Ugaritic texts an important source for understanding textual transmission in the Mediterranean, and the Ugaritic materials are often thought to provide the intellectual and religious milieu from which several important motifs in the Hebrew Bible were adopted.

Among the textual materials we find at Ugarit—most of which are written in the (northwest Semitic) Ugaritic language in an alphabetic cuneiform script—are various ritual texts, god/goddess lists, divination texts, economic documents, and mythological materials. Myths from Ugarit reveal a pantheon arranged in the form of a divine family, and various lines of archaeological data give us a glimpse into worship at Ugarit: Two large temples dedicated to the deities Baal and Dagan were uncovered at the site; iconographic images reveal the physical form of certain deities, such as El, Baal, and Athirat (biblical Asherah); and excavated tombs display Ugaritian beliefs about the placation of the deceased with food and drink offerings.

The fragmentary texts of the so-called Baal Epic are often adduced as a fascinating insight into Ugaritic religion and are cited for their connection to various biblical motifs, though there is no direct evidence that Ugaritians considered these stories about Baal as anymore "normative" or important than other kinds of texts. In particular, certain biblical epithets of divinity, such as "cloud-rider" (Psalm 68:4, 104:3), are also used to describe one major Ugaritic deity, Baal, the account of Baal's status as a mountain-dwelling divine warrior, his battle with the Sea (*Yamm*) and Death (*Mot*), followed by formulaic declarations of victory, and the erection of a temple/house for the victor have striking parallels in the biblical corpus (see, e.g., Exodus 15:1–19, 19; Isaiah: 27:1, 51:9–11; Nahum 1:3–4; Habakkuk 3:3–15; Psalm 29:10, 48:1–2, 68:4,16, 74:12–7; Daniel 7:1–14; in the Christian New Testament, Revelation 12). Some scholars have even speculated that certain biblical passages, such as Psalm 29, were copied directly from Ugaritic texts and adapted for Israelite worship. The motif of a new, young deity defeating powers of chaos (personified as the sea) also found its way eastward into the heart of Mesopotamia, where the Babylonian *Enuma Elish* presents its principal deity, Marduk, in a general role similar to that of Baal in the Ugaritic texts.

Brian R. Doak

See also Ancient Near Eastern Religions; *Enuma Elish*; Middle East

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UKRAINE

For over a millennium, Ukraine, Europe's second largest country, has seen a variety of religious and political entities representing various cultures and social systems. It has been a crossroads of religious traditions and denominations.

Out of a shrinking population of some 46 million, Ukraine's religious believers constitute about 32 million. Around 25–30 million of these are Christians. Over half of the Christians are Orthodox, divided among the Ukrainian Orthodox Church under the Moscow Patriarchate, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate, and the smaller Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church. The rest include 4–5 million Greek Catholics, 1 or 2 million Protestants, less than a million Roman Catholics, and several million unchurched Christian believers. Jews, Muslims, and others number less than a million each. Religious belief and practice are strongest in western Ukraine and weakest in the east and south. Several million Ukrainian Orthodox and Catholics reside in other parts of the former Soviet Union as well as in western Europe, the Americas, and Australia.

Around 988 CE, Grand Prince Vladimir of Kyiv (Kiev) adopted Byzantine Christianity as the religion of his realm, known as Kievan Rus'. It received and developed a Byzantine Slavonic religious culture developed in Bulgaria on Greek models. In 1596, part of Ukraine's Orthodox Christians under Polish Lithuanian rule reestablished communion with the Roman Church. These were known as Uniates (later Greek Catholics). Some of the nobility embraced the Reformation. In the 17th century, there arose an influential Ukrainian Orthodox culture distinguished by its theological literature, church architecture, icon painting, and choral music. After the union of Cossack Ukraine with Muscovy in 1654, Orthodox Ukrainians came under Russian Orthodox Church jurisdiction. Most of western Ukraine, which passed to Austria in 1772 and to Poland after 1918, remained Greek Catholic.

During the national revival of the 19th and 20th centuries, Christian motifs remained important in Ukrainian art and literature, also appearing in film. As in previous eras, the folk culture produced wooden churches, icons, and ritual objects.

In the wake of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, an independent Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church thrived briefly, only to be destroyed along with the dominant Russian church in the 1930s. During World War II, Stalin restored the Russian Orthodox Church and, in 1946, suppressed the Greek Catholics. With the disintegration of the

USSR, an independent Ukrainian Orthodox church sprang up along with a revived Greek Catholic Church. Evangelical Baptist, Adventist, Pentecostal, and other Christian congregations, persecuted under Soviet rule, expanded their activity in one of the most tolerant of the post-Soviet states.

Since the Middle Ages Jews have lived in Ukraine, the birthplace of Hasidism. The Jewish community survived repeated pogroms, only to be annihilated in the Holocaust. Most of Ukraine's Muslims are Crimean Tatars. Deported to Central Asia during World War II, they have been gradually returning to their homeland.

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See also Communism; Eastern Orthodox Christianity; Religious Nationalism

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UMAYYAD DYNASTY

The Umayyad Dynasty presided over the Arab empire during a formative period in the development and expansion of Islamic religion and civilization (661–750). Later, Umayyad rule in Islamic Iberia (al-Andalus, 756–1031) fostered a flowering of Islamic and Jewish culture.

Civil war broke out within the Arab empire when the third caliph, 'Uthmān, was assassinated in 656. His successor, 'Ali, faced several challengers, including Mu'āwiyah, the governor of Syria and a senior member of 'Uthmān's family, the Umayyads. When 'Ali was assassinated by the *Kharijis* in 661, Mu'āwiyah was acknowledged as caliph, with Damascus as his capital.

Under the Umayyads, Arab expansion continued westward through North Africa and, with the Berber troops, Iberia (it was checked near Poitiers in 732), as well as eastward to Central Asia and the Indus River. 'Abd al-Malik (685–705) made Arabic the language of administration and coinage, while

his Dome of the Rock, with its anti-Trinitarian inscriptions, on the site of Abraham's sacrifice, the Jewish Temple, and Muhammad's ascension, demonstrated Islam's triumph over Judaism and Christianity. Though converts had to become clients (*mawālī*) of the Arabs, the latter began to lose their privileged position as conquerors as a more integrated Islamic society evolved. Muslims, however, remained a small minority ruling over "protected" non-Muslims (*dhimmis*), while Umayyad authorities were reluctant to recognize converts because Muslims were taxed more lightly.

Although most Umayyads were therefore assessed harshly in Islamic scholarship, the pious 'Umar II (717–720), who encouraged conversion while preventing the loss of the land tax, has been seen as the fifth "rightly guided" caliph after 'Ali. Designating themselves as God's deputies (singular, *khalīfat Allah*, hence caliph), the Umayyads derogated from the authority of the Qur'an and the Prophet—according to the emerging class of scholars (ulema), who sought to make themselves the exclusive interpreters of divine revelation. The Umayyads' introduction of hereditary rule (to promote political stability) reduced the elective caliphate to mere kingship, and gave charge to the Arab tribesmen, who had won the empire for God—and themselves. The Shi'i could not forgive the slaying of 'Ali's son Husayn at Karbala (680) while making a stand for the authority of the Prophet's family.

Intra-Umayyad conflicts (744–750) enabled the 'Abbāsids to seize the caliphate, but an Umayyad fugitive, 'Abd al-Rahmān, established an emirate in Córdoba (756–788). His successors, faced with numerous revolts, ruled all or part of al-Andalus until 1031, calling themselves caliphs from 929. The formation of a new, Arabic-speaking, Islamic society in Spain was accelerated by the prosperity of the 9th and 10th centuries (resulting from improved agricultural techniques, new crops, and international commerce). Architecture, poetry, and scholarship—secular and religious—flourished. Christians adopted the language and customs of the Arabs, and, while a few sought martyrdom, most apparently embraced Islam. For Jews, Umayyad Andalus was a golden age of Hebrew poetry and religious scholarship.

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See also 'Abbāsīd Caliphate; Karbala; *Khariji*; Shi'a Islam; Sunnī Islam

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UNIFICATION CHURCH

The Unification Church is a new religious movement founded in Seoul in 1954 as the "Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity" by Sun Myung Moon (b. 1920), a Korean who claims to have been asked by God to assume the role of the Messiah and restore the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. This, often contentious, movement (officially known as the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification since 1994) spread throughout the world, attracting the cooperation, admiration, and antagonism of notables in the worlds of religion, politics, academia, the media, business, the arts, entertainment, and sport. Among the more publicized features of the movement have been Moon's support for President Richard Nixon and the mass weddings where thousands of couples are "blessed" by Moon and his wife, known to their followers as "True Parents."

The Unification Church has an elaborate theology based on Moon's interpretation of the Bible and his own role as Messiah. The basic beliefs are outlined in the *Divine Principle*, which explains that humankind's fallen nature is due to Eve, who after being spiritually seduced by Lucifer, had a physical relationship with Adam before they had matured sufficiently to be blessed by God in marriage. Various key figures throughout history have been meant to contribute to the restoration. Jesus was unable to complete his mission because he was murdered before he could marry and set up the ideal, God-centered family, but this, it is claimed, was accomplished in 1960 when Moon married his present wife. A vast collection of talks by Moon contain further revelations of how he and his family have established numerous "foundations" from which

the futures of the physical and spiritual worlds have been developing according to God's plan.

Moon has always been a controversial figure, evoking extremes of adulation from his followers and intense detestation from his opponents. He has been imprisoned in Korea and, later, in America for tax evasion. He and his church first received international publicity through a series of revivalist rallies after he moved to the United States of America in the early 1970s, when the appeal was disproportionately made to well-educated, middle-class adults in their early 20s. Popularly known as "Moonies" (a term Unificationists now consider offensive), the converts became a familiar sight, selling flowers, candy, and literature in public places and inviting students and backpackers to meet friendly groups of idealistic young people eager to share their vision of how to serve God and/or make the world a better place. This could involve abandoning promising careers to work up to 18 hours a day, living in relatively primitive conditions, severing ties with relatives and friends, and letting Moon choose their marriage partner, who might not even speak their language. Concerned parents frequently became convinced that the only plausible explanation was that their offspring had been "brainwashed" and, in some cases, resorted to kidnapping in order to "deprogram" them.

Although details of the movement's finances are shrouded in mystery, it is clear that billions of dollars have been involved in the purchase of real estate (including land for a new "Garden of Eden" in Brazil), the running of businesses (including the loss-making *Washington Times*), and the promotion of Moon's many political ventures, supported by prominent figures such as George H. W. Bush and Louis Farrakhan, who, with other celebrities, are not infrequent guests at Unification conferences and dinners. In 2004, several congressmen found themselves witnessing Moon's "coronation" as "King of Peace" in a Senate Office Building. There are more than 1,000 organizations, institutions, and businesses associated in some way with Unificationism. These include Ambassadors for Peace; Bridgeport University; CARP; Il Hwa; International Cultural Foundation; Inter-Religious Federation for World Peace; Professors World Peace Academy; Tong Il; and Women's Federation for World Peace. Unification

businesses range from manufacturing armaments to fish restaurants; one lucrative Japanese enterprise is the "spiritual sales" of objects such as marble urns or statues for millions of yen on the understanding that they bring benefit to and from deceased relatives in the spirit world.

Although Moon remains the undoubted leader of the movement, considerable power now lies in the hands of certain members of his family and a select group of (mainly Korean) followers. Significance is also given to messages purporting to be from the spirit world, such as the pronouncements of a medium operating mainly from Chungpyung in Korea, who is believed to channel messages from Mrs. Moon's deceased mother, Dae Mo Nim. In the early 1980s, a revival was led by a Zimbabwean whom Moon endorsed as embodying the spirit of one of his sons who had died in a car crash. However, after "Black Heung Jin Nim" had beaten numerous members, and one of Moon's top aides had to be hospitalized, he was sent back to Africa, where he founded his own schismatic group. Other offshoots of the Unification movement include "Setsuri" (Jesus Morning Star), which has flourished in Korea and elsewhere in Asia.

By the start of the 21st century, the movement was far less visible than it had been in the 1970s and 1980s. Members are more likely to live with their spouse and children and to have work unrelated to the church. Although there are still converts, most of the new membership comes from those born into the movement. In the West, the majority of the first cohort of the second generation left the movement in early adulthood, but those in the second cohort are more likely to in the relatively more relaxed environment.

Eileen Barker

See also New Religions; New Religions in Japan; New Religions in the United States

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UNITARIANS

Unitarians are adherents to a noncreedal religious movement, derivative from Christianity yet in disjunction with it, denying the trinitarian character of God and open to insights from various faith traditions and intellectual positions. Although globally present, it is a minority group. It originates from 16th-century reactions to the Calvinist Reformation, stressing human free will, the goodness of humanity, and the use of individual reason. After Michael Servetus (1511–1553) attacked orthodox trinitarianism and was condemned for heresy, Faustus Socinus (1539–1604) augmented this teaching by denying Christ's divinity and pre-existence. Unitarianism further developed as a modern liberal religious phenomenon with humanist sympathies, especially in continental Europe, England, and North America.

The first Unitarian church was founded in Poland in the 16th century, shortly followed by an officially recognized congregation in Transylvania at the Diet of Torda in 1568. The movement survives today among ethnic Hungarians in Romania as a theistic, rationalist, and humanist church devoid of the worshiping of Jesus Christ. In England, Unitarianism started to develop in the 1600s but gained legal standing only in the 18th century. It was greatly influenced by James Martineau (1805–1900), whose theology centered on freedom and the intuitions within the individual human consciousness rather than external miraculous revelation or doctrine. The General Assembly of today's British Unitarianism was established in 1928, and it includes both liberal Christians and humanistic-oriented congregations.

In America, Unitarians trace their roots to an opposition to the Great Awakening of the 1740s in New England and to Jonathan Edwards's teachings, an opposition inspired by the ideas of James Arminius, who held to the principle of "free will" as opposed to predestination. An early Unitarian identity was forged as the liberal Henry Ware was appointed Professor of Divinity at Harvard in 1805, giving rise to a strong Unitarian tradition at this university. Subsequently, the preaching and writing of William Ellery Channing (1780–1842) defended Unitarianism as Arian Christianity (which asserted that Christ was not truly divine). The movement was, however, challenged from within by transcendentalists such as Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882). A division became evident between the Christian liberals in the Northeast and the proponents of a freer religious inquiry, especially as the latter spread through the Midwest. However, a broadly understood religious humanism brought American Unitarians under the same organizational canopy, the American Unitarian Association (AUA), in 1925, preparing the ground for a merger with Universalists (creating the Unitarian Universalist Association [UUA]) in 1961. The International Council of Unitarians and Universalists (ICUU) followed suit in 1995, currently encompassing about 500,000 members on all continents.

As a global phenomenon, Unitarianism today is a creedless collection of diverse self-governing congregations and religious movements with locally rooted commitments to religious freedom. Unitarians are nonetheless linked together by common themes, which include tolerance for diverse views, liberty of individual conscience with respect to such views, the inherent value of each person, human relations driven by justice and compassion, responsible stewardship of the environment, and the practice of democratic principles.

Natalia Marandiuc

See also Heresy; Liberal Protestantism

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UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) consists of the seven small emirates—Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ras al-Khaimah, Ajman, Fujairah, and Umm al-Qaiwain—that were united as a federal state in 1971. Before the establishment of the oil economy in the early 1960s, two main orientations shaped traditional Emirati culture: (1) the nomadic, desert-oriented Bedouins with small oasis farming and (2) the ocean-oriented culture that revolved around pearling and sea trading. These subcultures were economically, politically, and socially interdependent, creating a common culture and social identity. The UAE shares significant aspects of its culture with neighboring Arab countries and the larger Arab culture.

The commercial production of oil triggered rapid population growth as a result of an increase in the national population from improvements in health care and living standards and the importation on a large scale of mostly male foreign laborers. The latter factor has generated a dependence on expatriate labor; the UAE has become a multi-ethnic society, and Emirati nationals account for only about 20% of the population.

Urbanization in UAE has been characterized by incomparable growth. Abu Dhabi is one of the most modern cities in the world. UAE cities have been heavily influenced by the global city type. Despite its Western-style skylines, the Emirati culture is strongly influenced by Islam and the traditional Arab social structures. This country's political system remains obscure as it is based on a patriarchal kingdom that allows for little political participation of its citizens. Its socioeconomic development is based on a phenomenally unbalanced native-foreign population ratio, which makes this country extraordinary.

UAE is unique for its net immigration rate, ranking first in the world according to the CIA (U.S. Central Intelligence Agency) world fact book. About two thirds of the immigrants are Asians, mainly from India, Pakistan, Iran, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and the Philippines. The remainder are Arabs, Europeans, and Americans. The official language is Arabic. Among the immigrant population, English, Hindi, Urdu, Farsi, and Filipino are spoken. English is the language of commerce.

The constitution of the UAE declares that the official religion of the UAE is Islam. The Muslim population of the country constitutes 96% of the total population. Islam dominates most aspects of life. Most Emiratis are members of the Sunnī sect. Matters relating to marriage, divorce, inheritance, economics, politics, and personal conduct are affected by Islamic law. There is a dual system of Islamic courts for criminal and family law matters and secular courts for civil law matters. Shi'a Muslims in Dubai may pursue Shi'a family law cases through a special Shi'a council rather than the Islamic courts. Emaritis are tolerant toward other religions, and immigrants of other faiths are allowed to have their own places of worship.

Samaneh Oladi Ghadikolaei

See also Islam; Sunnī Islam

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UNITED KINGDOM

The four nations that constitute the sovereign nation-state “The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland”—England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales—are all distinct, shaped by specific circumstances. Scotland, for example, has its own legal and education system and established church. The 1998 Scotland Act led to the formation of a Scottish parliament, though the U.K. parliament at Westminster (London) retains control over some areas such as defense. Wales's governing council was abolished in 1689 (leading to direct rule from Westminster), and it was only in 1999 that the Welsh National Assembly with various decision-making powers was created. The Anglican Church in Wales was disestablished in 1920. Northern Ireland has a

very particular religious and political history. It is now a distinct jurisdiction governed by a power-sharing government. The Anglican Church of Ireland was disestablished in 1871.

This entry focuses on England and Northern Ireland—the latter could be argued to be the most divergent of the United Kingdom's components, and the former has been instrumental in the formation of not only contemporary Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales but also many elements of the modern world. Reference is made to Scotland and Wales when there are details or differences of particular note. Initially a brief history of the United Kingdom and religion within it is provided, with an emphasis on colonialism. Intensified immigration post-World War II and secularization in the 20th century are then considered. This leads on to a discussion of religion in the United Kingdom in the 21st century, focused on diversity and integration.

Religion and the United Kingdom: A Brief History

The United Kingdom is historically a place of immigration and emigration, with its tapestry of invasions, wars, and conquests. Roman, Saxon, Viking, and Norman influences interacted with indigenous cultures such as the Celtic. Prior to the Roman conquest, pagan practices were prevalent within what came to be known as the United Kingdom. Christianity began to develop in the region from the third century CE. Christian communities were established in Ireland from which members travelled to evangelize the mainland. In the sixth century, Augustine was sent out by Pope Gregory to evangelize what came to be known as Britain (England, Scotland, and Wales). The process of embedding was varied and uneven but so successful ultimately that the United Kingdom came to be identified with Christianity, and within it numerous denominations arose that have since spread internationally.

Britain remained loyal to the pope in Rome until the 16th century, when, following the Protestant Reformation in Europe and Pope Clement VII's refusal to grant King Henry VIII a divorce, the Church of England was established. At the same time, the Anglican Churches of Wales and Ireland were established. John Knox, influenced by John Calvin, preached equality of all

church members and was instrumental in the establishment of Presbyterianism in Scotland. The Church of Scotland also became linked to the state. Thus, the enduring relationship between church and state in the United Kingdom was cemented, though the monarch is not head of the Church of Scotland, as is the case with the Churches of England, Ireland, and Wales.

To this day, 26 bishops from the Church of England sit in the Upper Chamber of Parliament as Lords Spiritual. Henry VIII's daughter Queen Mary temporarily reinstated Roman Catholicism as the official religion, a prospect that reemerged and concerned Parliament periodically. However, from 1534, the Church of England was essentially the state religion, and Roman Catholics endured various restrictions and persecution, fueled by fear of the European Catholic powers, especially France. Pope John Paul II's visit to Britain in 1982 was historic as it was the first by a pope since the 1500s.

The 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries with their political and religious upheavals were pivotal to the formation of the United Kingdom. During this period, nonconformist Christian sects proliferated, including the Puritans, Quakers, and Levellers. Their degree of religious freedom varied over time, and some left the country to escape persecution. The Puritans took their ideals to Virginia and New England. Out of Puritanical reform grew the Baptist movement, which split in the early 1600s over the question of Jesus' atonement. The radical role that Dissenters, such as the Baptists, had played in the English Civil War (1642–1651) led to fearful reactions and the passing of anti-Dissenter laws. Jews are documented as living in England as far back as 1215 in the Magna Carta. The community, however, was expelled in 1290, returning only at the time of Oliver Cromwell. Their presence remains small.

Presbyterians clashed with Parliament in England, especially over the issue of episcopacy in the established church. Ulster Presbyterians of Scottish extraction in Northern Ireland remained in tension with the state. Scotland and England were already deeply connected politically and economically, but this was cemented in 1707 with the Act of Union, which enshrined Scotland's acceptance of the English monarch as its own in law. The act protected the royal succession and trade, though Scotland retained its own laws.

In 1660, Charles II of England was declared king in Ireland. During the reign of James I (1680s), Ireland became “re-Catholicized,” fueling fears of Catholic rebellion and papish plots and anti-Irish sentiment in mainland Britain. Catholic bishops and schools became outlawed, as they were in Scotland. Catholics were double taxed, though the late 1700s did see the loosening of restrictions on Catholics and Dissenters in the United Kingdom.

In Ireland, there were tensions between Catholics and Protestants and within Protestantism between unionists and nationalists. The 1798 Irish rebellion led to the death of 30,000 people and damage to the Ulster Presbyterians particularly. In 1801, following fears of Irish nationalism and French influence, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland was instituted, though this was never a stable union.

From the early 1700s, an evangelical revival began in England resulting in the rise of Methodism and voluntary mission societies. John Wesley, an Anglican clergyman, became highly critical of the established church. Wesley emphasized the power of the Holy Spirit and de-emphasized doctrinal conformity. His group formally separated from the Church of England in 1795. Methodism had a considerable impact in England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, leading to a “Great Awakening” in the latter. It also spread worldwide through the British Empire, particularly to America.

British colonization continued through the 18th century, with English, Irish, Scottish, and Welsh people involved in the process, including the military defense of British territory and interests. It is through the project of empire building that British identity really became formed. In 1792, Baptist William Carey founded the Baptist Mission Society, which became the blueprint throughout western Europe for the Protestant voluntary missionary society exporting Christianity.

The Century of Expansion

At its peak, the British Empire covered a huge swathe of the world’s surface with dominions, Crown colonies, and protectorates in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, and Oceania. Currently, the United Kingdom retains 14 overseas territories, and there are still 53 countries in the Commonwealth,

established in the late 19th century, 16 of which accept Queen Elisabeth II as their monarch. Industrialization, trade and commerce, scientific discovery, and competition with other European powers fed British overseas expansion. The churches participated in this process, engaging in international missions. The first Lambeth Conference, the decennial meeting of leaders from the Worldwide Anglican Communion, held in 1867 demonstrates the burgeoning consciousness of a global Anglican church.

Britons saw it as their Christian duty to bring the Gospel to and civilize the colonized peoples: the White man’s burden. Evangelicalism, with its emphasis on individual conversion and religious experience, facilitated the development of lay, voluntary missions. The churches, the Church of England in particular, became associated with the abolition of slavery, though it was the Evangelicals who finally pushed for it; their mission was thus associated with colonial imperialism.

The religious landscape changed at home as it did abroad. With rapid industrialization and consequent urbanization, the churches had to adapt to the presence of large, often impoverished populations in cities and towns. This fostered a large-scale and at times competitive church-building program and the further growth of Nonconformism, especially in Wales. In 1831, John Nelson Darby founded the Plymouth Brethren, with a strong emphasis on mission, baptism, and equality. William Booth founded the Salvation Army along military lines in 1878. These are two examples of British sects that developed in the 19th century and have survived into the 21st century. Interest in Eastern religions and spiritualism also grew.

In 1843, the “Disruption” occurred in the Church of Scotland, when many ministers and members left to found the Free Church of Scotland in protest over the political patronage of the clergy. The church’s authority to elect its own ministers was eventually reinstated in 1874.

Irish Catholic disaffection grew, especially with the British government’s deplorable handling of the Great Famine (1845–1852), during which the Irish population decreased by 25%. Numerous Irish people migrated to mainland Britain and beyond, leading to the establishment of an Irish diaspora, notably in the New World. The Irish Catholic nationalist movement grew, and the

Irish War of Independence (1919–1921) led to the partitioning of Ireland. Twenty-six southern counties became the Irish Free State, while six northern counties remained under British rule. Northern Irish Protestants wished to establish Northern Ireland as a Protestant state despite the residence of Catholics in the newly created nation.

Hence, the 19th century closed and the 20th opened with the British government controlling a vast empire but losing control of much of Ireland. England was the seat of power, and there was prejudice against Irish, Scottish, and Welsh people as well as racism against people in the colonies.

Migration and Secularization

Migration and secularization are key processes affecting religion in the United Kingdom in the 20th century. It is clear that a variety of Christian groups have existed within the United Kingdom for centuries. Other religious groups such as the Jewish community have also been present historically. However, the range and size of non-Christian groups increased with post-World War II immigration, mainly from the (former) British colonies. Following the Great Depression, two world wars, and resistance movements in colonies, extensive decolonization began. At the same time, the depleted labor force was insufficient for post-war reconstruction. Hence, labor was imported. People from within the Commonwealth were free to migrate to the United Kingdom, and many came from Africa and the Indian subcontinent, including Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs. With the 1962 Immigration Act, such immigration was severely restricted and a process of consolidation began as families settled in the United Kingdom began to seek more permanent religious provision, leading to the construction of more temples and mosques. Difficulties separating ethnicity and religion arose in legislation, and new arrivals encountered discrimination.

Simultaneously, Christian participation began to decline. Callum Brown states that at least 44% of the Scottish population had a formal church connection in 1939, which had shrunk to 27% in 1994. Though in the 19th and 20th centuries Wales was known for its religious enthusiasm, since then organized religion has declined faster in Wales than anywhere else. It is only in Northern

Ireland that church membership figures have remained relatively high.

The British picture of decreasing Christian participation is attributed to various factors, including modernization, increase in leisure time, consumerism, and the sexual revolution of the 1960s. The church population in Britain is shrinking, ageing, and overwhelmingly female (though the number of women belonging to churches is also decreasing). Yet Grace Davie has nuanced this picture, highlighting the variations between different indicators of religiosity: Church attendance and membership are declining at a far faster rate than belief. Also, as will be seen, some churches are growing in the 21st century.

Northern Ireland

Strongly felt sectarian divisions between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland have contributed to its enduringly high rates of church membership. They led to violence in the 1960s and the institution of British Direct Rule in 1972. The 1998 Good Friday Agreement laid the foundations for the present power-sharing government and peace in the country.

The 21st Century

Questions about religion were administered in the national censuses of England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland in 2001 after lobbying, particularly by religious groups, to reintroduce them. The aggregated results for Great Britain give 71.8% of the population as Christian, 15.1% as having no religion, 2.8% as Muslim, 1.0% as Hindu, 0.6% as Sikh, 0.5% as Jewish, 0.3% as Buddhist, and 0.3% as following other religions (7.4% did not state a religion). The fact that other national surveys have found a much lower proportion of Christians led to a critique of the census. It is generally thought that the timing of the census and placing of the question on religion in the English and Welsh census caused people to coalesce their religious, national, and ethnic identities, identifying themselves as British and Christian as opposed to Muslim. It is true that a dramatically smaller percentage of the British population go to church on a Sunday: 6.7% in 2005, according to Peter Brierley.

Black Christians who migrated to the United Kingdom post–World War II from the Caribbean and Africa found themselves rejected by the mainline denominations. Hence, they established their own, often Pentecostal-Charismatic, churches. In the 21st century, Black-majority churches are growing, along with White-majority evangelical and Pentecostal-Charismatic churches and Orthodox churches. The United Kingdom joined the European Union (EU) in 1973, and the 21st century expansion of the EU has led to an influx of migrants from new eastern European accession states, especially Poland, prompting the Catholic Church in the United Kingdom to increase provision for them. However, there are already indications that this form of migration is likely to be temporary.

The Church of England has suffered a marked decline in numbers. In 1998, there was controversy over the decision to admit female priests, and the Lambeth Conferences of 1998 and 2008 were dominated by a divide in the Worldwide Anglican Communion over the issue of homosexual clergy.

The number of active Christians in the United Kingdom may be declining, but mainline denominations continue to predominate in the state-funded armed forces, hospital, prison chaplaincies, and faith school system, though other faiths are increasingly represented.

Faith Schools

In England, there are 6,867 faith schools maintained by the state. The Church of England controls most of these, Roman Catholics have charge of about half as many, and far fewer are in the hands of Jewish, Muslim, Sikh, and Hindu groups (in descending order). In Scotland, there are 395 state-maintained faith schools, most of which are Roman Catholic. There are 263 in Wales, mostly run by the Church of Wales, followed by Roman Catholics. Finally, Northern Ireland has a total of 988 state-maintained faith schools, of which most are Roman Catholic and almost as many are “controlled schools,” the latter being Presbyterian, Church of Ireland, and Methodist. (These data were reported on March 10, 2009, in the document “Faith Schools: Admissions and Performance.”)

These numbers give a good indication of the persistence of Anglican and Catholic influence in

education, and the variation between nations within the United Kingdom. The establishment of more state-funded Muslim schools has been the catalyst for renewed debate about the validity of faith schools. Some believe that Roman Catholic and Protestant schools in Scotland and Northern Ireland have contributed to the perpetuation of sectarian divisions in these countries. This debate relates to the perceived “failure of multiculturalism” in contemporary British society and points up the particular focus on Islam within the discussion of this failure.

Islam

The British Muslim population is mainly concentrated in English cities. Incidents such as the “Paki bashing” in the 1980s, the 1989 Rushdie Affair (during which the British government refused to protect Muslims by extending an archaic law, ultimately repealed in 2008, that protected Christians from charges of blasphemy), and riots in northeast England involving young Muslim men indicated the fact that the relationship between Muslims and the wider British society could be contentious.

The bombings in London on July 7, 2005, and subsequent terrorist attempts raised both fears and questions, especially because the perpetrators were Muslims born and raised in the United Kingdom. Muslims are consistently negatively portrayed in the media, and many report feeling excluded, discriminated against, and non-British. Following international terrorist attacks by members of Muslim extremist groups, new immigration laws and policies have been introduced, making it more difficult to enter the United Kingdom. There has also been discussion of British values in the public sphere and controversies over religious dress. As a result, debate about religious freedom, freedom of expression, and pluralism has been reignited in the United Kingdom.

Religious Freedom

The 1998 Human Rights Act incorporated the European Convention on Human Rights into (English) law, protecting both individual and group rights to practice or change a religion. The Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations of 2003 and the 2006 Equality Act prohibit discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief in

employment and the provision of goods and services. However, Baha'is, Jehovah's Witnesses, Muslims, and Quakers all report experiencing social stigma, because the requirements of their faiths prevent participation in common social practices. There are complaints of ignorance and hostility as well as physical and verbal abuse from some members of minority religious groups.

Some groups, such as Scientology, are refused recognition by the Charities Commission (the government body that grants religious groups official status). The controversial Race and Religious Hatred Act of 2006, the introduction of protest exclusion zones, and the invocation of antiterror legislation to restrict peaceful demonstration, particularly against the Iraq War, have been seen as suppressing dissent and activism in the United Kingdom. The London riots in August 2011 were regarded by some observers as a protest against the marginalization of lower-class and immigrant communities.

Christianity is of enduring significance in the United Kingdom. It remains the foundation of British legal systems, and the Churches of England and Scotland remain established. There has been discussion of removing the Lords Spiritual from the House of Lords, but thus far, there has been no action. The Archbishop of Canterbury (the highest authority in the Anglican Church) has argued that these bishops serve as representatives of all faiths within the United Kingdom. He and other Anglican prelates speak publicly on a range of issues. The political and the religious spheres are not entirely separate in the United Kingdom, and accommodating the diverse religious groups now present within it is challenging. The religious landscape of this composite nation-state, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, continues to mutate. Some religious groups, such as Methodists, shrink, while others, such as Pentecostals, grow. Non-Christian religious groups remain relatively small. Against a backdrop of increased and sometimes hysterical media coverage, continued migration, and shifting regulation, the future of religion in the United Kingdom remains both interesting and difficult to predict.

Rebecca Catto

See also England; Enlightenment; Northern Ireland; Politics and Religion; Religion and State; Religious Nationalism; Scotland; Secularization; Wales

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UNITED NATIONS

The world's preeminent international organization, the United Nations (UN), has played a role in almost every major international controversy since World War II. Its primary forums are the Security Council, with its five permanent members, and the General Assembly, which includes all the nations of the world. The UN's primary functions include the pursuit of collective security, peacekeeping, weapons inspections, the promotion of economic development, global health initiatives, and humanitarian assistance such as famine relief and responding to natural disasters. Its many agencies are also involved in protecting religious, cultural, and historical sites of interest, and the UN has provided a forum for negotiation of disputes between nations as well as for interstate and ethnoreligious conflicts.

Because of the imperial and colonial nature of the world prior to the advent of the UN in 1945, its predecessor organization, the League of Nations (1919–1945) with its original 29 members, was largely made up of European and Latin American nations. The membership of the UN (1945–), however, includes nations from all over the world representing all the major religions. At its inception in 1945, the 51 founding states of the UN consisted of 42 predominantly Christian states of various denominations; seven predominantly Muslim nations; a nation with a substantial Buddhist population, China, which also joined as a permanent member of the Security Council; and the predominantly Hindu state of India, which was allowed to join in 1945 despite not obtaining complete independence from Britain until 1947. The Jewish state of Israel joined in 1949. Today, the UN's 192 member nations represent an estimated 6 billion people worldwide. Of these, approximately 2 billion (33%) are Christians of various denominations; an estimated 1.2 billion (20%) are Muslims; Hindus constitute 800 million (14%); Buddhists, 300 million (5%); and Jews, approximately 14 million (0.2%).

U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt's proclamation of the Four Freedoms in January 1941 defined "freedom of religion" as one of the chief principles the Allies were fighting for during World War II. This also became one of the foundational ideals of the future UN. One year later, the Declaration of the United Nations of January 1942 defined "religious freedom" as one of the primary war aims of the "United Nations" alliance. These principles related to religious freedom shaped the UN Charter drafted in 1945. The charter (Article 1, Paragraph 3; Chapter IX, Article 55[c]) called for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion and explicitly rejected all forms of discrimination based on religion. Freedom of religion was also defined as one of the principles underlying the creation and composition of the General Assembly (Chapter IV, Article 13). The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights further enshrined freedom of religion. And, in 1981, the General Assembly passed the Declaration on the Elimination of Religious Intolerance. More recently, in the wake of the widespread destruction of mosques and churches during the Balkan wars

of the 1990s and the Afghan government's toppling of the giant Buddha statues at Bamiyan (a UNESCO World Heritage Site) in 2001, the UN General Assembly passed the Protection of Religious Sites (May 2001), calling on governments and international organizations to take responsibility for the protection of religious and cultural treasures. Moreover, combating religious discrimination has remained a top priority on the agenda of UN Human Rights Commission and its successor the Human Rights Council.

Christopher Dion O'Sullivan

See also Global Religion; Politics and Religion; Religion and State; Religions and World Federation; Religious Dialogue; Religious Freedom; Religious Nationalism

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Religion in the United States historically was, and continues to be, shaped by the continuous inflow of new immigrants, their cultures, and their religious traditions. Moreover, a voluntary religious order and a rapidly changing sociocultural environment combine to make religion here dynamic and fluid; sensitive to individual needs and preferences as a means of recruiting followers; responsive to shifts in public opinion; this-worldly oriented and socially activist; diverse in styles, beliefs, and practices, especially within major traditions; yet also creative not just in its capacity to adapt to varying social environments but also in mobilizing people and resources in support of benevolent causes. All this means that American religion ("American" as short for the United States) is a work in progress, always evolving. For this reason, visitors to this country since the time of de Tocqueville have come away with so many differing, and at times conflicting, impressions of its religion, deeply enmeshed within the culture and of the culture enmeshed within it. "Observers of American religion regularly need to map the terrain," according to the historian Martin Marty (1976, p. 18). "Its bewildering pluralism, they soon learn resists a single or permanent outline." In the following section, this entry discusses the major religious traditions in the United States, regional patterns, polarized religion, and civil religion.

Major Religious Traditions

No map is more important than that of the major religious traditions and how they are changing over time. Protestant Christians were, and still are, the largest of the religious constituencies; the most influential historically of all the faith traditions culturally and politically, their numbers are now declining. Today, they represent just slightly more than 50% of the total population. Denominationally, the largest Protestant constituencies are the Southern Baptists and United Methodists. Overall, the more significant division among Protestants at present is “evangelical” versus “mainline,” a distinction important theologically, socially, and politically. Old Protestant traditions such as Presbyterians, Lutherans, Methodists, the United Church of Christ, American Baptists, and others shaped by historic theology, liturgy, and practice and culturally established in the past make up the mainline; Evangelicals, both as distinct religious bodies and as self-identified individuals, some of whom happen to be in mainline denominations, emphasize to a greater degree experiential faith, personal morality, and the individual’s relationship with God. Drawing on the Pew Religious Landscape Survey, a huge national survey of self-reported religious affiliations in 2007, evangelical Protestants (mainly White, variously described as Born-Again, Pentecostal, Charismatic, Holiness, Fundamentalist) accounted for 26.3% of the American population, whereas mainline Protestants represented 18.1%. Evangelicals are on average younger, better at keeping their children and youth within the faith, more diverse racially and ethnically, less educated, and less privileged financially; however, over the past 50 years, they have experienced considerable upward mobility.

The same survey indicated that Roman Catholics make up an additional 23.9% of the population. They are a growing constituency, largely because of the influx of Hispanics from Mexico, Cuba, and many other Central and South American countries. Twenty-nine percent of American Catholics today are Latin American, significant not just demographically but because of the transformations they are bringing about within an older, largely Irish and German style of Catholicism. Other Christian groups include the historically Black churches (6.9%), Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Mormons) (1.7%), Jehovah’s

Witness (0.7%), Orthodox Christians (0.6%), and Other Christians (0.3%). All combined, the self-reported Christian population in the United States is roughly 79%, or somewhat more than three fourths of the American population.

The Jewish population is small, perhaps even smaller now than it was three or four decades ago (1.7%), and is mostly of the Reform tradition. Despite the huge influx of immigrants from around the globe since the immigration policy was liberalized in 1965, the relative sizes of the new immigrant faith communities remain quite small: Buddhist 0.7%, Muslim 0.6% (mostly Sunnī), Hindu 0.4%, and other world religions 0.3%. There is some dispute over exact numbers for Muslims, Sikhs, and some others, but probability sample surveys are generally more reliable for profiling faith communities than the membership statistics reported by the religious organizations themselves. The impact of these diverse populations religiously and culturally on the United States is far more important than their actual numbers. Growing Asian, Middle Eastern, and Latin American populations are diversifying the country, especially considering that within each of these are various ethnic, language, regional, and nationality subgroups. As many religion scholars have noted, Latin American immigrants are “Latinizing” the country, particularly the Catholic population; Muslims, Buddhists, Sikhs, Hindus, and others are “de-Christianizing” it; and Christian immigrants, who are the majority actually of all recent immigrants, are “de-Europeanizing” the many Protestant and Catholic communities.

Small religious groups of all kinds, especially in the theosophical, New Thought, and mystical traditions, continue to flourish. “Other faiths,” according to the Pew Survey, account for only 1.2%, the largest identified being Unitarian Universalists and self-declared New Agers. The influence of these traditions, too, is greater than their numbers would suggest, since Americans rather freely mix and match beliefs and spiritual themes across historic traditions. Belief in reincarnation, yoga and other meditation practices, astrology, and self-help means of tapping spiritual energy easily blend with more commonly held Judeo-Christian beliefs and practices.

The nonaffiliated sector has grown considerably in the past several decades—estimated at 16.1%.

This is a diverse grouping of several, somewhat distinct subgroups: atheists, agnostics, seekers, secularists, “believers but not belongers,” those claiming to be “spiritual but not religious,” and still others who while not affiliated with, or only peripherally involved with, any religious group say that they are religious in some personal way. There is no singular, widely encompassing rhetoric by which those within this heterogeneous sector define themselves or talk about such matters. An open, fluid constituency at any moment in time, many are recruited into religious faiths and spiritual practices, while just as many, if not more, drop out and/or pursue other possibilities. Curious Americans move in and out of active religious life and from one group to another as their personal circumstances change; short-term involvement and commitments are not uncommon. Perhaps fair to say, many within this constituency have a better sense of who they are not than who they are insofar as ultimate matters are concerned. A highly pluralist society such as the United States offers people the opportunity for thinking through their choices and to some degree fashioning their own personal meaning system as they journey and at times temporarily dwell “in, with, through, and against the religious idioms including (often enough) those not explicitly their own,” as the religious scholar Robert Orsi (1997, p. 7) puts it.

Regional Patterns

Generalizing to the country blurs some important religious differences across regions. And because religion in a fluid, voluntary order is closely associated with, and often legitimates, social mores, values, and political cultures, this entire cultural complex easily varies from one local setting to another. A 2008 book with the provocative title *One Nation, Divisible: How Religious Differences Shape American Politics*, summarizing the results of a large study conducted by Mark Silk and Andrew Walsh, identifies seven important regional cultures.

Beginning with the South, known for its low-church evangelical Protestantism, the major groupings are Southern Baptists, Pentecostals, Charismatic and Holiness people, and those within the historic African American denominations. Many mainliners in the region as well—Methodists in particular—are evangelical in outlook and practice. But not

counting these latter, the above combination accounts for 63% of all religious adherents within the region. White southern Evangelicals tend to be strong supporters of conservative politicians, for whom “family values” rhetoric is common.

Going westward across the country along the Mexican border is the Southern Crossroads region, with Texas at its center, which is populated largely by White Baptists and Catholics, half of whom are Hispanic, and less by Pentecostals, Charismatic and Holiness people, many of whom are Hispanic Protestants. Religiously, it is the most homogeneous region in the country, with relatively small numbers of non-Christians, though these latter populations are growing in urban areas. It is the most “churched” region, in the sense of having religious affiliations, and one of the most politically conservative.

Still further west, and extending upward to the Canadian border, is the vast mountain region. In the southern states of Arizona and New Mexico are concentrations of Catholics, both of Spanish descent and Hispanic, and White Protestants who migrated to the Sunbelt. Utah is two-thirds Mormon; Idaho’s largest group is Mormon, followed by Catholics. Wyoming, Montana, and Colorado have more Catholics than any other single religious constituency, but relatively there are large constituencies of the unaffiliated in these states as well. Politically, the region for the most part is conservative.

The Pacific region of California, Nevada, and Hawai‘i is diverse religiously but is dominated by Catholics, constituting 29% of the population. Nevada and California have absorbed masses of immigrants from Latin countries—accounting now for about 60% of the Catholic population—and from around the world. Jews, Mormons, Muslims, and Buddhists are overrepresented relative to their representation in the United States as a whole. More people identify with Eastern religions here than with any single mainline Protestant denomination, unlike in any other part of the country. The unaffiliated sector in Nevada is 61%; in Hawai‘i, 55%; and in California, 46%. The region is characterized by cultural and lifestyle pluralism, fluid identities, and progressive politics relative to other areas in the western region.

The Pacific Northwest stands out for having the lowest religious adherence in the country—Oregon

at 35%, Washington at 38%, and Alaska at 40%. Catholics dominate but with only slightly more than 11% of the entire population, followed by Pentecostals, Holiness, and other conservative religious groups at 9%. Eastern religions have more followers than any one mainline Protestant denomination except for Lutherans. The two most populous states—Washington and Oregon—are known for environmentalism, nature-based spirituality, and moderate to liberal politics, while Alaska in contrast is more conservative ideologically.

Moving back eastward on the upper border, there is the Midwest, described by these authors as “the most balanced region in the country,” in the sense that its religious and non-affiliated profile is more similar to the overall national average than that of any other region. The greatest exception are the mainline Protestants, who have a stronger presence here than within the country as a whole, especially Lutherans, who are widely present throughout Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, and the Dakotas. Religious adherence is quite high, even higher in some places than in the South. Reflecting its “mainstream ethos,” the region is mixed ideologically but leans in the moderate direction.

The Middle Atlantic is also highly churchied relative to the rest of the country. About half of its religious adherents are Catholic, having more European than Latin cultural backgrounds. Proportionately, there are more Jews and also more Muslims, including high numbers of African American Muslims, in the region, and mainline Protestants outnumber Evangelicals by more than two to one—both features reflecting an older and persisting ethnoreligious context. Middle Atlantic political styles are very much colored by local environments and on the whole are ideologically moderate.

Finally, there is New England. Once the land of Puritans, today it is the most Catholic of all the regions. Here, mainline Protestants outnumber evangelical Protestants, and it is the only region where African American Protestants outnumber White Evangelicals. Still, it is the least Protestant of all the regions. Asian religions have grown significantly since the 1960s: Buddhists especially in Vermont and Hindus and Muslims in the southern states of Connecticut and Massachusetts. Some of the rural areas in the northern states have huge proportions unaffiliated—more than 50% in parts of New Hampshire and Maine; overall the region’s

unaffiliated rate is 38.5%. Politically, it is moderate to liberal.

Polarized Religion

Another religious mapping not to be overlooked today is that of conservative versus progressive faith and ideology. Not just Protestants, but all the major religious constituencies and many smaller ones are internally divided over moral and family-based issues. Since the days of Ronald Reagan, when evangelical Protestants and traditionalist Catholics became more aligned with the Republican Party, this alignment has continued and was particularly evident during the presidency of George W. Bush. Various developments coalesced here, creating a highly polarized religious context. One is that political conservatives co-opted religious language and advanced “value voters” rhetoric at a time when progressives had difficulty doing so for fear of losing nonreligious and more liberal religious voters. A second is that controversial issues such as abortion and gay rights were, and remain, highly divisive and thus pose a challenge for politicians in how best to address them. A third is that religious beliefs, values, and symbols are carefully framed by political candidates, especially in presidential politics, in a more deliberate and calculated manner now than ever before. “God-talk” has come to play a considerable role in politics, particularly by skilled conservative organizers who are very effective in developing social networks and special-purpose organizations for advancing partisan politics, often in ways blurring the lines between the religious and the political. These developments must be understood in the larger context of the so-called culture wars, which have received considerable attention. Emerging as a backlash to the moral and political freedom of the 1960s and early 1970s, the conservative movement in the years since has viewed itself as involved in a battle for the soul of the nation. The “culture wars” paradigm posits a deep cleavage between fundamentalists, Evangelicals, and religious conservatives generally, who constitute one camp, and religious liberals, humanists, and secularists, who constitute the other. Because the two are deeply divided in their views on moral authority and fundamental sources of truth, communication between the two is at best strained and at worst incommensurate,

with middle positions on policy difficult if not impossible to achieve. Conservatives locate authority in transcendent sources and privilege biblical text and divine revelation as opposed to scientific and evolutionary explanations; progressives see authority arising out of social arrangements and as a result of the coercive power of dominant groups especially and, thus, tend to see texts, teachings, and moral codes as humanly constructed and often at stake. The former often worry about greater moral relativism and institutional collapse in a secular world, whereas the latter stress individual rights and opportunities to become fully self-actualized. While this paradigm of a polarized nation is easily overdrawn and often exaggerated by social activists and the media, still it points to some highly contested social issues for the nation, around which religious and political energies come together in support of one or other ideological position. The family as a social institution particularly is a lightning rod in this clash of views. A host of seemingly irresolvable issues continue to attract public debate, such as male authority, gender roles, abortion, women's reproductive rights, gay marriage, stem cell research, parent-child relations, and, even more fundamentally, the definition of family itself. Increased numbers of single mothers and gay partners raising children help bring these issues into greater public focus.

Civil Religion

The nation's civil religion—that set of myths, beliefs, texts, and rituals used for interpreting national identity and purpose in relation to the transcendent—is itself deeply conflicted. While this has always been the case to some extent, in recent times, tensions have reached a high level. More than simply occasions for a few references to God and somber reflection, presidential inaugurations seem to have emerged as staging grounds for elaborating a particular civil religious perspective. George W. Bush's inaugurations conveyed a distinct Christian tone and drew on old myths of an innocent and millennial nation, one chosen by God to be a shining light and to carry freedom to the world; in the 2005 Inaugural Address alone, he invoked the words *freedom*, *free*, and *liberty* 49 times. In contrast, Barack Obama in the 2009 inauguration spoke of “a nation of Christians and

Muslims, Jews and Hindus, and non-believers.” The juxtaposition of “Christians” with “Muslims” projected the vision of a much more diverse nation and undercut the notion of the country as having a singular normative faith; and including “non-believers” in the inaugural address points to his effort at building a genuinely pluralist society, the religious and nonreligious united through bonds of civility, each recognizing and respecting the other.

American civil religion faces all the challenges that arise in the “culture wars” debate described above. But apart from these moral and ethical controversies, greater religious diversity poses its own challenges: how to expand the civil religious canopy and legitimating myths beyond their historic Judeo-Christian formulation and to include a more global religious symbolism. Religious versus secular interpretations of the nation will continue as well to provoke heated debate. Civil religious symbols and interpretations push in an inclusive direction, but here the challenge is especially difficult: how to envision and then forge a rhetoric of a common humanity appealing to universal values, many people saying this goes too far and abandons too much of historic religious content and others applauding these efforts as a means of unifying the country. Then there is the question of whether the country will have a civil religion with any prophetic force, that is, capable of calling on the nation to live up to its best ideals, to do more than simply justify its own political and economic interests. Related as well is America's role in global capitalism and the possibility that the country will be known mainly in other countries for its exports, all too easily wrapped in the rhetoric of salvation—“its goods, gadgets, and God-talk, all seemingly bound up together under the label of ‘Made in the United States’” (Roof & Caron, 2006, p. 131).

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See also North America; Religious Nationalism

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UNITY MOVEMENT

Founded in the late 1880s in Kansas City, Missouri, by Charles and Myrtle Fillmore, the Unity movement grew into perhaps the most influential New Thought group in the United States in the 20th century. It is best known for its teachings on positive thinking, mental healing, and financial prosperity.

Charles and Myrtle Fillmore began their advocacy of mental healing soon after Myrtle reported successfully healing herself of tuberculosis by repeatedly affirming that as “a child of God” she did not “inherit sickness.” The Fillmores began publishing a series of magazines devoted to mental healing and metaphysical religion that, by the mid-1890s, were consolidated into *Unity Magazine*. In 1890, at Myrtle’s suggestion, they began an organization to provide prayer support to those who wrote in for help, which later became known as “Silent Unity.” In 1891, the Fillmores were ordained as ministers by Emma Curtis Hopkins, a former student of Christian Science founder Mary Baker Eddy and the teacher of many of the first generation of New Thought teachers.

The Fillmores focused on using publications to spread their vision to all who would listen, regardless of their church affiliation. Throughout the late 19th and 20th centuries, Unity publications advocated the use of the latent powers of the mind to achieve spiritual well-being, physical health, and financial prosperity while maintaining a

generally Christian-centered vocabulary and altruistic emphasis. Bible passages tended to be interpreted allegorically, while Jesus was conceived of as a human who had found the inner spark of divinity in himself and taught others to do the same. Numerous other early New Thought writers contributed to the Fillmores’ efforts. The most influential of these was the New York homeopathic physician H. Emilie Cady, who in 1895 wrote a series of lessons that soon were collected into book form as *Lessons in Truth*, which became Unity’s introductory textbook and has sold more than 1.5 million copies.

Today, the Unity movement has two major organizational entities: the Unity School of Christianity and the Association of Unity Churches. The Unity School of Christianity, based in Lee’s Summit, Missouri, oversees publication activities, numerous educational retreats and seminars, and the prayer services of Silent Unity. In addition to *Unity Magazine*, the Unity School publishes the *Daily Word*, a magazine that focuses on daily inspirational interpretations of Scripture. It is published in eight languages and has a worldwide circulation of 91,000. Silent Unity provides prayer support to more than 1.5 million telephone callers annually, with 13 affiliates worldwide operating in English, Spanish, and French. The other major entity is the Association of Unity Churches, which organizes the activities of 875 Unity churches, 211 of them outside the United States.

Although Unity has been attacked as heretical by conservative Christian groups, its publications have been read by many who never formally identified with the New Thought movement. It has thus been one source of the spread of “health and wealth” ideas among Christians worldwide, even as many of Unity’s congregants and writers gravitate toward metaphysical and “New Age” religious orientations.

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See also Unitarians; United States of America

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UNIVERSALISM

See Unitarians

URUGUAY

Uruguay is located in South America between Argentina and Brazil. Its official name is Oriental Republic of Uruguay, and its inhabitants are also referred to as “Orientals.” Uruguayan society resulted from the confluence of several cultures and ethnicities. The presence of pirates, corsairs, and illegal traders from Holland, France, and England was related to their interest in cattle for the production of leather. Along with some Iberians, they joined the native peoples and thus originated a unique culturally and racially *metizo* population, the Gauchos. Their religiosity was tenuous, although some sectors were influenced by the Jesuit and Franciscan missions of the 18th century. A slave market operated in Montevideo, and a fraction of the national population was brought from Africa during the initial years of the colonization.

Not only was Uruguay Spain’s last colonization effort in the continent, but the singularity of the nation was also propitiated by migratory waves from different parts of Europe, which intensified immediately after the establishment of an independent republic in 1830. A strong presence of the British in the regional politics and economy was associated with a settlement of British people in Uruguay and the foundation of the first English church in South America. Since the second half of the 19th century, Protestants were recognized, with Waldensians migrated from northern Italy, Reformed Swiss, and German Lutherans. Although the Uruguayan Catholic Church shares some of the features of Latin American Catholicism, it has been

neither as powerful nor as strongly connected with the state. The first system of public schools was established in 1870. It was well spread, nonconfessional, free, and compulsory. During the same period, the university diffused the doctrines of positivism. The 1919 constitution strengthened cultural secularization and the lay or nonconfessional state.

Today, the percentages of religious affiliation are 47%–51% Catholics, 17.2% nonbelievers, 11% Protestants and Pentecostals, 23.2% believers affiliated to no church, and 1.3% other traditions (African descendants, Jews, and Muslims). These figures show not only the diversity of religious affiliations but also the increasing secularization of Uruguay.

Uruguay is located east of the Uruguay River, which, along with River Plate in the south, divides it from Argentina. It also borders with Brazil on the northeastern corner. Geography has affected Uruguayan history since the beginning of its European colonization, as a territory that has been claimed first by the Spanish and the Portuguese and later by the Argentineans and the Brazilians. Attempting to secure an entrance to the continent via the rivers Plate, Uruguay, and Paraná, the Portuguese founded Colonia del Sacramento in 1680 and therein erected the country’s first Christian church. Around 1730, the Portuguese were replaced by the Spanish, who founded Montevideo. The national territory measures 176,200 square kilometers and consists of fertile plains with low hills, used as pasture lands for European livestock. The development of this economic sector began in the 16th century, before the intensive colonization of the country during the 18th century.

Ana Maria Bidegain

See also Postcolonialism

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UZBEKISTAN

With a population of 27 million, Uzbekistan is Central Asia’s most populous country. Bordered by

Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Afghanistan, Uzbekistan is a doubly landlocked, arid country, rich in natural gas but lacking the water supply needed to sustainably support the extensive cotton farming. Ethnically homogeneous, 80% of the population is Uzbek, and almost 90% self-identify as Sunnī (Hanafi) Muslims. Russians who did not emigrate postindependence in 1991 live primarily in the capital, Tashkent, and religiously identify with Russian Orthodox Christianity. The once sizable Jewish population, concentrated in Bukhara, has dwindled, with most Jews having emigrated to Israel or the United States.

The territory of contemporary Uzbekistan consisted of a number of khanates that were centers of trade and periodic conflict. The Bukharan Khanate was a center of Islamic learning since the ninth century and home to Muhammad ibn Ismail al-Bukhari, compiler of the most authoritative Hadith collection. Other important Muslim figures from Bukhara include Baha-ud-Din Naqshband Bukhari, namesake of the Naqshabandi Sufi order, and Ibn Sina (Avicenna). During this period, the khan was the supreme leader, whose rule was seen as Islamic because he afforded the ulema an elite status. The khanates, however, were not considered Islamic states in the contemporary sense of the term; Islam was an unquestioned part of life, and disputes were often resolved within a milieu characterized as custom and tradition.

As the various khanates came under Russian control in the mid- to late 19th century, Uzbek autonomy gave way to colonial rule, and the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic was established in 1924. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the Jadids sought to reform Islam through encouraging modernist approaches to education and religion,

which resulted in clashes with traditionalist Muslim leaders. Both groups, however, resisted colonial rule and had conflicts first with the Russian and later with the Soviet authorities. In 1943, the Muslim Spiritual Directorates were established both to integrate socialist teachings and to control the propagation of Islamic learning. In the final assessment, the Soviet apparatus was successful in disrupting formal religious educational training.

In 1991, Uzbekistan gained independence and began promoting Islam as part of developing a national identity. This included the rehabilitation of shrines as historic sites associated with Uzbek heritage and the encouragement of a secular Islam perceived as unthreatening to the government. Under President Islam Karimov, however, there has been a general sense of religious restriction and persecution of orthodox and orthopraxic Muslims. Thus, the vast percentage of the population that embraces Islam faces the challenge of balancing its religious interests with the threat of persecution and dissatisfaction with the state.

David W. Montgomery

See also Islam; Religious Nationalism; Russian Federation

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VAISHNAVISM

As commonly understood, Vaishnavism is a prototypical form of Hinduism focusing on Vishnu (or His many manifestations and incarnations) as the Supreme Being. It is a form of monotheism that perceives other deities as subordinate, viewing them as demigods, angels, or empowered beings. Vaishnavism claims many millions of adherents, for it is the most widely practiced form of Hinduism in the Indian subcontinent.

While Vaishnavas acknowledge the Vedic idea that the many gods are just various faces of the Brahman (“Ultimate Reality”), they also assert that Brahman has an “original” face—the one belonging to Vishnu. A clarifying metaphor might run as follows: Just as one candle can be used to light others, and just as all candles thus lit would hold the same potency, so, too, is Vishnu the source of all divine emanations, even if these emanations are also various forms of the Supreme.

To avoid misconceptions about the esoteric truths concerning Vishnu, the texts advise affiliation and study with established lineages of knowledge, of which four stand out as representative of the rest: The Rudra, Sri, Kumara, and Brahma Sampradayas. These lineages have numerous offshoots and branches.

Once knowledge is received through any of these established lineages, several articles of faith unfold as a matter of course. Though these articles have been expressed in numerous ways, they are perhaps

best summed up by the 19th-century Vaishnava theologian Bhaktivinoda Thakur (1838–1914), as follows:

1. Vaishnavism sees itself not as a sectarian religion but as *Sanatana Dharma*, or the eternal righteous order. In other words, all religions are but various expressions of Vaishnavism, to greater or lesser degrees. The soul is by nature an eternal servant of Vishnu (or Krishna, Rama, Allah, Jehovah, and/or other manifestations of God, depending on the lineage, tradition, or religion with which one identifies).

2. God manifests variously—(a) as an impersonal abstraction, (b) as the soul of the universe, and (c) as the Supreme Person in His spiritual kingdom. He also appears in deity form—that is, as the image worshipped in the temple—and He often interacts with humankind in the form of his many incarnations (*avatars*), as already mentioned.

3. Krishna, or Vishnu (or one of His direct incarnations), is the Supreme form of the Godhead.

4. Vishnu possesses infinite and multifarious energies, which are briefly mentioned in the world’s sacred literature but are more fully described in the Vedic and Puranic texts of ancient India.

5. The souls of this world are part of Vishnu’s energies—they are technically called His “separated parts”—and their proper function is to serve Him and to develop love for Him.

6. Certain souls are engrossed in Vishnu's illusory energy, which is considered His "material energy" (*maya*). By the practice of Vaishnavism, they can free themselves from the grip of such an all-encompassing illusion.

7. All spiritual and material phenomena are simultaneously one with and yet different from the Lord.

8. Krishna, among all manifestations of Vishnu, is an ocean of intimacy, and one can derive the highest bliss by becoming reestablished in one's eternal relationship with Him, which is now dormant.

9. "Devotional service" (*Bhakti yoga*) is the mystical path by which one can enter into a relationship with God—it supersedes all pious action, the cultivation of knowledge, and various mystical endeavors, such as yoga and meditation (though in its practice it subsumes various forms of yogic mysticism). The science of this holy devotion is detailed in scriptures such as the *Bhagavad Gita* and the *Bhagavata Purana*, but it is chiefly understood by associating with devotees who carry it in their hearts. The central practices of this path include singing the praises of God, chanting His names in a regulated fashion, offering food to Him as a sacrament of devotion, and worshipping His image in the temple or in one's home.

10. Pure love of God alone is the ultimate fruit of the spiritual journey, and it is the essence of Vaishnava thought.

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See also Hinduism; India

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that is found in Tibet, Mongolia, Bhutan, parts of Nepal, and the Indian state of Sikkim. The analogy to a diamond reflects the indestructibility of its methods. Its practitioners believe it to be the most powerful, most effective, most advanced, and most dangerous Buddhist path. According to its adherents, Vajrayana is superior to its precedents, Hinayana ("Lesser Vehicle," also known as Theravada) and Mahayana ("Greater Vehicle"). This entry discusses the history and philosophy of Vajrayana Buddhism, as well as the tantras, mantras, deities, ritual practice, and distinctive features of Tibetan Vajrayana.

History

Vajrayana Buddhism was being practiced in India in the sixth century CE. Its distinct sets of practices and scriptures developed outside the monastic context and early Vajrayana may have been at least partially motivated as a form of protest against the elitism and exclusivity of monastic Buddhism. In contrast to lineages that emphasize asceticism or withdrawal from worldly life, Vajrayana practices engage the social and physical realities of our existence and use them on the path to Buddhahood.

In Indian Vajrayana, the figure to be emulated was not a mild-mannered, scholarly monk but a fierce, wandering yogi. Accomplished yogis, called *mahasiddhas*, had magical powers, such as the ability to fly, to read people's minds, and to project their consciousness into another body. Instead of observing a list of moral precepts, *mahasiddhas* deliberately transgressed and openly flaunted social norms. Virupa, for example, reputedly spent 3 days in a tavern drinking beer nonstop, and Kukkuripa cared more about the company of his dog than he did about the pleasures of heaven.

Vajrayana Buddhism was first successfully transmitted to Tibet in the seventh century CE. While it gained state support for a short time, it was not until its revival in the 11th century and the formation of the Sarma ("new") schools that Buddhism came to enjoy a secure status as the official religion of Tibet. At present, there are four main sects of Vajrayana Buddhism in Tibet. These schools are the Gelug, Kargyu, Nyingma, and Sakya. Recently, the Bön tradition has also been added as a fifth sect, but it is not entirely accepted as a Buddhist school, either by the other four sects or by its own adherents.

VAJRAYANA, TIBETAN

"Vajrayana Buddhism" designates the Diamond Vehicle (or Adamantine Vehicle) of Buddhism

Although it has largely disappeared from all but the most remote Himalayan regions of India, the practice of Vajrayana Buddhism continues to flourish in Tibet, Bhutan, Nepal, and Mongolia. Recently, Tibetan refugees have brought their Vajrayana traditions to many countries in the Americas, Asia, and Europe. Japan's Shingon Buddhism is also a form of Vajrayana.

Philosophy

Vajrayana Buddhism is rooted in Mahayana Buddhism. In fact, Tibetan Vajrayana Buddhists consider themselves to be practicing a form of Mahayana Buddhism. The Vajrayana vehicle accepts the Mahayana doctrines of emptiness and impermanence and, like the Mahayana, espouses belief in the intercession of bodhisattva figures. While the Mahayana provides important doctrinal and practical foundations, Vajrayana Buddhists consider the Mahayana view and methods to be limiting and time-consuming. Unlike the Theravada (Hinayana) and Mahayana approaches, which require many lifetimes of commitment, one who follows the Vajrayana route can achieve enlightenment in a single lifetime.

To advance this quickly along the Buddhist path, the Vajrayana practitioner cannot dispense with "negative" emotions such as anger and lust. Instead, *all* aspects of one's life experience and *all* of one's energies must be used as a part of one's spiritual practice. Vajrayana teachings emphasize the nonduality and the inherent pureness of all phenomena. According to the Vajrayana view, the sufferings of samsara are not distinct from the peace of nirvana. When one's mind and view are pure, one lives in a blissful Pure Land. When one's view is clouded and one's mind impure, one sees all appearances as samsara. Vajrayana images and rituals seek to demonstrate this doctrine and often depict male and female deities in sexual embrace. These types of representations aim to illustrate the union of opposites: male and female, compassion and wisdom, bliss and emptiness.

Another feature of Vajrayana is its use of the result, or "fruit," as the practice, or "path." This means that enlightenment is not a distant goal to be achieved only after much effort but is already present in the here and now. We simply need to recognize our already enlightened nature. The practices of Vajrayana are aimed at helping us

identify our Buddha nature by recognizing the emptiness of all phenomena, thus transforming our ordinary perceptions and experiences into enlightened awareness. The sun is a commonly used metaphor. When its rays are blocked by clouds or smog, the sun's light seems dull, but when the sky is clear, the sun shines brightly. Just as clouds in the sky do not change the nature of the sun, our ignorance does not affect our Buddha nature. It is only when we purify our karmic obscurations, such as delusion and attachment, however, that our inner purity is able to manifest and we realize perfect Buddhahood. This method is called "taking the result as the path" because the practitioner draws on his or her already enlightened nature at the same time as he or she moves toward fully realizing it.

Tantra

Vajrayana Buddhism is also known as Tantric Buddhism (or Tantrayana). In this case, the label "Tantric" reflects Vajrayana's reliance on scriptures called tantras.

Hinayana and Mahayana Buddhism, in contrast, rely only on the sutras, scriptures they believe to be the actual words of the historical Buddha Śakyamuni. Some non-Vajrayana Buddhists argue that the tantras are spurious later additions to the Buddhist canon and not actually the teachings of the historical Buddha (as the sutras are). Vajrayana followers respond to this criticism by claiming that the tantras are more advanced, more profound teachings than the sutras and represent the Buddha's final teachings, which he bestowed only on the most advanced bodhisattvas and disciples and which were only later committed to writing (or were taught by Buddhas other than Śakyamuni). According to the Tibetan tradition, the historical Buddha Śakyamuni "turned the wheel of the Dharma" three times. In the first turning, he gave the Hinayana teachings about karma and the necessity of avoiding negative actions. In the second turning, he gave the Mahayana teachings, explaining the emptiness of all phenomena and praising the bodhisattvas who commit themselves to helping others achieve enlightenment. In the third turning, the Buddha taught the profound Vajrayana, demonstrating the union of all phenomena.

In general, the tantras can be characterized as more centered on ritual and less concerned with

ethics and philosophy than the sutras. Different schools of Vajrayana have different classification techniques for the tantras. The Tibetan Sarma schools organize the Tantric teachings into four groups: (1) Action Tantras, (2) Performance Tantras, (3) Yoga Tantras, and (4) Highest Yoga Tantras. The contents of Action Tantras focus on bodily practices. They include physical and verbal activities aimed at purifying the practitioner and readying him or her for more advanced practices. The Performance Tantras deal with more pointed rituals that prepare the practitioner for meditative practice by allowing the practitioner to develop a relationship with a meditational deity (or deities). In the Performance Tantras, the meditational deity is conceived of as separate from oneself. The Yoga Tantras instruct the practitioner in envisioning himself or herself as a particular Buddhist deity. In fact, the Sanskrit term *yoga* means union and in this case refers to the union of the practitioner and the deity. Philosophically, this is possible because all phenomena are empty of inherent existence; from the ultimate point of view, an ordinary human being is no different from an enlightened Buddha. When a Tantric practitioner learns to experience himself or herself as a deity, the practitioner's surroundings become the perfected mandala of a Buddha's Pure Land. The Highest Yoga Tantras are also meditation practices. They are characterized by their use of sexual imagery and of emotions such as desire and anger. Tantras of the Highest Yoga category can be further divided into Father Tantras and Mother Tantras.

Mantra

In Tibetan, Vajrayana Buddhism is called "*sang ngak*," meaning "secret mantra" (or Mantrayana). As a label for a type of Buddhist practice, *secret mantra* refers to the guardedness of the teachings and the use of formulaic incantations in its rituals.

A mantra is like a spell; its correct recitation, the utterance of its syllables, is said to bring about a corresponding effect. Mantras are thought of as the verbal forms of certain energies, and reciting mantras activates these energies. Mantras are also important because as long as people are engaging their mind and speech in reciting mantras, they are unable to engage in harmful language or negative thoughts. The most popular Tibetan mantra is the

six-syllable mantra of the bodhisattva of compassion, Avalokiteśvara: *Om mani padme hum*.

Secrecy is an important element of Vajrayana Buddhism, and due to the secret nature of its practices, Vajrayana Buddhism is also known as esoteric Buddhism. The reason for guarding Tantric instructions is to protect oneself and others from harm. Because the Vajrayana affirms all facets of experience, its methods can be dangerous. If one engages in Tantric practices without correct understanding, great harm can result. Tibetans also believe that if a person disparages the teachings, that person will suffer the negative consequences. For this reason, the teachings should not be shared with those who are unlikely to have faith in them.

Deities

The Vajrayana pantheon is populated by numerous divine and semidivine figures. In addition to the historical Buddha Śākyamuni, there are the cosmic or primordial Buddhas, Samantabhadra, Vajradhara, and Vairocana. There are also five *dhyani* (meditational) Buddhas, each of which symbolizes a particular quality of enlightened activity and is associated with a particular Buddha family. These five Buddhas are depicted occupying the five cardinal directions (the fifth direction being the center), and each Buddha has his own consort, mantra, mudra, color, and element. Vairocana, for example, is the Buddha who occupies the center. He is white, associated with the ether element, and a member of the Tathagata Family. Amitabha is in the west. He is red, associated with the fire element, and a member of the Lotus Family. These five Buddhas are often depicted in mandalas and on the five faces of ritual crowns.

In addition to the five *dhyani* Buddhas, other popular Buddha figures include the Medicine Buddha; the female bodhisattva Tara; the bodhisattva of compassion, Avalokiteśvara; the future Buddha, Maitreya; and the bodhisattva of wisdom, Manjusri. In Vajrayana Buddhism, these deities appear in numerous forms, some peaceful and some wrathful, some with 1 head and 2 arms and some with 11 heads and 1,000 arms. The fearsome images of fanged beasts brandishing multiple weapons and wearing garlands of human skulls and fresh entrails are intended both to frighten away evil spirits and to represent the transmutation of negative

qualities, such as pride or bigotry, into purity and wisdom. According to Vajrayana, a Buddha or bodhisattva will take on a wrathful form when doing so will allow him or her to aid sentient beings more effectively. There are also lesser deities—wrathful protector gods—who when properly propitiated protect their devotees from harm and failure.

Other members of the Vajrayana pantheon include tutelary deities, called “*yidam*” in Tibetan. One’s *yidam* is one’s own personal deity with whom one establishes a special meditational relationship. Tibetans also revere female celestial beings called *dakinis*. Enigmatic *dakinis* are crucial to many aspects of Tantric Buddhist practice, including the revelation of spiritual treasures, called *terma*. In addition to these figures, since Vajrayana posits the possibility of becoming a Buddha in this very lifetime, Tibetan Buddhists believe that our ordinary world is populated with numerous *nirmanakaya* emanations of enlightened beings, even if we do not recognize them as such. These Buddha figures can manifest in any form, animate or inanimate.

A Vajrayana practitioner considers his or her teacher, or lama, to be the union of all the Buddhas and learns to cultivate an image of his or her lama as a foundation for his or her meditation practice, just as she also use Buddhas and bodhisattvas. The lama is crucial for spiritual progress, because it is the lama who transmits the essence of enlightenment to the disciple. As a result, forming a relationship with a spiritual teacher is a necessary requirement for Vajrayana practice.

Ritual Practice

Vajrayana rituals include initiation ceremonies, prayers, sacred dances, fire offerings, prostrations, chanting, and meditation. All these practices are aimed at aiding the practitioner in recognizing his or her inherent Buddha nature. Before beginning Vajrayana practice, a student must receive initiation and instruction from a qualified master. Tantric instructions are traditionally passed down in person from the teacher to the student, thus maintaining distinct lineage traditions over successive generations.

First, the student and the teacher must examine each other and establish mutual trust. Then, after

the student has completed any prerequisites and taken on any commitments or *samaya* vows (such as a promise to maintain a daily practice), the teacher begins instruction by bestowing initiation on the student. Initiation serves to purify the student’s mind stream, causing his or her potential to ripen and thus making him or her a fit vessel to receive the teachings. After the student has been properly “empowered,” the teacher may begin with an oral transmission. The oral transmission may take the form of the teacher’s own instruction, or it may consist of the teacher reading aloud from a text that the student will then study. In the case of a reading transmission, the ritual of hearing the text from the teacher’s mouth authorizes the student to begin study of the text on his or her own.

Tantric meditation techniques include breath manipulation and eventually control over the body’s physiological processes, its “winds and channels.” Advanced techniques include sexual practices, performed either as visualizations (especially in the case of monks and nuns who have taken vows of celibacy) or with an actual consort. There are many risks involved in sexual yoga—for example, becoming overcome by the physical sensations and losing sight of one’s purpose in the practice. For this reason, these rituals are undertaken only by the most expert practitioners.

Vajrayana rituals employ a variety of supports. The *vajra* is an important ritual implement in Tantric Buddhist practice. It is most often found in the shape of a five-pronged thunderbolt (the five prongs representing the five wisdoms) and is paired with its counterpart the bell. Held in the right and left hands, respectively, the *vajra* and bell symbolize the male and female principles—method and wisdom. Vajrayana practitioners also use handheld two-sided drums, rosaries for counting mantras, offering bowls made from or in the shape of the top of a human skull, and daggers. Ritual experts also employ *mudras*, symbolic hand gestures that evoke certain qualities and states of mind. Other ritual aids include *mandalas*, geometric diagrams that represent the cosmos or the abode of a particular Buddha. A *mandala* is a sacred space, a place of consecration that the practitioner enters through his or her meditation. It may take the form of a physical prop or an inner visualization.

Distinctive Features of Tibetan Vajrayana

Tibetan Vajrayana includes the unique systems of Dzogchen or “Great Perfection” practiced mainly in the Nyingma school and Mahamudra or “Great Seal,” a teaching lineage of the Kargyu sect. Practitioners of the Tibetan schools of Dzogchen and Mahamudra claim that the efficacy and profundity of their teachings exceed even that of the Highest Yoga Tantras. The manners in which these teachings are bestowed may seem incredible to the uninitiated. In a mind-to-mind transmission, for example, a master transmits realization directly from his or her mind to the mind of the student without the use of any words or gestures.

Terma, or spiritual treasures, of the Nyingma sect are teachings that the great Indian *mahasiddha* Padmasambhava hid when he visited Tibet in the eighth century. At that time, Tibetans were not ready to receive these teachings, so he concealed them to be unearthed, revealed, or remembered by a particular person at a particular time in the future. Some he hid in the earth in the form of ritual implements; some he hid as texts in temple pillars; others he hid in people’s mind streams. Because they are traced to Padmasambhava, *terma* are not considered the original ideas or compositions of their revealers but of a Buddha deposited for future generations by Padmasambhava.

Hinayana, Mahayana, and Vajrayana Buddhisms all incorporate an awareness of death into their teachings. In Tibetan Buddhism, this awareness is cultivated via meditations that allow the meditator to rehearse his or her time of death. Highly realized masters may even attain the ability to experience the *bardo*, the intermediate state between this life and the next. The *Tibetan Book of the Dead* describes the *bardo* experience and can be used as a map of our death journey. Great Dzogchen masters are said to achieve the rainbow body when they die; instead of leaving behind a corpse, their bodies shrink until they disappear. The passing of these masters is marked by extraordinary events, such as the appearance of rainbow-colored lights in the sky.

Dream yoga is a means of incorporating the dream and sleep states into Tantric practice. From a Vajrayana perspective, whatever appears to the senses is the creative play of a deity. Whatever one sees, for example, is an emanation of the deity’s body, and whatever we hear is a deity’s mantra. Because of the imaginal nature of the universe, our

dreams do not have to be unconscious, unaware displays of our imagination. Through dream yoga, one can learn to control one’s dreams and use the period of each day spent sleeping as a fruitful time of spiritual progress.

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See also Bhutan; India; Japan; Mahayana Buddhism; Mongolia; Nepal; Sexuality; Tibet

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VALE DO AMANHECER

The Vale do Amanhecer (Valley of the Dawn) is a millenarian religious community situated in the Federal District of Brazil, 50 kilometers from its capital Brasília. It is a new religious movement with a complex syncretism, including elements of Christianity, Spiritism, Afro-Brazilian, and Oriental

religions, and beliefs in unidentified flying objects. The movement has spread all over Brazil (around 600 temples) and to seven other countries (the United States, Germany, Bolivia, Uruguay, Japan, Portugal, Trinidad-Tobago), garnering more than 100,000 adherents. The community was founded in 1959 by Neiva Chaves Zelaya (*Tia Neiva*), widowed at the age of 24 years and a mother of four children, who worked as a truck driver in central Brazil. Clairvoyant and guided by her visions, mainly by an Amerindian spirit named Father White Arrow (*Pai Seta Branca*), Neiva decided to consecrate her life to a special mission: to create a doctrine to heal people and to prepare humanity for the arrival of the third millennium.

Based on the so-called teachings of the spirits and combining elements of Allan Kardec's Spiritism, the doctrine of the Amanhecer considers its active members as mediums and the others as patients. Classified into two categories—jaguar and nymph—the mediums (a pair, a man and a woman) invoke the spirits during the rituals. The mediums are also characterized by their spiritual orientation: The one who “incorporates” (falls into a trance) is called *apará*, and the one who “indoctrinates” (teaches) the spirit is known as *doutrinador*.

Rituals are well-known for their impressive visual characteristics, with their use of different symbols from Aztec, Egyptian, and Afro-Brazilian religions: the colorful, shining costumes worn by the followers at the ceremonies; and the monumental displays, with huge statues, pyramids, lakes, waterfalls, stairways, and colored walls.

The ritual practices are very complex and require a great number of participants. Words, prayers, and gestures are previously determined and strictly controlled by the leaders of the ceremonies. They create a real epic scene where the verbal, sound, visual, and kinetic elements of the *mise-en-scène* are related.

Since Tia Neiva passed away in 1985, the Vale do Amanhecer has been ruled by the Trinos Presidente Triada, a triad that includes Tia Neiva's son, Raul Oscar Zelaya Chaves, who is also the official president of the community.

Marilda Manoel Batista

See also Brazil; Latin America; New Religions; New Religions in South America

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Vale do Amanhecer: <http://www.valedoamanhecer.com>

VANUATU

The Pacific island Republic of Vanuatu, formerly known by the colonial name of New Hebrides until it was changed by the government in 1980, is an archipelago of 80 islands with a majority Christian population. Nearly all Vanuatuans are Melanesian, with small communities of Europeans, Asians, and Pacific Islanders. While nearly all residents of the archipelago hold onto strong beliefs regarding ancestral spirits, and syncretic practices are widely evident in the country, more than 80% of the populace report adherence to one form of Christianity or another: 31% Presbyterian, 13% Roman Catholic, 13% Anglican, 11% Seventh-Day Adventist, and an additional 14% claimed by the Church of Christ, the Apostolic Church, the Assemblies of God, and other Protestant denominations. Members of the Baha'i Faith, along with Jehovah's Witnesses, members of the Church of the Latter-Day Saints, and some Buddhists, account for 10% of the population. Another 6% of Vanuatuans belong to the indigenous John Frum movement, a cargo cult begun in the late 1930s.

John Frum, thought by some to be based on a World War II American serviceman, is a messianic figure who is believed to have spread the doctrines of the movement. Those doctrines revolve around wealth; believers hold that for native Melanesians to gain wealth, they must reject all European symbols and customs and return to the traditional way

of life of the indigenous people. The followers, who now have their own political party, opposed the creation of independent Vanuatu, which would favor Western modernity and Christianity.

Though the Spanish were the first to come across the archipelago during the early-17th-century explorations, in the 1880s both Great Britain and France claimed parts of the country as their own. The result was the creation, in 1906, of a unique, “condominium” colony, where the two European powers shared political control. Catholic and Protestant missionaries arrived in the area in the 19th century, and religion would reaffirm the divisions already entrenched by the colonial powers; the Catholic communities were aligned with the French government, while the Anglophones, governed by Great Britain, were nearly uniformly Protestant. The division played out when the issue of independence was raised in 1980, when the two groups backed different political parties, and those pushing for independence were largely from the British camp. Politics and religion have been, and continue to be, largely bound together, and the first political party of the island was founded by Father Walter Lini, an Anglican priest who would serve as the first prime minister of independent Vanuatu.

At the beginning of the 21st century, much of the government is still made up of young pastors and leaders of Christian communities, but much of the daily lives of communities are still administered by local chiefs and elders. During independence, the government overtly looked to Christianity, along with the shared cultural experience of the islanders, to forge a national identity. The preamble of the Vanuatu constitution claims commitment to “traditional Melanesian values, faith in God, and Christian principles.” The Ministry of Internal Affairs, along with the Vanuatu Christian Council, provides the means for the government to interact with the religious communities and provide funding for Christian schools (though not for non-Christian religious instruction). Government schools also set aside time for religious education, which is implemented by local churches.

John Soboslai

See also Cargo Cults; Missions and Missionaries; Pacific Islands/Oceania; Postcolonialism; Religion and State

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VATICAN CITY STATE AND THE HOLY SEE

With a territory of 0.44 square kilometers and a permanent population of only 900, Vatican City is the smallest independent state in the world. Yet it is known all over the globe as the seat of power of the 1.3-billion-member Roman Catholic Church, the headquarters known as the Holy See. Indeed, although Vatican City is recognized as an independent state in international law, its main function is to guarantee the independence of the Holy See and to grant it *de facto* recognition as an international power.

Vatican City is located on the west bank of the Tiber River in Rome and encompasses St. Peter's Church and Square, the pontifical palaces, several administrative buildings, the Vatican library, museums, and gardens. The Basilicas of St. John Lateran, Santa Maria Maggiore, and St. Paul in Rome together with the papal summer residence at Castel Gandolfo are also under the sovereignty of the Vatican City and as such enjoy extraterritoriality. It came into existence in February 1929, following the signing of the Lateran Pacts between the pope and Mussolini, which put an end to the “Roman question” created by the annexation of the Papal States by the Unitary Italian Kingdom in 1870. The pacts recognized the full sovereignty of the Holy See in international matters and its full ownership of and exclusive jurisdiction over the Vatican.

Although as temporal and spiritual entities the Vatican City and the Holy See are formally distinct, their governing structures are closely intertwined. The pope is both the absolute monarch of the city-state and the spiritual leader of the Church. The Pontifical Commission manages the administrative

affairs of the state, but the Code of Canon Law applies to both Vatican City and the Church. The Roman Curia is in charge of the central administration of the Church as well as the foreign affairs of the city-state.

Through the Vatican, the Holy See entertains diplomatic relations with 177 countries and international institutions (expanded from 91 before the election of Pope John Paul II). It is the only neutral permanent observer at the United Nations and, as such, can take part in all the debates of the General Assembly, although it cannot vote. Some observers claim that the Church takes advantage of this ambivalent status to exercise its religious authority in the secular arena, as exemplified by the promotion of its positions on reproductive health and gender relations at the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo in 1994 and the Fourth International Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995. Others claim that given the tiny size of Vatican City, the Holy See intervenes in international debates not to defend narrow state interests but to advocate policies affecting the welfare of the world's peoples, such as environmental protection, social and economic justice, peace, and human rights.

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See also Benedict XVI; John Paul II; Roman Catholicism; Rome; Vatican Council, Second

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VATICAN COUNCIL, SECOND

The Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) was a general assembly of the bishops and other ecclesiastical representatives of the Roman Catholic Church,

the second held since the 16th century. Pope John XXIII, attentive to the changing global context, called the Council as a means of renewing the Church and updating its pastoral practices in light of the needs of the modern era. The bishops present at the Council represented the increasingly global membership of the Church, and the Council's pronouncements shaped not only the internal life of the Church but its relationship with the cultures, states, civil societies, other Christian bodies, and other religions with which it interacts around the world.

The dramatic growth of Christianity in the non-European world in the 20th century was reflected in the attendance at the Council, which was larger and more diverse than any previous council. Of the approximately 3,000 bishops who attended, about one third (36%) were from Europe, another third (35%) from the Americas, and the remainder from Asia (14%), Africa (12%), and Oceania (3%). John XXIII, who died at the end of the first session, also invited non-Catholic religious leaders to attend as observers. His successor, Paul VI, took the unprecedented step of inviting Catholic women, including prominent leaders of women's religious orders, to observe what had previously been all-male assemblies.

In its Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (*Sacrosantum Concilium*) and its Decree on Missionary Activity of the Church (*Ad Gentes*), the Council moved away from its ultramontane stress on the uniformity of Catholic practice and encouraged a deeper engagement with the cultures of the world, most notably by approving the translation of the Latin Mass into vernacular languages and by encouraging missionaries to explore the ways in which Catholic thought and practice could be accommodated to different cultures.

The Decree on Ecumenism (*Unitatis redintegratio*) and the Declaration on the Church's Attitude Toward Non-Christian Religions (*Nostra aetate*) fostered a new openness to dialogue and engagement with other traditions both Christian and non-Christian. *Nostra aetate* acknowledged that other religions, though different, may contain much that is true and holy and encouraged Catholics not only to greater dialogue and collaboration but also to promote that which is good in other traditions.

The Declaration on Religious Freedom (*Dignitatis humanae*) and the Pastoral Constitution on the

Church in the World of Today (*Gaudium et spes*) reshaped the relationship between the Church, states, and civil societies. Recognizing and affirming the principle of religious freedom, *Dignitatus humanae* recognized the right of individuals to be free of coercion in matters of religion as a civil right grounded in the nature of the human person. *Gaudium et spes* also stressed the fundamental dignity of the human person and the importance of constructive engagement with the deep questions raised by “the profound and rapid changes . . . spreading by degrees around the world.” Although the extent to which the Council broke with the past is still hotly debated, it clearly reoriented the way the Church engaged with the modern world.

Ann Taves

See also Global Religion; Roman Catholicism; Vatican Council, Second

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VEDA

The term *Veda*, derived from the root *vid*, “to know,” means “knowledge.” The Veda functions in Hindu traditions as an authoritative category that is ascribed the status of transcendent knowledge and has both textual and supratextual dimensions. As a textual phenomenon, the Veda is revered in many Hindu traditions as the paradigmatic scripture that has historically provided a

legitimizing source of authority for later sacred texts and teachings up to the contemporary period. With approximately 1 billion Hindus in India and the diaspora, the Veda is thus a phenomenon with global reach whose authority continues to reverberate throughout the transnational network of Hindu communities and beyond.

The term *Veda* is used to designate a corpus of sacred texts in at least four different senses. (1) The term is used in its narrow sense to designate the four *Samhitās* (ca. 1500–800 BCE)—Ṛg-Veda, Yajur-Veda, Sāma-Veda, and Atharva-Veda—which are collections of verses (*ṛcs*), sacrificial formulae (*yajuses*), chants (*sāmans*), and incantations and imprecations (*atharvāṅgirases* or *atharvans*), respectively. The versified portions of the four *Samhitās* are termed *mantras*. (2) The term is subsequently extended to include not only the *Samhitās* but also three other categories of texts: (a) the *Brāhmaṇas* (ca. 900–650 BCE), sacrificial manuals attached to the *Samhitās* that are concerned with correct performance of the Vedic fire sacrifices (*yajñas*); (b) the *āraṇyakas*, “forest books” that reflect on the inner meaning of the sacrificial rituals; (c) and the *Upanishads* (ca. 800–200 BCE), the latest portions of the Vedas, which contain metaphysical speculations concerned with the attainment of knowledge (*jñāna*) of ultimate reality. (3) In post-Vedic speculations the term is at times extended even further to include two additional categories of texts that are designated as the “fifth Veda”: (a) the *Itihāsas*, or epics—the *Mahabharata* (ca. 200 BCE–100 CE) and the *Ramayana* of Vālmīki (ca. 200 BCE–200 CE) and (b) the *Puranas* (ca. 300–1000 CE and after), encyclopedic texts comprising cosmogonic myths, genealogies, and narratives about gods, kings, and sages. (4) Finally, Veda functions as an encompassing category within which can be subsumed potentially all sacred texts.

This entry discusses the distinction between the *śruti* and *smṛti* texts, the Veda as a supratextual category, and methods of engaging the Veda.

Śruti and Smṛti

To understand the mechanisms through which this expansion of the purview of the term *Veda* occurred, we need to examine more closely the distinction that is made in the Brahmanical Hindu

tradition between the two categories of sacred texts: (1) *śruti*, “that which was heard,” and (2) *smṛti*, “that which was remembered.” The core *śruti* texts are the mantras—*ṛcs*, *yajuses*, *sāmans*, and *atharvāṅgirases* or *atharvans*—collected in the Vedic Saṃhitās. The domain of *śruti* was subsequently extended to include not only the Saṃhitās but also the Brāhmaṇas, Āraṇyakas, and Upanishads. While the domain of *śruti* is in principle circumscribed, *smṛti* is a dynamic, open-ended category that includes the epics, Puranas, and *Dharmashastras* (ca. first to eighth centuries CE), and the Brahmanical legal codes, along with a variety of other texts that have been incorporated within this ever-expanding category in accordance with the needs of different periods and groups.

The primary criterion for distinguishing between the *śruti* and *smṛti* texts is generally characterized by both Indian and Western scholars as an ontological distinction between “revelation” and “tradition.” *śruti* texts—Saṃhitās, Brāhmaṇas, Āraṇyakas, and Upanishads—are traditionally understood to have been directly cognized—“seen” and “heard”—by inspired “seers” (*ṛṣis*) at the beginning of each cycle of creation. Among the orthodox schools of Hindu philosophy, the formal schools of Vedic exegesis, Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā and Vedānta, maintain that the *śruti*, or Vedic, texts are eternal (*nitya*), infinite (*ananta*), and uncreated (*apauruṣeya*)—not derived from any personal agent, whether human or divine—whereas the Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika, and Yoga schools view the Vedic texts as the work of God. All other sacred texts are relegated to a secondary status as *smṛti*, for they are held to have been composed by authors and are therefore designated as “that which was remembered” rather than “that which was heard.” On the basis of this criterion, the epics and Puranas are classified in the Brahmanical canon as *smṛti* texts, even though they may seek to identify themselves with *śruti* by claiming the status of the “fifth Veda.”

In attempting to assimilate themselves to the Veda, the epics and Puranas exemplify a well-documented phenomenon in Indian history whereby any Hindu text or teaching seeking to legitimate its authority had to do so with reference to the Veda. The legitimating function of the Veda within Hindu traditions derives from its role as a

transcendent source of authority. The core *śruti* texts, the Vedic mantras, are represented in the cosmogonic and cosmological speculations of Vedic and post-Vedic texts as eternal, transcendent knowledge that exists perpetually as the source and plan of the cosmos. The Vedic seers are portrayed as having stationed their awareness on the transcendent level where they “saw” and “heard” the primordial vibrations of pure knowledge manifesting as the fundamental rhythms of creation. They subsequently expressed on the gross level of speech that which they cognized on the transcendent level, and in this way the mantras assumed a concrete form on earth as recited texts. The Vedic mantras are thus granted the status of transcendent knowledge. Any subsequent sacred text can participate in that status only by assimilating itself to the Vedic mantras through a variety of strategies, including claiming to form part of *śruti*, the original cognitions of the seers, in the case of the Brāhmaṇas, Āraṇyakas, and Upanishads; claiming the status of the “fifth Veda,” in the case of the epics and Puranas; establishing a genealogy that directly links the text’s teachings to the Veda or to some form of divine revelation, in the case of *Dharmashastras* such as the Manu-Smṛti; claiming that the text’s teachings derive from lost Vedic texts, a claim that could potentially apply to all *smṛti* texts; or otherwise conforming to the model of the Veda. Through such strategies, the term *Veda* is extended beyond the circumscribed boundaries of the Vedic mantras and, through a process of “vedacization,” comes to include within its purview not only an expanded array of *śruti* texts but also potentially all *smṛti* texts and teachings that are promulgated by Brahmanical authorities.

Such strategies, including a variety of other modes of assimilation, have been used not only by exponents of the Brahmanical hierarchy but also by non-Brahmanical Hindu groups to invest their sacred texts with the transcendent authority of the Veda. The domain of Veda is thereby expanded beyond the Brahmanical Sanskritic canon of *śruti* and *smṛti* texts to include texts derived from non-Brahmanical origins, including a variety of vernacular texts that are authoritative for particular bhakti (devotional) communities. For example, the *Tiruvāymoli* of the poet Nammālvār (ca. ninth century CE)—the collection of Tamil hymns composed by one of the most acclaimed of the South

Indian Tamil Vaishnavas known as the Āḷvārs—is said to represent the four Vedic Saṃhitās and is designated as the “Dravidian Veda” or “Tamil Veda.” The *Rāmcaritmānas* of the poet Tulsīdās (ca. 16th century CE), a Hindi version of the *Ramayana* popular throughout North India, has been ascribed a similar status as the “fifth Veda” or “Hindi Veda.” Even scriptures derived from non-Hindu traditions have at times been identified with the Veda. For example, in South India, certain Tamil Christians deem the Bible to be the “true Veda,” whereas Tamil Muslims invest the Qur’an with an equivalent status. While some groups have thus sought to legitimate their texts through assimilating them to the Veda, certain bhakti and tantric movements have responded to the Veda by rejecting or subverting its authority. Whether the Veda is revered or rejected, appropriated or subverted, it remains a symbol invested with authoritative power that must be contended with by all those who wish to legitimate their teachings in the Hindu religious landscape.

Veda Beyond Texts

The Veda serves as a powerful and enduring symbol because it transcends the confines of textuality that limit the term to a circumscribed body of texts and comes to represent the totality of knowledge—not the ordinary knowledge derived through the powers of human observation and reasoning but the transcendent, infinite knowledge that is held to be the essence of ultimate reality and the source and foundation of creation. This knowledge is said to have been cognized by the Vedic seers and preserved by them and their Brahmanical descendants in the form of orally transmitted texts; but in the cosmogonic and cosmological speculations of Vedic and post-Vedic texts, the corpus of Vedic mantras preserved by the Brahmanical lineages is represented as only a limited manifestation of the unlimited, eternal reality of Veda. Among the network of representations associated with Veda, four complexes persist through the various strata of literature.

1. The Veda is described as the essence of Brahman, the ultimate reality, and is at times designated more specifically as śabdabrahman—Brahman embodied in the Word.
2. The Veda as the totality of knowledge is also at times identified with the creator principle as the immediate source of creation.
3. The Vedas (plural) are depicted as the archetypal plan of creation containing the primordial expressions of speech that the Creator utters to manifest the material realm of forms.
4. The Vedas in their mundane transmitted form are the mantra collections, or Saṃhitās, of the Ṛg-Veda, Yajur-Veda, Sāma-Veda, and Atharva-Veda that are recited by human beings on earth as part of the Vedic sacrificial rites.

Engaging the Veda

The Vedic Saṃhitās, the core *śruti* texts, have been preserved in an unbroken chain of oral transmission (*sampradāya*) for more than 3,000 years. The preservation of the Vedic recitative tradition, along with the performance of the Vedic sacrificial rituals, in which recitation of the Vedic mantras assumes a central role, has remained the exclusive prerogative of male Brahman priests from the Vedic period to the present time. While the tradition of recitative transmission is restricted to the Brahman class, the male members of the other two “twice-born” social classes (*varnas*), *Kshatriyas* (rulers and warriors) and *vaiśyas* (merchants, agriculturalists, and artisans), have traditionally been expected to undertake a limited period of Vedic study. However, Brahmanical ideology provides no paradigm of Vedic study and practice for the larger community who are excluded from the ranks of the twice-born—in particular, women, *śūdras* (servants), and “outcastes,” who are beyond the pale of the *varna* system. Indeed, women and *śūdras* are forbidden in the *Dharmashastras* from even hearing the Vedic mantras recited, let alone reciting them. Although these marginalized groups have thus been excluded from direct access to the core *śruti* texts, they seek to participate in the eternal reality of Veda through engaging certain *smṛti* texts that are ascribed the status of the “fifth Veda,” such as the epics and Puranas. In contrast to the highly circumscribed Vedic Saṃhitās, these popular devotional texts—both in their original Sanskrit versions and in their multiple vernacular retellings—are intended to inspire and edify the general populace and thus provide an alternative

means for women, *sūdras*, and others at the bottom of the social hierarchy to encounter the transcendent power of Veda.

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See also Brahmanical Hinduism; Hinduism; India; Scripture

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Badarayana's Vedanta Sutra or Brahma Sutra led to the three major forms of Vedanta as expounded by Shankara (about eighth century CE), Ramanuja (about 11th century CE), and Madhva (about 1197 to 1276 CE). More recent movements that have advanced interest in Vedanta are the Arya Samaj and the Brahmo Samaj.

Shankara's nondualism or Advaita Vedanta has perhaps attracted more attention from Western observers in comparison with Ramanuja's qualified nondualism or Madhva's dualism. In North America, the Ramakrishna movement, advocated by Ramakrishna's disciple Swami Vivekananda, has led to the formation of the better known societies seeking to practice in the tradition of Advaita Vedanta. This is not the only Vedanta Society or Vedanta Centre, as may be seen in another group known as the International Vedanta Society, founded on a central figure known as Bhagavan.

In the 2 years following Swami Vivekananda's attendance at the Parliament of the World's Religions in 1893 in Chicago, he spoke to groups around the United States, which led to the establishment of a Vedanta Society in New York in 1894 and eventually a network at other locations in the United States and Canada and headquartered in India in 1897. Usually structured as twin legal entities, the Ramakrishna Math is the monastic organization, and the Ramakrishna Mission is for devotees who provide social and community services, including a free soup kitchen. Sunday school moral and spiritual education is also provided to youth through initiatives such as the Vedanta Vidya Mandir in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. The Vedanta Press in southern California has been an active publisher of printed materials on relevant topics.

The purpose of life in the context of Vedanta is to find God. There are many paths to finding Truth, and there is no intent to proselytize. From the perspective of Vedanta, one's affiliation with other religions or organizations is not material to the spiritual journey. The discipline requires unselfishness, service, and self-sacrifice rather than self-assertion. Actively accepting divinity in all forms, one is required to discipline one's mind and actions with an attitude of humility and reverence.

The International Vedanta Society, of which Bhagavan (meaning "God") is the central figure, is of more recent vintage. Its international headquarters is at Amingaon, Guwahati, Assam, India, and

VEDANTA SOCIETY

Vedanta Society is the name for organizations that have been established around the world to promote Vedantic ideas. Vedanta or the "end of the Vedas" refers to the time in India between 500 and 200 BCE during which several schools of thought developed, often by way of commentary on earlier sutras. For example, commentaries on

can also be found on Facebook (see “Bhagavan,” accessed May 3, 2010) and YouTube (see <http://in.youtube.com/ivstube>, accessed May 3, 2010). In his teachings, Bhagavan advocates realization of Truth through Love. The slogan adopted by this organization “Man Is God” is a restatement of the awareness that the individual and God are in reality indistinguishable. By analogy, and consistent with Advaita Vedanta, although one can differentiate between the individual waves and the ocean, they are in fact, one.

Bhagavan is one who has realized ultimate Truth and returned to share that Truth and lead others to this awareness of the oneness of all. Guru Swami Pavitrnanandaji Maharaj’s letters written from West Bengal, India, to Bhagavan in Assam, India, provided the instructions that enabled him to achieve supreme realization on December 15, 1984. Love for people prompted his return to contemporary life. His existence since then is as Truth and Love incarnate for the benefit of humanity, creating a new civilization. The society has developed groups around the world that continue to practice his teachings. To facilitate the realization of Truth, he identifies 12 commands.

In both forms, Vedanta Society and Vedanta Centre, it follows then that the objective is universal oneness as distinct from a universal fellowship. When awareness and realization of Truth is achieved, all matters in life are resolved and concluded. Awareness of oneness with God or *Samadhi* is the nondualist reality sought by the adherents of Vedanta Societies.

Lester de Souza

See also Hinduism; New Religions; Veda; Vivekananda; World’s Parliament of Religions

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Vivekananda Vedanta Society, Chicago: <http://www.vedantasociety-chicago.org/index.htm>

VENERABLE MASTER CHENG-YEN (B. 1937)

Venerable Master Cheng-yen is the founder of the Tzu Chi Foundation, one of the largest Buddhist philanthropic organizations in the world. She was born in 1937 into a middle-class family in the central city of Taizhong, Taiwan. At the age of 16 years, she took an oath to the Compassionate Bodhisattva Guanyin, whereby she vowed to become a lay Buddhist for 12 years if her mother recovered from a serious illness. Her mother did recover, which inspired her desire to become a Buddhist nun and dedicate her life to the Buddhist dharma. Her father died from brain hemorrhage caused by a stroke when she was 24 years. Cheng-yen’s compassion and empathy resulted in her feeling some sense of responsibility for his death. As a result, and against her mother’s wishes, she left home to become a Buddhist nun. However, she could not secure a Buddhist teacher to accept her vows without her family’s permission, and she reluctantly returned to her mother’s home. After a few years, she left her home again, but this time, she headed for the quiet rural county of Hualian, on Taiwan’s poor east coast. After wandering around various temples for several years, she finally took her vows in 1963, under a well-known secularizing and reformist monk named Yinshun (b. 1906). This inspired the fastest growing humanistic Buddhist movement in cultural China.

Cheng-yen established Tzu Chi in 1966 to perform a mission of helping the poor and educating the rich. She, along with five disciples and about 30 others, mostly homemakers, vowed to set aside half a New Taiwan dollar each day for a fund to aid poor families (equal to US1.3 cents). During their first year, they distributed about 435 U.S. dollars; today, Tzu Chi Foundation claims to have dispersed more than 100 million dollars. Cheng-yen’s Tzu Chi Foundation is one of the first Buddhist organizations in the history of Buddhism in any Chinese society to carry out large-scale

humanitarian missions around the globe. In recognition of these accomplishments, Cheng-yen was awarded the Philippine Magsaysay Award in 1991 and was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1993.

Cheng-yen emphasizes the importance of the laity and charitable activities in the propagation of the Buddhist dharma. Although the members of Tzu Chi follow the precepts of Chinese Mahayana Buddhism, there is a distinctly Taiwanese dimension to the teachings of Cheng-yen, which are often transmitted in Minnanhua, the local language, intermixed with Mandarin. Cheng-yen's theology does not rely on original scriptures and can be summed up as a series of aphorisms that emphasize the performance of good deeds.

One distinguishing feature of Tzu Chi is the seemingly matriarchal nature of the organization. Because of a Buddhist practice that allows nuns to initiate only women, Cheng-yen's following within the small monastic community she leads is exclusively female and ethnic Chinese. Indeed, the prevalence of women in Tzu Chi is not limited to the monastic community but extends to the whole of the lay organization, whereby 80% of the members are women. Despite this reliance on lay women, the functioning of Tzu Chi rests entirely on the authority of Cheng-yen. Her awe-inspiring authority is sustained by devotion to her within the organization and admiration from members of the Taiwanese media, who dub her the "Mother Teresa of Taiwan." Despite this reverence, however, the lifestyle of Cheng-yen is modest. The prestige of Cheng-yen and the success of her organization dramatically illustrate the ascendancy of engaged humanistic Buddhism, first in Taiwan and then around the globe.

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See also Buddhist Compassion Relief Tzu Chi Foundation; China; Civil Society; Confucianism; Mahayana Buddhism; Theravada Buddhism; Vajrayana, Tibetan

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VENEZUELA

The religious landscape of the country of Venezuela, on the northern coast of South America, has undergone multiple readjustments over the past four decades. While the 2001 census figures point to the clear predominance of Catholicism (96%), the contemporary religious scene is characterized by a growing pluralism, with some apparent tensions. The sustained growth of Protestantism (2%), particularly since the 1970s, has been one of the principal factors in the redefinition of religion in Venezuela. Pentecostal and neo-Pentecostal evangelical movements have found a fertile niche among the popular classes, where they operate in capillary fashion. The success of the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God exemplifies the surge of Protestantism. The Brazilian-based movement appeared on the scene in Venezuela in the 1990s, and its adherents have subsequently established a wide network of congregations, thanks to a sophisticated marketing strategy that includes radio and television programming, a newspaper, and a website.

The flourishing of Protestantism has not, however, slowed down the rise of its principal historical rivals—an array of practices frequently grouped under the generic term *brujería*, or "witchcraft." An example of such a group is the cult of María Lionza, which spread throughout Venezuela during the 20th century, in spite of tenacious government repression and persecution lasting until the 1960s. The highest expression of Spiritism in Venezuela, this possession cult is widely practiced in urban areas, where the pantheon of spirits has continued to grow and give rise to new modalities of trance. The Cuban religious forms known as *Santería* and *Palería*, introduced in Venezuela at the end of the 1960s and 1980s, respectively, are also in full expansion mode, and their influence on the malleable María Lionza cult seems increasingly apparent.

Another notable development has been the growing vitality of the esoteric and New Age movements, particularly since the 1990s. The wide range of practices and beliefs identified with these expressions (metaphysics, self-help, yoga, feng shui, cartomancy, astrology, crystal therapy, rebirth, angelology, etc.) enjoys tremendous popularity, especially in urban

centers. The growing number of talks, workshops, and seminars, as well as the growing body of specialized literature on these topics, indicates that the fascination with this new spirituality is still on the rise.

Religion in Venezuela has also undergone a series of transformations since the advent of the Bolivarian Revolution in 1998. One of these has been an interesting political mobilization on the part of certain religious movements, chiefly Pentecostals, and to a lesser extent *santeros* and spiritists, in support of the process of change introduced by the administration of Hugo Chávez. Another has been the loss of privilege suffered by the Catholic Church, whose ongoing confrontations with the government have made it one of the country's most emblematic opposition sectors.

Anabel Fernández Quintana

See also Latin America; María Lionza Cult of Venezuela; New Religions in South America; Pentecostal Movements in Latin America; Santería

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short list of official religions signifies. Currently, the Vietnamese government officially recognizes Buddhism, Roman Catholicism, Protestantism, Islam, Baha'i, Hoa Hao, and Cao Dai, as well as Pure Land Buddhist Home Practice, the Threefold Southern Tradition, and the Threefold Enlightened Truth Path. Care should be exercised in taking any of those traditions as monolithic, as many have a syncretic character when practiced in Vietnam.

While the government of Vietnam does not give precise figures on religious adherence, approximate figures show that 80% or so follow the Vietnamese blend of Mahayana Buddhism and Confucianism (Tam Giáo) and 8% of the country are Christian, with the Catholic Church being the dominant denomination. About 3% of the total population are reported to be Cao Dai followers, and another 2% practice Hoa Hao. The minority Cham ethnic group are largely Muslim, mostly practicing a form of Islam unique to the group, known as Bani, with a strong subgroup of Sunnī Muslims. There are also small communities of Baha'i and Jews, and Theravada Buddhism is preferred by the Khmer people, who populate areas near the Cambodian border. Although not recognized as an "official" religion by the government, there are reports of Hindu communities within Vietnam as well, but figures are not available. While it is not possible to go into detail on all the religious aspects of Vietnam, this entry will give an overview of the development of the religions in Vietnam and offer a few insights into the traditions.

VIETNAM

The Southeast Asian country of Vietnam blends socialism and a distinct religious character. Its religious history has been shaped by indigenous beliefs interacting with the importation of a variety of religious traditions and the emergence of new religious movements. The Vietnamese government officially recognizes a small set of the world religions; according to the government's Decree 22 in 2005, for a religious organization to be recognized, it must have 20 years of "stable" operation. With sharp rebukes for faiths that speak out against the state's doctrines and practices, recognition is by no means a foregone conclusion, as the

The Tam Giáo

While the majority of Vietnamese report themselves as not subscribing to a religion, no doubt in part a consequence of the socialist nature of the nation, some estimate at least 80% of the populace to be nominally Buddhist. However, the Buddhist variation most practiced in Vietnam is known as Tam Giáo (Tam Đạo, "Triple Religion"), which blends Mahayana Buddhism with Confucianism and Daoism, and is synthesized with indigenous ancestor and hero worship.

The religious situation at the beginning of the 21st century has developed through a strong sense of Vietnamese distinctiveness coming into contact with foreign cultures, as well as internal strife

within the country. China largely controlled Vietnam until 938 CE, when Vietnam reasserted its independence. Vietnamese imperial dynasties then endured until the French colonized the country in the 1850s, ostensibly in response to the real or imagined harassment of its missionaries, and by the 1880s the whole of Vietnam was under French control. Vietnamese nationalist forces gained momentum during World War II, and after overthrowing the Japanese administration in 1945, the French attempted to reassert control. The Democratic Republic of Vietnam, established by the national hero par excellence Ho Chi Minh, finally expelled the French after an 8-year war. The country was divided into North and South Vietnam following the advent of a communist government, which drove Vietnamese Catholics into the southern regions of the country. The North attempted to forcibly reunify the nation, leading to the American war in Vietnam in the 1960s, which was driven in part by the pleas of Cardinal Francis Spellman, a strong proponent of American support for the South Vietnamese Catholic population. That war would come to an end with the expulsion of American forces from Saigon in 1975 and reunification under communist rule.

The blend of Tam Giáo philosophies shapes everyday behaviors and attitudes in Vietnam, even though the distinct religions of which it is composed may not be practiced formally. The worship of spirits, especially spirits of ancestors, forms a core part of Vietnamese religion, and most homes have altars on which ceremonies are performed on death anniversaries and the Lunar New Year. Funerals are likewise important to ensure the proper transfer of the departed soul and guard against the creation of malevolent ancestors. Ancestor worship and life cycle rituals are essential for the national identity of Vietnam, but through history, a divide has developed between the northern and southern parts of the country, which can be seen in their construction of national identity. The north, more favorable to the communist power structure, has elevated national symbols to replace religious ones, which has resulted in the near apotheosis of figures like Ho Chi Minh, the leader of the revolution. He remains a symbol of national pride, and a mythic model for political conduct. Southern Vietnam looks to figures from the Vietnamese dynasty for emulation, but northern

dominance has led to the suppression of those symbols.

Indigenous Vietnamese Religion

One religion that showcases Vietnam's distinctiveness is the new indigenous religion Cao Dai, short for *Đại Đạo Tam Kỳ Phổ Độ* (Great Religion [of the] Third Period [of] Revelation [and] Salvation), established in 1926. It is a syncretic, monotheistic religion that boasts 2–3 million adherents and whose dogma is based on the direct reception of religious messages from God to the founders. Followers look to join with God or escape from the cycle of birth and death, illustrating at a minimum the synthesis of Christian and Buddhist belief systems. Śakyamuni Buddha represents the high point of revelation, with Lao Ze of Daoism, Confucius, and Jesus all contributing important teachings to the religion. Blending religion with the social, recognized Cao Dai saints include Sun Yat-Sen, a Chinese revolutionary and political leader in the early 20th century; Nguyễn Bình Khiêm, a Vietnamese administrator and poet; and Victor Hugo, the 19th-century French writer and human rights activist.

The other indigenous Vietnamese “official” religion Hoa Hao was founded in 1939 by Huỳnh Phú Sổ, during the French occupation of Vietnam. Its teachings blend a form of lay Buddhism with a strong sense of Vietnamese nationalism, which has resulted in nearly all the professed 2 million followers living in Vietnam or diasporic communities. Hoa Hao has played a role in Vietnamese politics since its inception, supporting Japanese occupation during World War II, in the hope that Cường Để, the Absent Marquis and a descendant of a Vietnamese emperor, would once again rule Vietnam as emperor. Becoming an armed revolutionary group in the 1950s, the group became heavily anticommunist due to conflicts with provincial leaders in the An Giang province and provided one of the few places of reprieve for American and South Vietnamese troops during the 1960s war. In an attempt to rein in what officials consider a dissident group, the Hoa Hao Administrative Council was formed and recognized by the Vietnamese government in 1999. This council was created amid protests by several leaders of Hoa Hao, who condemned the council as an extension

of the government, which culminated in a division in the faith into the Traditional Hoa Hao Church and the Pure Hoa Hao Church. Followers have frequently complained of religious persecution, and two adherents self-immolated in 2005 to protest against the maltreatment. In 2007, the Vietnamese government outlawed Hoa Hao celebrations, an act that created a hard-line group based mainly in the United States standing against a more reformed group under the control of Vietnamese authorities.

Buddhism in Vietnam

Buddhism's history in Vietnam has some parallels to Hoa Hao's trials in the 21st century. First introduced by way of Central Asia (Mahayana) in the first century CE, then from India (Theravada) toward the seventh century CE, Buddhism grew throughout the first millennium of the Common Era. During the Chinese occupation in the early 15th century, Confucianism was given a renewed impetus, and traditional forms of Buddhism began to decline, compounded by the destruction of Buddhist temples by the Chinese. This is also likely the time when Tam Giáo was being formulated, the syncretism taking over customary Buddhist observance. The advent of Roman Catholicism with the French colonial force further repressed Buddhism and furthered the syncretism already highly evident. Vietnamese Buddhism became scattered, and 14 different sects are reported to have been in operation during the 1960s. The United Buddhist Church of Vietnam (UBCV) was founded in 1964 to unify the different sects in the face of a government that was increasingly considered hostile to the faith. In 1981, the Vietnamese government officially sanctioned the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha (VBS), which sought to incorporate Mahayana, Theravada, and Bhiksu Buddhism under a common flag controlled by the government, much to the chagrin of the UBCV. The administration required all Buddhist monks to be approved by and work for the VBS, a measure that has been criticized as an infringement on religious freedom. Tension between the UBCV and the VBS continued into the 21st century, and the UBCV was not permitted to celebrate Vesak Day in 2010—the celebration of the Buddha's birthday and a major festival for Vietnamese Buddhists.

Vietnamese Christianity

Christianity was first introduced to Vietnam in the 16th century, and the country still is home to the fourth largest Roman Catholic population in Asia. The French colonists actively promoted Catholicism as a method of controlling the indigenous people, and Jesuit missionaries were the most active group in the countryside. One particular remnant from the missionary activities of the Jesuits comes from Alexandre de Rhodes, who in the 17th century created a written system of the Vietnamese language using the Roman alphabet. The language, now called Quốc Ngữ, is still in use today and is the national language of Vietnam; it was also used in the first Vietnamese Bible, printed in 1651. After the country split into North and South Vietnam in the 1950s, Catholicism was again encouraged in the South, this time as a bulwark against the communist North. The Roman Catholic Church continued to work with its Vietnamese communities, and in 1988, all Vietnamese Catholics who died for their faith since Christianity's introduction were canonized as Vietnamese martyrs by Pope John Paul II. In 2010, President Nguyễn Minh Triết met with Pope Benedict XVI in the hope of furthering the relationship between the country and the Holy See.

Vietnam at the Beginning of the 21st Century

Freedom of religious practice in Vietnam at the beginning of the 21st century was guaranteed by the Vietnamese government in the Ordinance on Religion and Belief of 2004. However, the government requires the registration of religious organizations, and the ordinance states that any activities performed under the banner of religious freedom that seek “to undermine the country's peace, independence, and unity” are illegal. Missionary activities are also banned in Vietnam. Religious affiliation is marked on identification cards, and the reluctance of Vietnamese citizens to put such information on a communist identification card may in part be responsible for the difficulties in estimating the religious demographics. Churches are not permitted to purchase land directly, though many arrange for parishioners to purchase the land and pass the deed to the church to circumvent the restriction. Along with the complaints of Hoa Hao practitioners noted above,

Protestant communities in the country often report of restrictive treatment and harassment by the state, and there are accounts of discrimination against Christians applying for governmental posts. The Vietnamese government continues in its attempts to improve its international image regarding religious freedom, but instances of repression continued during the 2000s. Religious and ritual organizations, especially Buddhist and Spirit Medium coalitions, play a large role in the burgeoning civil society in Vietnam.

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See also Baha'i; Cao Dai; Ethnic Nationalism; Hoa Hao; Hybridization; Mahayana Buddhism; Missions and Missionaries; Postcolonialism; Pure Land Buddhism; Religious Freedom; Secularization; Southeast Asia; Theravada Buddhism; Vajrayana, Tibetan

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VIOLENCE

Religious traditions are largely nonviolent; yet every religious history leaves a trail of blood and a legacy of swords. Images of violence are a part of sacred iconography, symbolism, and mythology; and in every religious tradition, real acts of social violence are conducted in ways that are thought to be legitimized by divine will. These various images and acts of destruction can be collectively described as “religious violence,” though in many cases the religious ideas and practices that are associated with them are not narrowly theological. Apart from ritual sacrifice, real acts of violence are seldom intrinsic to any specific religious experience—wars are often justified in the name of religion, for instance, when the primary purpose is to extend political power. In this entry, *religious violence* refers to any symbolic or real act of violence that is associated with religion, even tangentially.

Because violence in both real and symbolic forms is found in all religious traditions, it can be regarded as a common feature of the religious imagination. Almost every tradition, for example, has some practice of sacrifice and some notion of cosmic war, a grand moral struggle that underlies all reality and can be used to justify acts of real warfare.

This suggests that religious violence is global, and global in several ways. First, the instances of both symbolic and real expressions of religious violence are universal; every religious tradition manifests it. Second, religious violence is transnational, in that religious movements that are involved in violent encounters are active transnationally, from the Christian crusades to the 20th-century Muslim movements of global jihad. And third, religious violence in the late 20th and early 21st centuries is often a response to globalization; it is related to the movements of social protest against the cultural homogenization of global society. This entry will explore the tradition of religious violence in each religious tradition, relating it to current movements of social change in the global era, and then briefly review the ways in which religious violence has been a subject of scholarly analysis.

Christianity

Perhaps the most central symbol of Christianity recalls an act of violence: the cross, which is the

symbolic representation of the crucifixion of Jesus. To most Christian believers, the symbol represents the sacrifice and redemption of Jesus, but the fact remains that the cross is an execution device. In the iconography of Roman Catholic churches, the body of the dying Jesus is portrayed on the cross in its bruised and bleeding condition; and in many Roman Catholic churches in Latin America, a statue of the broken body of Jesus lying in a casket is prominently on display. Similarly, the central ritual of Christianity, the Eucharist (called “Communion” or “the Lord’s Supper” by Protestants), is a symbolic ingestion of the body and blood of the dying Jesus. According to the Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation, the bread and wine that are consumed during the ritual actually turn into the body and blood of Jesus. Few Christians would think that their participation in this familiar and comforting ritual was an act of symbolic cannibalism, but it is meant to recall the violent death (and miraculous resurrection) of the founder of the faith.

Some theorists—including Sigmund Freud and René Girard—have pointed to the Christian ritual of the Eucharist and regarded it as a symbolic displacement of real violence. That is, the symbolic acting out of violence provides an emotional outlet that reduces the possibility of real violence, especially within the religious community. And it is true that regardless of the blood symbolism of the faith, the teachings of Christianity are primarily pacifist. Only a few passages in the New Testament refer to acts of violence in a positive manner. “I come not to bring peace but bring a sword,” Jesus is said to have proclaimed in Matthew 10:34 (see also Luke 12:51–52). The context, however, indicates that Jesus is talking about the committed discipleship that his teachings demand and how they will create dissention and conflict within families. Similarly, when Jesus is reported to have driven the moneychangers out of the temple, this is taken as an example of his commitment to an unblemished form of religion rather than as advocating attacks on persons one deems immoral. The dominant theme of Jesus’ message is summed up in the admonition of Jesus to respond to violence with nonviolence: “I tell you, do not resist an evil person; if someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also” (Matthew 5:38–39). Early leaders of the church, including Tertullian

and Origen, argued that this position meant that Christians were forbidden from taking human life, and hence they discouraged Christians from serving in the Roman army.

The pacifist attitude of Christian leaders ended when Christianity became the commanding religious tradition of the Roman Empire after the conversion of Emperor Constantine to Christianity in the fourth century CE. Rather than being a minority religious movement, Christianity was now expected to provide the moral foundation for the power of the state; this meant the necessity of justifying the use of military force. Church leaders began to develop the doctrine of just war, which was an idea first used by Cicero and later developed by Church Fathers such as Ambrose and Augustine, who made a distinction between the pure ethics of the “city of God” and the realistic ethics of the “city of man.” Yet the moral license to use force could be abused, which led a later Christian theologian, Thomas Aquinas, to reaffirm in the 13th century that war is always sinful, though it may occasionally be waged for a just cause. The “just war” position continues to be the major Christian statement on warfare: Though killing is immoral, it may be excused in the time of battle for a just cause if its effect is to reduce the climate of violence and injustice. An American Protestant theologian, Reinhold Niebuhr, applied the ideas of Augustine and the “just war” theory to the Allied position in World War II against Hitler. Niebuhr explained, however, that when it was necessary to use military power to stop a situation of violence and injustice, the violence should be applied as swiftly and skillfully “as a surgeon’s knife” (Niebuhr, 1940, p. 132).

Despite the attempts of “just war” theory to contain violence and limit its use, there have been instances in the history of Christianity in which violence was more intemperately associated with religion. From the 11th to the 13th century, for instance, a series of crusades were conducted by European Christians in an unsuccessful attempt to reclaim the holy land of Jerusalem and its environs for Christianity. Though the crusades were aimed at Muslim rule in Palestine, they also attempted to stop the expansion of the Muslim Seljuk Turks into Anatolia and were engaged on attacks on a wide variety of enemies of the pope and established Roman Catholic Christendom, including

Jews, Orthodox Christians, pagans, Mongols, and renegade Christian sects. Another period of excessive violence is related to the Spanish Inquisition in the 16th and 17th centuries. It was originally established to ensure the purity of the faith of those Muslims and Jews who converted to Christianity after Spain reverted to Christian rule after centuries of being under Muslim political authority. But it degenerated into trials, torture, and persecution—including executions—of all religious and social groups suspected to be deviant. The “wars of religion” in France in the 16th century and the Thirty Years War in the 17th century in Germany and elsewhere in Europe were battles between Roman Catholic and Protestant military forces waged more for the purpose of extending political control than to propagate the faith of one side or another. The end of the Thirty Years War resulted in the signing of the Peace of Westphalia; its recognition of political control over communities of constituents is often regarded as the beginning of the modern nation-state.

In the 20th century, one of the bloodiest confrontations involving Christian religious identities occurred in Northern Ireland. Though the confrontation was largely a dispute over two ethnic communities that claimed dominance over the same region, one side was Catholic and the other Protestant, and this gave the encounter a religious character. Some religious leaders, such as the fire-brand Protestant minister, Reverend Ian Paisley, played active roles in fomenting the antagonisms that led to the violence. Elsewhere in Europe, movements opposed to new immigrant communities often had a stridently anti-Muslim and pro-Christian message. In the United States, the rise of right-wing social movements related to the Christian militia were in the background of a series of terrorist incidents in the late 20th century; these included the shoot-out at Ruby Ridge in Idaho in 1992, a bombing at the site of the Olympics in Atlanta in 1996, and an attack on a Jewish day care center in Los Angeles in 1999. The most devastating moment of Christian violence in America was the bombing of the Oklahoma City Federal Building in 1995, which killed several hundred people and was the largest act of terrorism on American soil before the September 11, 2001, terrorist attack. The perpetrator, Timothy McVeigh, was a follower of Cosmotheism, advocated by

William Luther Pierce, who authored McVeigh’s favorite book, *The Turner Diaries*, under the pseudonym “Andrew Macdonald.” The religious ideology of the book is similar to extreme forms of the Christian Identity ideology, which regards Jews and non-White persons as racially inferior and imagines its own ideology and group to be the protectors of true Christendom.

The images of Protestant Christianity are sometimes exploited by political leaders in support of military efforts. Though historically the reformed tradition is strongly pacifist, martial images abound in the rhetoric and symbolism of the contemporary Protestant faith. Protestant preachers everywhere have encouraged their flocks to wage war against the forces of evil, and their homilies are followed with hymns about “Christian soldiers,” fighting “the good fight,” and struggling “manfully onward.” During the “war on terror” following the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, and the subsequent U.S. military invasion and occupation of Afghanistan and Iraq, Christian religious images were appropriated by some political leaders to advance the notion that the American military position was justified in Christian terms.

Judaism

Unlike Christianity, few of the symbols and rituals of Judaism are linked with violence, though they often recall an ancient history that involved war and bloodshed. The Jewish tradition extends back to the biblical era of the Hebrew Bible (known by Christians as the Old Testament), when warfare was conducted with the explicit support of the Divine Being. “The Lord is a warrior,” states Exodus 15:3. Later in Exodus, God states a willingness to send “terror before you” (Exodus 23:27). In Deuteronomy, enemies in distant lands who surrender are allowed to live—though as forced laborers—and the scenes of battle are vivid and bloody.

The Book of Deuteronomy, however, makes a distinction between required wars and wars of expansion. Wars of expansion were justified not for material gain but for defensive purposes—to preempt the possibility of attack by distant enemies—and required wars were necessary to prevent foreign religious influence on the “chosen

people” within the Holy Land. Defense of the community was the only circumstance in which warfare was required and the only situation of military encounter in which Israelites could be certain that God was on their side. Later in the history of ancient Israel, the people were subjected to imperial control, and Israel was not in a position to support warfare. There were, however, militant protests and clashes with the Romans—including the Maccabean Revolt (166–164 BCE) and the revolt at Masada (73 CE).

After the creation of the modern state of Israel in 1948, religious writings emerged that support warfare in the cause of Israeli irredentism. Some of the most extreme positions justified the use of force against the Palestinian Arabs. A fringe movement mobilized around the notions of Messianic Zionism as described in the writings of Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kuk (also spelled “Kook”) and his son. The hope was that Israel would become not just a state that protected Jews but a fulfillment of biblical Israel and the coming of the Messiah to lead it. The militant activist Rabbi Meir Kahane developed his own distinctive “catastrophic Messianism,” as Ehud Sprinzak has called it, reasoning that the Messiah would come only after a great conflict in which Jews were able to prove their loyalty to and respect for God through military might. Critical to the theory was the Jewish claim on Jerusalem and the West Bank, the biblical lands of ancient Israel. This provided a religious basis for the resistance of Israeli settlers that has confounded Israeli-Palestinian negotiations for a peace settlement, and it delayed the establishment of a Palestinian state on the West Bank. Kahane’s own strident anti-Arab position left a legacy of violence, including his own assassination in 1990 by members of the Muslim group in New York City, some of whom were later implicated in the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center. One of Kahane’s followers, Dr. Baruch Goldstein, attacked and killed Muslim worshippers in the 1994 massacre at the Cave of the Patriarchs in Hebron, precipitating a round of attacks on Israeli citizens by the militant Muslim Hamas movement in response.

Islam

Symbolic violence is manifest in the Shi’a branch of the Muslim community during the ritual day of

Ahura on the 10th day of the month of Muharram. It commemorates the martyrdom of the third Imam in the Shi’a tradition, Husayn ibn Ali, the grandson of Prophet Muhammad, at the Battle of Karbala. During this ritual, some of the faithful parade through the streets of Iran, Iraq, and other predominantly Shi’a regions, flagellating themselves with sticks and sharp instruments until they are bloody with usually superficial wounds. This ritual occasion is a call for self-sacrifice from the faithful and a recollection of the bloody struggles in early Shi’a history.

Warfare is a frequent feature of Muslim history, and like the Hebrew Bible of Jews and Christians, the sacred scriptures of Islam provide instances of divine sanction for battle. The Qur’an (also transliterated as “Koran”) is revered as having been transmitted in a series of revelations to Prophet Muhammad by the Angel Gabriel in the Arabian cities of Mecca (or Makkah) and Medina in the first decades of the seventh century CE. After the Prophet was driven from his home in Mecca, he organized a military force that was able to retake his native city and much more: By the end of the Prophet’s life in 632 CE, Islam dominated most of the Arabian world. In such a conflict of armed strife, it is not surprising that the Qur’anic revelations mention military struggle. This sentence from Sura 2 verse 190 of the Qur’an has been much quoted: “Fight in the cause of Allah those who fight you, but do not transgress limits; for Allah loves not transgressors.” But even this sentence preaches moderation in the time of battle, and most of the Qur’an is about nonviolent topics. What is remarkable, in fact, is how seldom the Qur’an speaks about fighting. The entire corpus of the Qur’anic revelations consists of more than 6,000 verses, and only a few—100 or so, less than 2%—refer to warfare.

These few references to fighting, however, have been employed by many Muslim political activists over the years to justify their own military expansion as a defense of the faith. Muslim theology makes a distinction between the world of peace within Islam (whose very name means “peace”) and the “world of conflict” (*dar al harb*) outside the Muslim world, where force is a means of cultural survival. In such contexts, another Muslim theological concept is often employed, the idea of *jihad*, a word that literally means “striving,” often

translated as “holy war.” Islamic law does not allow jihad to be used arbitrarily, for personal gain, or to justify forcible conversion to the faith: The only conversions regarded as valid are those that come about nonviolently, through rational persuasion and a change of heart. Most Muslims regard the true jihad as the internal struggle between belief and unbelief within each Muslim’s soul; but this has not stopped activists from employing the term for political gain.

In the late 20th century, a small number of strident Muslim political activists used the idea of jihad to justify their militant position against the secular states of the Middle East and their alleged sponsor, the United States. According to an Egyptian activist, Abd al-Salam Faraj, who was accused of being implicated in the assassination of Egypt’s prime minister Anwar Sadat, jihad is a “neglected duty” of Muslims. By that, Faraj meant the call to take up arms against secular political authorities. Though mainstream Muslims have had nothing to do with what they regarded as his extremist rambling, some political activists eagerly accepted it, since it provided the theological justification they needed for their violent acts. Among those who implemented the idea of antiseccular jihad were terrorist organizations in Egypt such as the al-Gama’*a* al Islamiyah and the anti-Israeli Muslim movements of Hamas in Palestine and Hezbollah in Lebanon. These movements have been directed toward nationalist goals, and a much broader sphere of warfare is imagined by the global jihadi movement represented by al Qaeda and the rogue activists associated with Osama bin Laden (d. 2011).

On September 11, 2001, 19 Muslim hijackers took control of four commercial airplanes shortly after they departed from Boston, Newark, and Washington, D.C., airports. Two were aimed at the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York City, and approximately an hour after they crashed into the buildings, both towers collapsed, killing thousands. Another plane targeted the Pentagon, the headquarters of the U.S. Defense Department near Washington, D.C., and destroyed one section of the building. Though most Muslims around the world were horrified over the events of 9/11 and regarded the perpetrators as illegitimate Muslims, their own writings indicate that their terrorist actions were undertaken in a religious

manner. Though no specific moral or religious justifications are given for the acts of 9/11, the reference to great wars in Muslim history implies that the perpetrators regarded themselves as soldiers in a great spiritual battle against the enemies of Islam. At the same time, the rituals of purification that were specified in the written instructions given to them imply that the hijackers were preparing to undertake a religious rite. Some of the references in the instructions indicate that they should kill their victims in the manner of a religious sacrifice. Mention is made of the rewards that the hijackers would receive in heaven for their suicide missions, but heavenly rewards were clearly not the main point. Rather, the participants were made to feel honored that they were chosen to be on a great spiritual mission.

Hinduism and Sikhism

Justifications for warfare are found in the ancient Indian text dating from the fourth century BCE, the *Arthashastra*. The very name of the volume indicates its religious purpose: It is knowledge (*shastra*) about political and economic issues—*artha*—which are one of the four essential aspects of the Hindu way of life. Responsibility for political life is ultimately in the hands of the rulers, and thus the *Arthashastra* is largely aimed at showing how a king should rule, especially when confronted with enemies of the state.

One of the Hindu tradition’s most beloved texts, the Bhagavad Gita, is a sermon delivered in the context of war. It is part of the great epic, *The Mahabharata*, which comprises a shelf of books that were written down several centuries before the time of Christ. At the heart of the epic is a great battle on the field of Kurukshetra in North India between two sets of cousins, the Kauravas and the Pandavas. As one of the princes, Arjuna, prepares to command his chariot into battle, he reflects aloud about the meaninglessness of warfare. He will either kill or be killed, he despairs, and either way it will involve taking a life or being destroyed by one of his own cousins. The Bhagavad Gita then sets out several reasons why killing in warfare is permissible. It includes the argument that the soul cannot actually be killed: “He who slays, slays not; he who is slain, is not slain” (Bhagavad Gita 2:19). It also states that the ethical duties of someone in

the Kshatriya (warrior) caste is to fight, so violence is justified in the maintenance of social order.

The great Indian leader, Mohandas Gandhi, is remembered as an apostle of nonviolence, and indeed he has interpreted the Bhagavad Gita as being an allegorical reference to the cosmic conflict between good and evil. Yet Gandhi also allowed for an exception to his position of absolute pacifism when a limited act of violence would prevent a greater amount of violence. The examples he gave were the justification of halting a sniper in the midst of an act of killing or the defense of a people against an invading army.

In the 20th century, some of the movements supporting Hindu nationalism have involved violence. In the independence movement against British colonialism, some militant Bengalis were inspired by Kali, the goddess of destruction. The use of violence in India's independence movement was justified by the Hindu nationalist leader V. D. Savarkar and other leaders of the militant *Rashtriya Swyamsevak Sangh* (RSS; National Service Organization). The RSS was a precursor to a revived Hindu nationalist movement at the end of the 20th century, which brought the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) to power from 1998 to 2004. Though the leaders of the BJP denounced violence, a mob of its supporters attacked and destroyed a Muslim mosque in the town of Ayodhya, which stood on the spot that was said to be the birthplace of the god Rama. The BJP is also accused of fostering an attitude of intolerance that encouraged violent anti-Muslim attacks in various parts of the country.

The Sikh religious community in the North Indian state of Punjab is largely peaceful and shares many of the nonviolent precepts of the Hindu tradition to which it is historically related. The history of the Sikh tradition, however, is punctuated with military encounters between Sikh leaders and Muslim leaders of the Moghul Empire. The most faithful members of the Sikh community are known as the "the army of the faithful" (*Dal Khalsa*), and the Sikh symbol is a double-edged sword. The two sides of the sword are to indicate both spiritual and worldly power.

The idea of worldly power was taken literally by the Khalistan movement of Sikh separatism, which erupted in the 1980s in the Punjab. Thousands of Sikhs and Hindus were killed in a decade-long struggle that involved acts of terrorism and brutal

police responses. In 1984, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi authorized Indian troops to invade the holiest Sikh shrine, the Golden Temple, in the city of Amritsar. Thousands of pilgrims at the spot were killed, along with the radical Sikh leader Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, a rural preacher who had become the symbol of the movement's leadership. Later that year, Mrs. Gandhi's own Sikh bodyguards turned on her with automatic weapons, and her assassination was the cause of even more Sikh and Hindu violence. In 1985, an Air India airplane exploded en route from Canada to India killing all 329 passengers. This was the largest act of air terrorism involving a single plane, and Sikh activists were suspected in the incident.

Buddhism

Even before Buddhism became a part of China's religious heritage, ancient texts provided spiritual insights for social order. These included sanctions for war. Said to be the oldest military treatise in the world, the Chinese text *The Art of War* provides a spiritually balanced way of approaching warfare. It was written in the fifth century BCE in ancient China by Sun Tzu, "Master Sun"—which is most likely an honorific name given to a general, Sun Wu. *The Art of War* is a practical manual for fighting that has been applied to martial arts as well as to warfare between states. Like the ancient Indian text the *Arthashastra*, *The Art of War* implies that kings in ancient China conduct warfare only if they have a justifiable reason for doing so. Moreover, the manual insists that the conduct of war be consistent with the balanced state of harmony that is advocated in Chinese religious texts.

A similar stance was taken in Buddhist texts related to the martial arts. In Japan, in the early 17th century, for instance, Zen master Soho Takuan provided the philosophical underpinnings of the Japanese martial arts and the samurai warrior art of swordsmanship. In *The Unfettered Mind*, Takuan describes the correct attitude that is required to engage in battle and undertake the martial arts. He does not ask whether the conflict is worthy; he assumes that the fight is to uphold social order and is not for personal gain and that nonviolent options are not available to resolve the conflict. The question for Takuan is how to conduct an unavoidable conflict in a way that is consistent with Buddhist

principles. Takuan argues that Zen Buddhist practices are able to transform these actions through discipline, concentration, and abandoning extraneous thoughts.

The Buddhist doctrine of nonviolence, therefore, is not absolute. According to some Buddhist writers, traditional Buddhist teachings allow for some exceptions to the rule of nonviolence. They state that five conditions must be satisfied to prove that an act of violence has taken place: (1) something living must have been killed, (2) the killer must have known that it was alive, (3) the killer must have intended to kill it, (4) an actual act of killing must have taken place, and (5) the person or animal attacked must, in fact, have died. The third condition—the intention to kill—is often the most difficult to prove and allows for a relaxation of the absolute rule of nonviolence. One might kill in the process of defending one's home or country without having intended to kill those who were threatening. On a more mundane level, many Buddhists will eat meat as long as they have not killed the animal themselves or intended that the animal be killed. Though this understanding of Buddhist ethics can justify an armed defense of a nation, to use military force in a nondefensive way—to expand political control, for instance—would be prohibited under Buddhist ethics just as it is under Jewish, Christian, and Islamic ethical standards.

In Theravada Buddhist societies such as Thailand and Sri Lanka, where Buddhism is virtually the state religion, Buddhist precepts provide for the defensive use of the state's military force. The protection of Buddhist culture has also been a principle that has justified protests against the government—as in Myanmar (Burma), Tibet, Thailand, and Sri Lanka. In Sri Lanka, one of the leaders of the movement of independence against the British was a Buddhist monk. Members of Buddhist monastic orders have also been involved in opposition to the government after independence. A monk assassinated Prime Minister S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike in 1959, and monks were supporters of the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna and other government opposition movements in the last decades of the 20th century. When a Buddhist monk was asked how, in light of Buddhist teachings on nonviolence, he could justify his support for violent antigovernment activities, he

explained that we live in an immoral world, implying that survival in a sinful world required strong measures, including militant means of defense (Juergensmeyer, 2008, p. 125).

In Japan, an eclectic Buddhist movement carried out one of the most dramatic acts of terrorism related to religion. Members of the Aum Shinrikyô movement in Japan released sarin gas, a poisonous nerve gas, in the Tokyo subway system in 1995; it killed a dozen people and injured thousands. This was the only act of religious terrorism that involved a weapon of mass destruction—poisonous gas. Many Japanese denied that the Aum Shinrikyô movement was actually Buddhist, but the teachings were taken from both Japanese and Tibetan Buddhism, along with iconography from Shaivite Hinduism and apocalyptic imagery from Christianity. It advanced prophecies about a future catastrophic war, an "Armageddon" that would culminate in World War III. Like many other violent religious movements, it claimed that its own actions were justified as defensive measures in response to larger violent confrontation.

Studies of Religious Violence

The earliest scholarly theories that have dealt with religious violence begin with the symbolic aspects, especially the ritual of sacrifice. The great 19th-century sociologist, Émile Durkheim, regarded the practice of sacrifice as central to the notion of religion. Within the Durkheimian school, Henri Hubert and Marcel Mauss developed the notion of sacrifice as the seminal religious act, a mediation between the sacred and the profane realms of reality. A more recent anthropological theory in the Durkheimian tradition comes from Maurice Bloch, who shows how sacrificial ritual in many societies can be an empowering act, a way of identifying with a victim to overcome the fear of victimization and become a conquering warrior and hunter.

Sigmund Freud provided a psychological dimension to the study of religious violence. Freud speculated that many of the myths and legends of religion provided a way of symbolic enacting violence and thereby displacing the drive to real acts of violence. Freud regarded the myth about Oedipus's desire to kill his father and seduce his mother as the prototype of all myth. Although many aspects of Freud's theories are discredited, the idea that

symbolic violence can displace the threat of real acts of violence has endured. Ernst Becker, for instance, has said that the violent images in religion can help deny the reality of death. Weston LaBarre, examining the Ghost Dance religion of the Plains Indians, argued that religion is an attempt to deny the destructive forces in life and seek strength in the transcendent. The French literary theorist, Georges Bataille, combined ideas about religion, sex, violence, and capitalism in a theory that borrows from Freud in trying to explain acts of control as attempts to restore the shattered self. Perhaps the most discussed theory in the Freudian tradition is the position of René Girard. In *Violence and the Sacred*, Girard restates Freud's point that the violent symbols and rituals of religion evoke, and thereby vent, destructive impulses. Where Girard differs from Freud, however, is in his thinking about what motivates the violent urges in the first place. Girard rejects the idea of aggressive instincts and instead identifies the basic impulse as "mimetic desire," which is the longing to imitate one's rival and to desire what one's rival desires.

Other social scientists have approached the matter of religious violence differently. Instead of looking at religious phenomena isolated from society, they place the study of religious violence within their social and political contexts. Karl Marx, for instance, thought of the violence of class conflict as helping explain how religion could be used as an instrument of exploitation.

At the end of the 20th century, the rise of new religious politics and the dramatic acts of terrorism associated with it brought new analyses of the phenomenon of religious violence. Martha Crenshaw distinguished between "instrumental" and "organizational" approaches to terrorism. David C. Rapoport traced the historical cycles of religious terrorism, and Ehud Sprinzak described the radical religious politics that could emerge in times when authority structures were weak and open democracy was not balanced by discipline and control. Martin Riesebrodt developed a theory of religion based on the development of new religious practices in response to catastrophic social situations, and Mark Juergensmeyer explained why the cosmic war images of religious traditions appealed to radical activists who lost faith in secular nationalism. Robert Pape argued that suicide terrorism was

undertaken largely for political reasons and religious ideology was simply an enhanced motivation for those who were looking for moral legitimacy for their violent acts. These analytic insights have been attempts to make sense of symbolic and real instances of religious violence, not only in the history of religious traditions but also in their contemporary manifestations.

Mark Juergensmeyer

See also Cosmic War and Cosmic Conflict; Islamism (Political Islam); Nonviolence; Politics and Religion; Terrorism

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VIRGIN ISLANDS (BRITISH)

The British Virgin Islands, a British territory in the Leeward Islands chain of the Caribbean Sea, consists of four major islands—Tortola, Virgin Gorda, Anegada, and Jost Van Dyke—plus many smaller ones; its religious character derives from British colonialism and 20th-century American missionary activity. Tortola is the largest island, and about 82% of the population lives there. According to the 1991 census, most of the inhabitants are Christian: 33% Methodist, 17% Anglican, 10% Roman Catholic, 9% Church of God, 6% Seventh-Day Adventist, 4% Baptist, 2% Jehovah's Witnesses, and 15% other Protestant.

While the islands were initially inhabited by Arawaks and Caribs, European colonizers killed most of the native peoples even as they brought in African slaves to work on sugar plantations. After

the Dutch initially settled Tortola in 1648, the English wrested control of it in 1672, along with the rest of the islands that would make up the British West Indies—until their designation as a British colony called Leeward Islands (1872–1960) and their subsequent status as an autonomous British Overseas Territory since 1967. Until the 18th century, Anglicanism was the official religion, although Anglican ministers preached to White audiences only, fearing that Christianity would make the slaves rebellious.

Moravian and Methodist missionaries began converting slaves in the 18th century. Apart from learning Christianity, the slaves gained literacy, permissible assembly, and social status among other slaves. A policy of noninterference with the political and social institutions surrounding slavery required missionaries to teach the slaves obedience to the White plantation owners and submission to secular authorities. Since Methodists like John Wesley generally opposed slavery, however, plantation owners suspected Methodists of aiding slave revolts on the islands in 1799. The enthusiastic style of worship, combined with literacy and status, helped turn most of the islands' Black population to Methodism by the mid-19th century.

In the early 20th century, indentured workers from India immigrated to the islands, practicing Hinduism and Islam from their homes. Minority communities of Hindus and Muslims continue to live on the islands today. Laborers from Lebanon, incorrectly called Syrians, were already Christian, and most of them joined the Catholic Church.

After World War II, American fundamentalist and evangelical churches began proselytizing in the Caribbean, fueling the swift growth of these churches on the British Virgin Islands. Since the 1970s, the numbers of Jehovah's Witnesses and Seventh-Day Adventists have increased steadily. Alongside growing urbanization, the Pentecostal and Holiness traditions also expanded rapidly, incorporating African-derived shouting and ecstatic worship practices alongside Christian theology. Charismatic worship is a hallmark of many modern Caribbean churches, whether Catholic or Protestant.

Dusty Hoesly

See also Latin America; Missions and Missionaries; Virgin Islands (U.S.)

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VIRGIN ISLANDS (U.S.)

The U.S. Virgin Islands, a territory of the United States in the Leeward Islands chain of the Caribbean Sea, consists of three major islands—St. Croix, St. John, and St. Thomas—plus smaller ones; its religious diversity stems from European and American missions mixed with African forms of ecstatic worship. A majority of the population lives on St. Croix and St. Thomas. According to the 2001 census, most inhabitants are Christian: 42% Baptist, 34% Roman Catholic, 17% Episcopalian, and 7% other.

Although Spain never established permanent settlements in the 16th century, explorers and planters warred with the native Caribs, who usually refused to convert to Catholicism, killing most of them over the next two centuries. Danish colonizers arrived in the late 17th and early 18th centuries, bringing slaves from West Africa to work on sugar plantations in what was then called the Danish West Indies. During this time, the Danish National Church, a form of Lutheranism, was the official religion in the colonies, although Denmark also recognized Roman Catholicism, the Dutch Reformed Church, and Judaism. Religious toleration reigned during the colonial period.

Moravian missionaries traveled from Germany to St. Thomas in 1732 to minister to slaves. Like the Methodists who followed them, Moravians taught slaves literacy as they converted them. Anglican missions to the islands increased in the late 18th century, as did the Jewish population. Although Catholic missionaries were already allowed to preach to slaves since the 1760s, in the

early 19th century, U.S. Archbishop John Carroll oversaw the expansion of Catholicism in the Leeward Islands, though mostly ministering to the Irish on St. Croix. By 1819, the Catholic Church began an independent diocese for the Caribbean Islands. Spiritual Baptists, a syncretistic religious movement combining Catholic, Baptist, and Orisha (from the Yoruba people of West Africa) beliefs and practices, emigrated from Trinidad to St. Croix in the late 19th or early 20th century. Their worship includes shouting, spirit possession, and mourning rituals.

The United States bought the islands in 1917, and under U.S. control, with no official state support, the Danish National Church on the islands collapsed.

In the 1960s, conservative evangelical church missions from the mainland United States converted thousands of islanders, outgrowing the mainline Protestant churches. Pentecostal and other charismatic faiths gained a popular following as well. However, the Baptist faith practiced by many Virgin Islanders is distinctively Caribbean, incorporating elements of African and Holiness worship such as ecstatic movement and experiencing the Holy Spirit during services. The post-World War II period also saw the growth of Hinduism, Islam, Vodou, and Rastafarianism, as emigrants arrived from India and the Middle East as well as neighboring islands such as Puerto Rico and Haiti.

The Catholic Church, witnessing the rise of revivalist worship within its own ranks, is turning to young priests and charismatic African missionaries to enliven services and add parishioners, bridging the gap between secular tastes and sacred beliefs and practices. The use of Caribbean gospel music in churches, for example, is creating a new cultural identity and communal ethos among the faithful in the Virgin Islands.

Dusty Hoesly

See also Latin America; Missions and Missionaries; Virgin Islands (British)

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VIRGIN MARY

The plurality of representations of the Virgin Mary is rivaled only by the multifaceted meanings attributed to these representations across religions and continents. Revered as the virgin mother of Jesus, Mary of Nazareth is described in the New Testament as having conceived a child through the action of the Holy Spirit, thereby fulfilling the prophesy of Isaiah 7:14.

In Roman Catholic theology, “Mariology” is a specific field of thought. Mary is considered the human vessel through which Christ became human. However, she is set aside from other humans by four dogmas. Her divine motherhood, declared in 431 CE, recognizes that she was predestined to be the Mother of God. The second dogma is her perpetual virginity, even after giving birth to Jesus. Third, the doctrine of the immaculate conception was declared a dogma in 1854. It states that she bore no trace of original sin. The most recently established dogma (1950) is her bodily assumption into heaven at her death.

The Qur’an recognizes the virgin birth of Jesus. According to Islam, Mary (Maryam) is a particularly pious woman blessed by God, and in contrast with Christianity, her son (Issa) is not considered the son of God but rather the messenger of God.

The Protestant tradition criticizes the Catholic emphasis on Mary and her role as intercessor with Christ and God. Catholic Mariology is interpreted as a form of idolatry. Protestants reject the Marian dogmas and do not refer to Mary as the Mother of God, although they accept that Mary gave birth to Jesus who is fully God.

Within the Catholic world, the significance attributed to Mary is multifaceted. Our Lady of Guadalupe, for instance, is the name given to the dark-complected Virgin Mary who appeared to an Indian on the hill of Tepeyac in 1531 and who now

encapsulates Mexican national consciousness. Although the Virgin Mary was a patroness for Spanish conquerors, she embodied the revolutionary promise of liberation for Indians worshippers. William Taylor notes that her purity carried the promise of redemption and that her child was the source of a new beginning. Another layer of meaning is attributed to her role as an intercessor and how as such she legitimized acceptance of colonial authority by inspiring people to seek her mediation rather than address injustices directly. These contrasting interpretations coexisted through time with different emphases.

The plurality of interpretations has taken on a new dimension with the contemporary feminist critique of Mary’s virginity and her identification as the new Eve (her absolute obedience to God’s command contrasting with Eve’s disobedience). Her unyielding virginity is interpreted by some as a sign of female power and autonomy and by others as a reification of male power implying that the only path to spirituality for women is chastity.

Ariane Zambiras

See also Marian Cults and Apparitions in Latin America; Our Lady of Guadalupe; Roman Catholicism; Women’s Roles

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VIVEKANANDA (1863–1902)

Swami (“master”) Vivekananda is one of the best known Hindu teachers in the Western world. A disciple of the Bengali saint Ramakrishna (1836–1886), he came to attend the World’s Parliament of Religions held in Chicago in 1893. A powerful orator, his inspiring speech at this meeting led to the first formal introduction of Hinduism to the

Americans. Vivekananda was also a social reformer and the founder of the Ramakrishna Mission; the Vedanta Societies he inspired have branches in many parts of the world.

Born Narendra Dutta in the city of Kolkata (formerly Calcutta), Vivekananda had a traditional upbringing at home and a secular education. In 1881, he met the spiritual teacher Ramakrishna and became his disciple, giving up his educational career and eventually becoming a monk. After his father's death in 1884, Narendra had to take care of his family, but following Ramakrishna's death in 1886, he also became the leader of a small spiritual family, a monastic brotherhood comprising 15 fellow disciples. Very soon they all became renunciants. Traveling all through India, he learned about its people and also began to see how the teachings of Ramakrishna, Hindu texts, and Vedanta could be made relevant not just to his individual spiritual well-being but to all Hindus and, in fact, the whole world.

In 1893, Vivekananda sailed to America to attend the Parliament of Religions in Chicago. Due to a miscommunication, he arrived several months before the conference and had no funds for subsistence. Helped by strangers in America, he eventually attended the Parliament. He began his speech addressing the delegates as "brothers and sisters" and received a standing ovation from the delegates. Most people trace the history of Hinduism in America to this famous address. Sister Gargi (born Marie Louise Burke, 1911–2004), one of the best known biographers of Swami Vivekananda, writes that on that day, the Vedanta movement started in the West.

An eloquent speaker, Vivekananda was invited to speak at several forums in the United States. Vivekananda's primary teaching was a form of Hindu philosophy called Vedanta, based on Hindu sacred texts such as the Bhagavad Gita and the Upanishads and as interpreted by his teacher Ramakrishna. The Vedanta Society of New York was founded in 1894. He preached in America and Europe for the next several years and returned to India in early 1897. That year, in India, Vivekananda started both the Ramakrishna Mission, an organization in which monastic personnel and laypeople could come together to disseminate a practical, engaged Vedanta, and the Belur Math, a monastic order, in West Bengal.

When Vivekananda returned to America in 1899, he lectured in several organizations on topics such as "Christ, the Messenger" and "The Way to the Realization of a Universal Religion." With his disciples, he started a number of Vedanta Societies around the country. In April 1900, Vivekananda founded the Vedanta Society of Northern California, known earlier as The Vedanta Class, and The Vedanta Society of San Francisco. The purpose of the organization was to help him in his work in India and for Americans to study Vedanta philosophy. After touring Europe, Constantinople, and Cairo later that year, Vivekananda returned to India and died when he was only 39 years old, in 1902.

Vivekananda opened up Vedanta and parts of Hindu thought to people of all faiths by interpreting religious texts as having "universal" messages and by understanding all human beings to have a divine potential in them. He was also practical; just as he wanted the Western world to understand India's spiritual contribution, he wanted Indians to have access to Western education while at the same time being conversant with and proud of their own heritage. Vedanta Societies are now found in many parts of the world.

Vivekananda is known as one who spoke of a common identity at a time when the word *Hindu* was not in common use and sectarianism was the rule; thus he not only brought Hindu ideas to the West, he can also be seen as one who brought the idea of a common Hinduism to Hindus in India.

Vasudha Narayanan

See also Hinduism; Vedanta Society; World's Parliament of Religions

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VODOU

Vodou is Haiti's national religion and incorporates elements from traditional African religion with Christian images and practices. The term *voodoo* is a creation of the European American imaginary and should be rejected as it has been misconstrued to designate irrational, baseless, and unfounded myths about Vodou practices. Other spellings used over the years included the French traditional spelling *Vaudou*, and also *Vodun* or *Vodoun*, and even the Spanish *Vodu*.

In 2010, about 70% of Haitians are still officially Roman Catholics, whereas another 30% (some would say more) are Protestants, belonging to Baptist, Adventist, or (increasingly) Pentecostal denominations or other less mainstream churches. Despite these formal religious affiliations, the commonly held view is that most Haitians are *Vodouizan* (Vodouists) to one degree or another; some even go as far as to say that Haitians may be 100% Vodouists in terms of worldview. Even if all Haitians are not active participants in the faith, without doubt, Vodou beliefs represent key components of the Haitian national consciousness and serve as repositories of knowledge and aesthetics. The reality is that for most Haitians, whether they live in rural or urban settings, Vodou is above all a way of life and mode of being involving the continuation as well as transfiguration of ancestral traditions. Simply put, for the *sèvitè*, those who serve the spirits, it is a way of seeing the world, a particular mode of interaction with others, and ultimately a ritualized system of healing and of relating to larger cosmic forces within the universe. As a sophisticated philosophy and complex religious system, Vodou regulates this worldly existence while harmonizing humans' rapport with the divine.

Origins

Vodou developed in the crucible of colonial life. Haitian Vodou is a neo-African spiritual system, philosophical construct, and religion whose core resides largely in Dahomey (presently Benin) and in Yorubaland, in western Nigeria. The term *Vodou* derives from the Fon word for "god" or "spirit." It also signifies in a larger sense "in the

company of the spirits" or "belonging to the family of the spirits." Another common interpretation is "introspection into the unknown." There are other meanings. In Ghana, for example, spirits are called Vodous. Haitians call the deities *Lwa*, *anj*, and *mystè*. What is distinctive about Haitian Vodou additionally is that it incorporated the powerful systems of the Bakongo peoples in Central Africa, creating a synthesis that did not occur elsewhere in the Caribbean or in Latin America. Also, earlier influences were found extant from Islamicized, enslaved Africans. Vodou had been a powerful ideological force in waging the wars of liberation in Haiti, in forging the revolutionary movements that led to *the dismantling of slavery and independence*. It is certain that Haitian leaders and the mass of insurgents were well versed in these African and neo-African traditions, especially since as many as two thirds of the population had been born in West and Central Africa and not in the colony of Saint-Domingue. Vodou in Haiti seems to have been a deliberate amalgam of various African traditions, cobbled together from similar systems in an effort to unify Africans from various parts of the continent and speaking different African languages well into the first two decades of the 19th century, after independence was proclaimed. Vodou also incorporated some aspects of the religion of the Arawaks, Freemasonry, and, of course, Catholicism. From the latter, it integrated more than juxtaposed the dates of celebrations for the saints now associated with the Vodou *Lwa*, the Catholic iconography, and the prayers that many still use to open Vodou ceremonies (*sèvis Lwa*). Vodou—together with the Creole language, which evolved from a similar base—served as a unifier, particularly in the provinces, when the populations retreated from national public life in the form of a quasi-permanent *maronage*, in protest against having been marginalized by the Haitian power structure that emerged after independence in 1804. Haiti then found itself isolated and ostracized, but this also gave Vodou time to develop further until the Concordat signed between the Haitian state and the Holy See in 1860. In those six decades, it acquired some of its final forms, unimpeded, alive in both rural and urban settings, not having to share the national space with other religious traditions. After that, things changed. Vodou had to contend with persecutions

from both the state and the Catholic Church during various times in its history, notably in 1896, between 1913 and 1941, during the aftermath of the Duvalier regime, and currently, as Vodou is under constant attack from various Protestant sects.

Philosophical Tenets

Haitian Vodou's theological structure is similar to other religious forms found in Africa and elsewhere on the American continents, North and South. It shares similarities with Cuba's *la Regla de Ocha* (Santería) and with Brazilian Candomblé in all its variants. Haitian Vodou, as other African or African-derived religions, lends itself to monotheistic faiths in the establishment of one supreme, omnipotent God. This supreme entity, Gran Mèt or Bondye, however, is immaterial in every sense of the word, as prayers are not addressed to "it." Below the Gran Mèt are literally hundreds of deities, Lwa, that are emanations of natural forces, energetic and electromagnetic entities even, that are rendered into ethical principles or societal values and, then, anthropomorphized. As illustrations, Danbala Wedo is *knowledge*, while the Ezili spirits represent *love* in its many guises. *Justice* becomes Ogou, and its many manifestations. Gede is *life* itself, sexuality, and death—all poles of the same continuum. Human beings and all of nature are associated with one or the other deities, with whom they share their vital energies. Each person has a guardian angel so to speak, the Mèt Tèt, who leads and guides the person. This would provide the basis for African/Haitian psychology, pedagogy, and other disciplines that place the person at the center of creation. In Haiti, Vodou is the superstructure. It transcends religion, and beyond spiritual discipline, it infuses all other societal systems. Vodou is never far removed from all fields, be they economics, politics, family structure, healing, or the arts, providing an integrated and integrative world sense that goes a long way in explicating the country's history and cultural life.

Rituals

The Lwa are grouped primarily in two major pantheons, the Rada (Fon), the sweeter spirits with cooler energy, and the hotter deities from the

Petwo-Kongo traditions; some see the latter more as Creole spirits from this continent who respond to particular needs of the Haitian population at given times. For instance, Ogou, the warrior who gives strength and courage, seems to be a favorite in ceremonies in rural settings or overseas, where Haitians struggle to create a safe space. Depending on the call placed by the drums or songs—drumming and songs are central elements of the ceremony and are carefully orchestrated—Ezili may come, for example, as a Freda (Rada) or as Jewouj or Dantò (Petwo). During ceremonies, Lwa mount their *chwal*, their horses, joining in the life of the living to deal with health and family crises and spiritual imbalance, to allow energy to flow better, and to advise, chastise, guide, and restore balance and harmony, continuously opening channels of communication between spirits and humans; the Lwa also visit in dreams. Each Lwa has its color(s), tree, scents, *vèvè* (a ritual drawing traced at the beginning of ceremonies), songs, day of the week, and favorite food carefully prepared and placed on beautifully crafted altars during *sèvis*. Sophisticated rituals and initiatory rites are part of the process leading to the priesthood. The male (*houngan*) and female (*manbo*) priests are ultimately responsible for the needs of their Vodou families; the *hounsi* are initiates who have undergone the first level of initiation (*kanzo*) and assist in the rituals at the house or the temple (*hounfò*). In the peristil (temple), one finds the *djèvo*, the initiation room and the center post, the *potomitan* through which the Lwa travel from under the water, from *anba dlò*, where they reside.

Future

Haitians typically never discuss Vodou; they live it. This is understandable in light of the circumstances under which it emerged and evolved and due to the pervasive misrepresentations of the West. Vodou was not recognized as a national religion until the constitution of 1987 and the presidential decree of April 4, 2003, which officially made it a religion *à part entière*, deserving equal rights along with other faiths. As more and more practitioners in Haiti acknowledge their involvement in Vodou and as the religion becomes less stigmatized overseas, it is now more accepted for Haitians and others hailing from the African

diaspora as well as *Blan* (non-Blacks), to practice it openly and with pride in Haiti and in other parts of the world, including the United States, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Canada, and France. Estimates of Vodou practitioners overseas range above 1 million. Contemporary research and advocacy work has started to change the image of Vodou in Haiti and abroad. Pioneer scholars include Milo Rigaud, Harold Courlander, Katherine Dunham, Maya Deren, and, more recently, Karen McCarthy Brown, among many other active researchers. We also note the efforts of groups such as KOSANBA, the Scholarly Association for the Study of Haitian Vodou, and associations such as Zentrail, Bodè National, and the *Konfèderasyon Vodouizan Ayisyen*, or the 2008 election of a national representative for the religion: Max G. Beauvoir. All in all, the presence,

role, and importance of Haitian Vodou in Haitian history, society, and culture are unarguable. Vodou is recognizably a part of the national ethos and should be embraced as such.

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See also Ancestors; Caribbean; Haiti; Latin America

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WAHHABIS

The Wahhabis today represent an ultraconservative, orthodox interpretation of Islam that is characterized by belief in and adherence to absolute monotheism (*tawhid*), giving particular attention to ritual correctness and the centrality of Shari'a (Islamic law). Although the heartland of Wahhabism remains Saudi Arabia, the use of the kingdom's tremendous financial resources for missionary activity (*da'wah*) has resulted in global influence.

Wahhabism was originally founded in central contemporary Saudi Arabia by the 18th-century religious and legal scholar Muhammad Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab as an Islamic revival (*tajdid*) and reform (*islah*) movement. The original movement called for a return to the Qur'an and Hadith (records of the sayings and deeds of Prophet Muhammad) for the purpose of historical and thematically contextualized reinterpretation (*ijtihad*) and rediscovery of their either specific or universal meaning, as opposed to the then current practice of imitation of past scholarship (*taqlid*). Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab preached a program of invitation (*da'wah*), in which preaching and a gradual educational process were intended to lead to social transformation and consideration of public welfare (*maslahah*). Jihad was therefore limited in both scope and importance in Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab's writings and was to be used only in the defense of a Muslim community under military attack or the threat of imminent military attack.

Wahhabism entered its political phase through the formation of an alliance between Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab and Muhammad Ibn Saud in 1744, a relationship that remains at the core of the contemporary Saudi state. The original alliance demarcated the boundaries between religion and politics, as the imam was responsible for the religious leadership, instruction, and guidance of the state, while the emir was responsible for political and military leadership. Following the death of Ibn Saud in 1767, the state usurped a portion of the imam's prerogative, embarking on a program that used religion, specifically the command to promote virtue and prevent vice, to justify state consolidation and the establishment of national unity. The addition of the teachings of the medieval scholar and jurist Ibn Taymiyya to the Wahhabi tradition by the early 19th century further placed religion at the service of the state through its justification of jihad as holy war against those deemed to be state opponents or those failing to live according to the Wahhabi interpretation of Islam.

Defined by its emphasis on *tawhid*, which does not permit association of anyone or anything with God (*shirk*), Wahhabis across history have confronted and sometimes engaged in conflict with other sects or trends in Islamic thought considered to be engaged in associationism, most notably Shi'is and Sufis, through accusations of their being unbelievers (*takfir*). This *takfiri* ideology was developed into a jihadist trend by certain extremists in the 20th century, purportedly justifying jihad as holy war against any individual or state accused of failure to abide by their interpretation of Islam.

Particularly since 9/11, the Saudi religious establishment and independent shaykhs have emphasized the differences between jihadist trends and the Wahhabi tradition, sometimes referred to as Salafi. Alongside those who seek to maintain the religious status quo, there are a plurality of voices calling for greater empowerment for religious scholars outside the religious establishment (notably the *Sahwis*) and for reinterpretation and reform of Islamic thought and practice within the kingdom, including by encouraging interfaith dialogue, cooperation, and coexistence.

Natana J. DeLong-Bas

See also Islam; Islamism (Political Islam); Jihad; Politics and Religion; Saudi Arabia

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WALES

The story of religion in the United Kingdom region of Wales is closely bound to her struggle for identity and autonomy to preserve and protect her culture and her language against the encroachments of England, her mighty neighbor to the east. Druidism is the earliest recorded religion in Wales, but the arrival of the Romans and then the spread of Christianity overwhelmed this and other native British cultures. In the 500 years before the invasion of the Normans in 1066, Welsh Christianity flourished, but the new French rulers imposed religious unity by demanding recognition of and obedience to the church headed by the Archbishop in Canterbury. This was reinforced during the Protestant Reformation, when King Henry VIII broke with the pope and the Church in

Rome to assert his political supremacy in his kingdom as well as his religious authority in 1534.

To carry the new doctrines to the people, the Bible was translated into vernacular languages, and in Wales, both the faith and the language were boosted by this move. Protestantism thus became well anchored, and during the religious and political upheavals in England, the Welsh people moved closer to Puritanism. Many members of Puritan sects such as Quakers and Baptists fled to America to escape persecution. The tradition of religious dissent continued in Wales and was marked by a series of religious revivals, the first of which was the Methodist movement in the 18th century, and John Wesley himself journeyed around southern Wales preaching.

The new conditions of the Industrial Revolution changed Britain economically, politically, and socially, and Nonconformist groups, which also included the Congregationalists, moved away from the Church of England, beginning a great movement of chapel building so that the congregations might have their own places of worship. However, even as Wales underwent a last great revival around 1904 to 1905, religion and the strict moral code of the Nonconformists were being superseded by socialist movements, especially in the industrial heartlands of the southern Welsh valleys. The temporary prosperity brought by the two world wars gave way to economic depression and religious decline.

The Church in Wales was disestablished in 1920, becoming a member church of the Anglican Communion, but today technological change and increasing secularism mean that Christianity is losing its impact. Today, all the main world religions have communities in Wales. The oldest Muslim community in Britain was established by Yemeni migrants in the 1850s in Cardiff, the home of the first British mosque, of which there are now 40 in Wales. It is estimated that there are about 5,000 Hindus in the country (total population 2.9 million) and a similar number of Buddhists, most of whom live in communities in central and western Wales. The Jewish community in Wales numbers around 2,000, which is also approximately the number of Sikhs living there. In recent years, Druidism has been revived in parts of Wales where people have reverted to pre-Christian traditions and beliefs.

Moya Jones

See also Protestant Christianity; Scotland; United Kingdom

WAR ON TERRORISM

The phrase *War on Terrorism* (also known as “the War on Terror” or “the Global War on Terror/Terrorism”) refers to the broad military, political, and legal initiatives launched by the United States and its allies following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Although the phrase had been used as early as the 19th century, it came into widespread usage by the Bush administration following the 9/11 attacks to refer to a global campaign against terrorist organizations, individuals, and state sponsors of terrorism that included, but far exceeded, the al Qaeda network. In his 2002 State of the Union address, for example, President Bush defined the War on Terror very broadly as a campaign not just against al Qaeda but also against the “axis of evil,” consisting of Iraq, Iran, North Korea, and their “terrorist allies.” From its inception, the War on Terror had complex religious implications, some explicit and others less so.

While President Bush used the term *crusade* only once to describe the War on Terror, he did make consistent and repeated use of the language of “good versus evil” and numerous invocations of God, the Almighty, and Providence. Perhaps the clearest example of this use of religious rhetoric appeared in President Bush’s 2003 State of the Union address, in which he made the strongest case for the invasion of Iraq. Here, the president first identified the “evil of international terror” with the “evil” of Saddam Hussein’s regime; and he then identified the United States as the nation that has received the “call of history” to aid in the spread of freedom as God’s gift to humanity:

Americans are a free people, who know that freedom is the right of every person and the future of every nation. The liberty we prize is not America’s gift to the world; it is God’s gift to humanity. We Americans have faith in ourselves, but not in ourselves alone. We do not claim to know all the ways of Providence, yet we can trust in them, placing our confidence in the loving God behind all of life and all of history.

Many critics of the War on Terror argued that its sweeping rhetoric has been used to justify a wide range of problematic and at times illegal agendas.

These include the preemptive invasion of Iraq; a vast program of warrantless wiretapping; the use of harsh interrogation techniques such as waterboarding (which the United States itself considered torture after World War II), indefinite detentions, a network of secret CIA prisons, and other alleged human rights abuses. Moreover, many critics questioned the fundamental logic of declaring war on a tactic such as terrorism rather than on a specific nation or group, which would seem to imply a state of perpetual and unwinnable war.

In March 2009, the Pentagon under the new Obama administration ceased to use the phrase *War on Terror* and began to adopt the alternate phrase *Overseas Contingency Operation* to describe its efforts to combat global terrorist organizations. After the killing of Osama bin Laden by a U.S. military raid on his hideout in Abbottabad, Pakistan, on May 2, 2011, many observers declared that the “War on Terror” was finally over.

Hugh B. Urban

See also Cosmic War and Cosmic Conflict; Islamism (Political Islam); September 11, 2001; Terrorism

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WEBER, MAX (1864–1920)

Max Weber, an original mind and one of the most influential thinkers of the 20th century, laid the ground for the theoretical and empirical foundations of the sociology of religion and the comparative analysis of civilizations. His classical essay *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of*

Capitalism is a refutation of a vulgar historical materialism that dismisses the role of religious values and beliefs in social action. In this early essay, published between 1904 and 1905 in the journal *Archive for Social Science and Social Policy*, Weber addresses the problem of the relationship between religion and modernity and the impact of religious values and beliefs on the modifications of human behavior and its subsequent effects on the rise of modern capitalism. His analysis focuses on one form of inner-worldly asceticism: Calvinist Puritanism.

Weber's thesis argues that the rise of modern capitalism was the unintended consequence of the actions of the Puritans, who were seeking a "right religious form of life" to reach salvation. The Puritans, following Calvin's theology, thought that the only way to attain salvation was to dedicate themselves to the construction of the Kingdom of God on earth. The Puritans redefined their relationship with nature and with themselves through hard work and religious discipline. This "redirectionality" of people toward nature was possible only by the radicalization of the Christian doctrines of salvation and the theological conceptions of the inscrutability of God and predestination of souls—the idea that God's intentions are beyond human comprehension and that salvation does not depend on one's own effort. No individual, according to Calvin, has the power to decide his or her salvation; only God has this power. Our works do not contribute anything to this purpose. In Calvin's writings, the desperate Puritan found a "path" that clearly set the steps to true religious piety and salvation. In their search for certainty, the Puritans found a form of corroboration of being chosen by God in the realization of their callings and in their everyday jobs and activities. As a consequence, every detail of life changed, including habits of work, social relationships, and even sexual behavior. In this process, asceticism and hard work, the main expressions of Calvinist conversion, permitted the creation, accumulation, and reproduction of capital. The irony of this phenomenon is that Puritanism undermined its own purposes. Capitalism grew, and Puritanism eventually faded away; the world became the scene of a ceaseless market and not the domain of Puritan morality.

However, the thesis that predestination had a fundamental role in the rise of capitalism is only a surface-level view of Weber's work. Weber

considered that "rational capitalism" and "Protestant ethic" are ideal types used to emphasize one of the multiple factors that determined the emergence of modern capitalism. Weber undertook a comparative analysis of other civilizations to determine the specific social conditions that were fundamental in the rise of Western capitalism.

For Weber, capitalism is a new form of restructuring social space according to a specific form of rationality that was possible only in Western societies. In looking for answers to this singularity, he undertook a work of comparative scholarship. Between 1916 and 1917, Weber published his essays on the religions of India, China, and Ancient Judaism. In 1920, these essays were published in a single book titled *Collected Essays on the Sociology of Religion*.

In searching for this uniqueness, Weber emphasized that Western capitalism is the final culmination of a complex mix of social factors that involved calculability, formal and fixed rules, written notations, and social coordination based on a single moral standard, among other factors. Weber identified three problems that he did not fully develop in *The Protestant Ethic*: (1) the rise of modern science and its struggle against magic, (2) the role of brotherhood and equality in the destruction of a society based on kin relationships (family relationships) and their replacement with individually based relationships, and (3) the role of social carriers who diffuse and incorporate in their activities and actions the theories and doctrines of charismatic leaders.

After analyzing Confucianism, Daoism, Hinduism, and Buddhism, and contrasting their ethics and ideas with the theology of the Puritans, Weber argues that these religions impeded the suppression and abolition of magic and rested on family ties, which hindered the development of a universal morality and its corresponding legal institutions. Weber concludes his comparative analysis by highlighting the revolutionary force of the notions of brotherhood and equality of prophetic Judaism and their importance for the rationalization of the world in Western societies. Messianic prophecy in ancient Judaism provided a morality in which rewards and punishment were distributed according to a universal and single moral standard, replacing traditional morality based on the distinction between the in-group and the out-group. Moreover, the defeat of magic by Judaism

represented an essential precondition for the rise of Western rationality. The liberation of religion from magic is one of the fundamental criteria for rationalization and for a modern economic mind-set.

Despite the importance of these “utilitarian” dimensions of religion, Weber considers that they are not the only fundamental aspects of the multi-form and complex nature of religion. He views religion as a form of “existential justification” against the chaos, fragility, and senselessness of human life.

In the history of religions, there have been “specialists” in the administration and innovation of the goods of salvation: priests and prophets. Weber relates specific social activities such as the intellectualization of the world with specific social groups. Weber views at least two forces that operate in the transformation of religion: differentiation and rationalization. Weber sees the first distinction of religion from magical coercion in the differentiation of the magician from the priest. The process of differentiation is simultaneously the expression of an increasing rationalization. The recognition of the power of a god and of his character as a personal lord is the fundamental prerequisite for the distinction between religion and magic. The god is no longer an object of coercion. The god becomes an autonomous entity with his own plans and desires. The only way to obtain his favor is through entreaties and gifts. The priest becomes the new mediator between the overlord and its human supplicants. In this way, the differentiation of gods from demons entails the rise of the priesthood as a distinctive social group, and this social distinction is an essential *precondition* for further rationalization.

Like the opposition between the priest and the magician, Weber defines the prophet in contrast to the priest. The latter defines his authority based on his official position, his office. The prophet receives, in contrast, his legitimation and authority from his personal calling: revelation and charisma. In this sense, the prophet is similar to the magician insofar as the prophet exerts his power by virtue of his personal gifts. However, the prophet is not a mere entrepreneur of the goods of salvation; he is a carrier of a doctrine or commandment. The prophet is someone who establishes a new moral order, such as Solon or Moses. The establishment of a new system of law has historically required the need for legitimation, and a firm and common

foundation for legitimacy has always been religion, which secures “divine approbation.”

In his unfinished opus magnum *Economy and Society*, Weber undertook a synthesis of his ideas. In this work, Weber insists that religion is a social matrix of meaning that provides significance and guidance to social actors who, in contexts of uncertainty, need to answer basic questions about their existence. Among those questions, the most important is concerned with the destiny of the self and the precariousness of human existence: death and suffering. For Weber, the constitution of the social group is not the mere result of material interests but the historical confluence of ideal needs, for instance, the need for a logical explanation of the existence of evil in the world. The rise of a particular group is the outcome of the multiple social forces that underlie diverse human needs. For Weber, events, works, and human accomplishments are the expression of particular historical crystallizations.

The impact and influence of Weber’s theories are enormous. Since the translation of the German edition of *The Protestant Ethic* into English by Talcott Parsons and the subsequent efforts of structural functionalism to integrate Weber’s sociology into its own categories, the work of Weber has stimulated original research on the relationship between politics and religion in Robert Bellah’s notion of civil religion, and on the interrelationship between Axial religions and multiple modernities in the work of S. N. Eisenstadt.

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See also Asceticism; Axial Age; Bellah, Robert; Charisma; Civil Religion; Confucianism; Hinduism; Judaism; Mahayana Buddhism; Modernization; Multiple Modernities; Theravada Buddhism; Vajrayana, Tibetan; World Religions

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WESTERNIZATION

See Modernization; Secularization

WOMEN'S ROLES

The role of women refers to characteristics and behaviors of females within a religious tradition, as well as the influence that particular women have had on the development of the tradition. Long ignored, women's role is a topic that has attracted a great deal of interest and controversy since the advent of the feminist movement in the past century. While early feminists criticized religions for legitimating patriarchy, later research has shown that women's role in religion varies considerably. It varies not only across different religions but within any one religious tradition and can change significantly over time. To assess women's role, one must consider not only their place in the church or temple but also in the domestic realm. One must distinguish between official teachings of religion and popular movements and between what is taught and what is actually practiced. This entry will discuss patriarchy, changes in women's role in religion over time, and variations in women's role within particular traditions.

Patriarchy in Religion

Patriarchy (male dominance) has been the norm both in universal world religions and in indigenous religious tradition for most of recorded history. Almost all religions articulated the primary role of women as wives and mothers, limiting their participation and leadership in religious institutions and subordinating them to male authority in both the private and the public domain. By designating women's roles as divinely ordained, religion provided powerful justification for gendered norms.

The three great monotheistic religions have historically been patriarchal in structure. Jewish women were not counted in the minyan (the quorum of 10 men that is necessary to have public worship) and were excluded from the rabbinate. While observant male Jews are bound by 613

mitzvot (commandments), the Talmud exempts women from all positive time-bound commandments, including synagogue attendance on holy days. The only exception, three women's mitzvot (weekly preparation of bread and lighting of Sabbath candles and the observance of purity laws during menstruation), do not challenge the assumption that women's primary role is to take care of the home and children.

Christian women were similarly excluded from the priesthood in the Catholic Church and from ministry among Protestants. While women were included in public worship, the Bible admonishes women to be silent in church and to submit to their husband's authority. The ideal role for women was modeled on Mary, either a virgin or a mother. Proper motherhood required marriage, which meant that the only role available to most Christian women was to be somebody's wife. Monastic life offered alternative religious roles for women as a scholar or teacher or even as leaders in religious ritual. But such roles were limited to the confines of the monastery and the company of other women.

The separation of female space was also important in Islam, even without a monastic tradition. In some Islamic cultures, women went to separate prayer services. More commonly, the mosque was considered male space (like the synagogue), while women prayed at home. As does the Bible, the Qur'an stipulates male authority in both the home and religious institutions. The imam has always been male, even when he is leading a female prayer service. A wife should be obedient and can be punished if she is not; and the custom in many cultures of women's seclusion to the private quarters of the home along with wearing a covering (hijab) in public spaces further reaffirmed her primarily domestic role.

The role of women in the major Asian religions was similarly circumscribed. In Confucian philosophy, which provided the basis for gender roles in the religions of China, Japan, and other East Asian cultures, women's yielding to male authority is articulated as reflecting the natural order of the universe. In India, Hindu religious law, as articulated in the *Dharmashastras*, such as Manu's, describes a woman's primary role as serving her husband as a living god. Her religious duties were to bear him sons, keep the house, and, following the mythical

model of Sita, selflessly devote her life to his welfare. A pious woman must pay respect to various deities, but the priests conducting services in Hindu temples to both gods and goddesses were always male. While Buddhism has no priesthood, its institutional leadership has been predominantly male. The sangha was theoretically open to women, and female monasteries were established in some cultures, but the vast majority of Buddhist orders were male. The guidelines for monastic rule articulated different behavioral precepts for men and for women and subjected female monasteries to the administrative oversight of male colleagues. In short, it is not difficult to find support for feminist claims that religion has served to legitimate patriarchy.

There are exceptions to the patriarchal pattern. Remarkably, the sacred texts of all these religions include descriptions of women as public leaders or even goddesses: Deborah (a prophet and judge) in Judaism, Aisha (an author of the Hadith) in Islam, Mary Magdalen (receiving instructions from the resurrected Jesus to tell the others of his return), Durga (a warrior goddess) in Hinduism, and Prajapadi (founder of the first women's sangha) in Buddhism. But these legendary ideals did not generally translate into the institutional roles available to ordinary women.

Institutional leadership was possible for women in religions with a significant monastic tradition, such as Buddhism and Christianity, which offered a religious alternative—the role of nun—to women who did not wish to marry and have children. While female monasteries often had fewer resources and were administratively subject to male authority, they provided education and leadership opportunities often unavailable in the surrounding culture. But these exceptions do not challenge the underlying assumption that women's primary religious role is within the home.

There were also exceptional individuals—women, who despite institutions that subordinated them, had an important and lasting impact on their tradition: Jewish women such as Beruriah, a second-century Talmudic scholar; Catholic writers such as Christine de Pizan, who spoke out against the misogynist writing of her time, or nuns such as Hildegard of Bingen, who produced beautiful music that is still played today; among Protestants, Mother Ann Lee, founder of the Shakers, whose followers believed her to be the second coming of

Christ, and Frances Willard and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, who advocated not only for women's suffrage but also for women's right to follow God's call to the ministry; in the Islamic tradition, Aisha, the youngest wife of the prophet Muhammad, the presumed author of numerous Hadith and said to have ridden into battle with the Sunnīs; and in the Vajrayana Buddhist tradition of Tibet, biographical accounts of women who became siddhas (enlightened ones), such as Mandarava, a Tantric teacher. It is possible that there were more such women whose lives were not recorded. The official history of most religions is largely "his story," with the contribution of women rarely noted. Feminist scholarship has begun to fill in the gaps, recovering writings by and about women as well as sociological data about the lives of women in the past. But much work remains to be done.

Indigenous religions are also sometimes viewed as an exception to the patriarchal pattern. In fact, most indigenous cultures do assign specific roles to men and women, with female religious activities typically focused on family and children, while males preside over public religion. Thus, women played a leadership role in the celebration of a girl's coming of age ceremony among the Apache. But in the Lakota Sun Dance, an annual celebration that draws Native Americans from many different tribes, women were historically excluded from participation. One area in which women have long had public religious authority is as a healer or a medium. In many indigenous cultures, the collection of healing herbs was a female role, passed on from mother to daughter. The role of shaman or diviner, who acts as a medium between humans and the spirit world, is also often open to women. Examples of female religious healers include *curanderas* in Mexico, diviners in East Africa, or shamans in Korea. But how typical these roles are remains a matter of debate. Indigenous religions are small and have not been as extensively studied as the world religions. They often rely on oral transmission, so we lack reliable data about their past. Finally, they often coexist in a culture dominated by one of the patriarchal world religions, so it can be difficult to sort out what is indigenous and what reflects outside influence. Given the currently available information about indigenous religions, it appears that they are no more gender neutral than world religions. In short,

while there are variations in the details, all religions seem to be characterized by some degree of biological determinism.

Changes in Women's Role

History suggests that restriction or subordination of women's role may not be inherent in a particular religion. Rather, it develops and evolves as various generations interpret and apply a tradition. Religious traditions dynamically interact with the culture around them: They both shape it and are shaped by it.

Goddess Religion

We do not know whether women's role in religion was always subordinate. Some scholars hypothesize that patriarchal world religions were preceded by a matriarchal, goddess-worshipping culture, in which women were free and had equal if not more power than men. This peace-loving, unarmed culture was wiped out by the invasion of warlike nomadic hordes that imposed patriarchal religions. While there is little doubt that many ancient cultures did worship both male and female deities, what impact this had on the role of human women remains unclear. The theory that religion once empowered women has considerable popular appeal, but the evidence for it comes mostly from archaeological remnants of preliterate cultures, the interpretation of which is disputed.

Liberating Founders and Patriarchal Institutions

In religions for which we do have written records, women's role changes over time. All the major world religions emerged many centuries ago in cultures that were deeply patriarchal, where women were widely viewed as not only physically but intellectually inferior and were, like children or slaves, considered the property of men. We should not be surprised, therefore, that sacred texts are rife with sexism. But at least some of the founders of the great religions also challenged the values of their time. In Hindu culture of the fifth century BCE, the religious life was open only to men, but Gautama Buddha allowed women into the sangha. In the context of the Jewish culture of his time, it was quite radical for Jesus, a rabbi, to have female disciples. Muhammad

established laws that protected women's right to education, income, and inheritance. Reportedly, the prophet's wives were actively engaged in the early Muslim community, and although some elders opposed it, Muhammad resisted their efforts to exclude women from Friday prayer.

Unfortunately, the founders' efforts to improve women's role were almost always eroded over time. There is ample evidence of women teachers in early Christianity, but this gives way to an all-male priesthood by the second century. Female Buddhist monastic orders were established during Gautama's lifetime but soon declined and had all but vanished by the sixth century. After Prophet Muhammad's death, women were gradually pushed out of public religious participation. As contemporary sociological research has shown, new religions often challenge the values of their culture, and later when the movement becomes institutionalized, moves from sect status to that of church, it adapts to mainstream cultural values. In most parts of the world, patriarchy was mainstream. So patriarchy in religion went unchallenged until the modern age.

The Feminist Movement

Women's roles in many religions began to change with the coming of modernity in the late 18th and the 19th centuries. The rise of individualism, which gave birth to democratic movements, combined with the increasing power of science to undermine the authority of religious institutions, preparing the ground for feminists to question patriarchal understandings of women's role. Feminism is often perceived as a secular movement that undermines the traditional values of religious institutions from the outside. But the efforts to reform religion are almost always driven by some of the most faithful followers of a religion, those willing to risk disapprobation or even punishment by religious authorities. And sometimes, the impetus to expand women's roles in secular society originates in religion. Thus, many of the activists for women's suffrage in mid-19th-century America were evangelical Christians. Religious feminists sought to change women's role so as to empower and include them fully in the practice and leadership of their traditions. They questioned laws and traditions that restricted women's role to the home and promoted

women's leadership in church and synagogue. As a result of these efforts, women are now ordained as ministers in many Protestant churches, as rabbis in Reform and Conservative Jewish communities, and as abbots of Buddhist monasteries.

Variations in Women's Role Within Traditions

The understanding of women's role in a given religion is based on traditions, many of them centuries old. But tradition must be interpreted, and not everyone interprets it the same way. The secularization of many societies, particularly in wealthier, industrialized nations, has led to a split in many religious traditions between more liberal, modernist branches, which are open to feminist interpretations, and fundamentalist ones, which are not. While Anglicans and Reform Jews, for example, began ordaining female ministers and rabbis in the 1970s, Catholics, fundamentalist and evangelical Protestants, and Orthodox Jews still do not permit the ordination of women, and they affirm woman's commitment to the domestic sphere as primary. Even within conservative religious communities, however, there are debates over gender, with women's role often serving as a symbol of denominational boundaries, distinguishing between religions that adapt to changing cultural mores and those that do not.

Variations in women's roles are also found in mystical movements that stress direct religious experience. Here, written doctrines or institutional rules that may exclude women are trumped by the Spirit of God. In Hassidic Judaism, Chana Rochel could become a female rebbe in 19th-century Russia. In Pentecostal Christianity, there were women such as Aimee Sample McPherson who, filled with the gift of the Holy Spirit, became charismatic leaders of major churches. And there are numerous female gurus, such as Ma Jnanananda, who are revered as divine incarnations by thousands of followers in devotional Hinduism.

There have always been differences between how the leadership of religious institutions understand women's role and how ordinary people practice it. The sacred texts and laws of any tradition are produced by a literary elite, usually male, whose teachings tend to exclude women from formal religious practice. In many cultures, however,

women do play important roles in domestic rituals and may even lead public rituals when the need arises. In rural India, Hindu women preside over rites celebrating the birth of a child, and they conduct puja to the goddess Devi or to Lord Krishna to protect their husbands or family. In the United States, we find women preaching in fundamentalist Christian churches whose formal teachings would seem to exclude women from such roles. In states that have a shortage of Catholic priests, there are nuns leading all aspects of parish life, including religious services (a traveling priest is brought in to celebrate the Eucharist).

Differences in the role of women in various religions can also be caused by factors external to religion, such as the level of education or the degree of church-state separation where the religion is practiced. It is a common prejudice among Westerners to think of Christianity as less patriarchal than other religions because women in predominantly Christian nations such as England or the United States have more choices and rights than those in other parts of the world. Such a judgment overlooks the fact that there is a vibrant fundamentalist Christian movement that defends traditional women's roles and thousands of Western Christian women who believe that God created them to serve a husband in the home. The freedoms enjoyed by Western women may derive less from Christianity than from a secular legal system that prevents state enforcement of religious laws and allows individuals to choose whether or not they want to follow traditional gender roles. Role choices are also expanded by education, which allows women to question patriarchal customs and offers alternative interpretations of their tradition. In India, for example, Hindu women living in rural areas are still largely confined to the role of wife and mother, and their religious behavior is oriented to preserve the welfare of their husbands. Among educated women, however, we find numerous doctors and engineers and a nascent feminist movement that is beginning to articulate Indian goddesses as a source of women's empowerment.

Women's role in religion continues to be the source of much debate. Traditionalist explanations assert that gender roles are ordained by God (or a wise leader) and should not be changed. In this view, placing women under male authority and assigning them primarily domestic roles reflects the natural differences between the sexes. The role of

women is different, but it is no less valuable than that of men. Modernist interpreters suggest that women's roles in religion reflect the patriarchal values of ancient cultures—cultures in which slavery was morally acceptable and women had the legal status of children—that are no longer appropriate today. Feminists point out that it was men who wrote the sacred texts and established the institutional rules of organized religion. These men's articulation of women's role reflected their own experience of women in their lives as mothers, wives, daughters, or lovers—women whom they depended on and loved but who may also distract them from their religious pursuits. In this view, assigning women a different role from men only perpetuates women's subordination.

Christel Manning

See also Christianity; Gay and Lesbian Theology; Gender; Goddess; Hinduism; Islam; Judaism; Mahayana Buddhism; Native North American Religions; Neo-Pagan Movement; Sexuality; Theravada Buddhism; Vajrayana, Tibetan

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charity based in the United Kingdom. According to its website, the WCF “works to develop better understanding, cooperation, and respect between people of different faiths.” The WCF accomplishes this work by sponsoring lectures, conferences, and travel opportunities and by publishing newsletters and books that address interfaith issues.

The WCF was founded by Francis Younghusband and several of his associates in 1936. The son of John Younghusband and Clara Jane Shaw, Francis Younghusband was born in India in 1863. After spending parts of his childhood in both India and England, where he was raised a Christian, Francis Younghusband later joined the military and traveled extensively throughout India, China, and Tibet. In a 1936 BBC broadcast published in *The Listener* magazine, Francis Younghusband traced his inspiration for the WCF to the years he spent abroad, during which he encountered and befriended numerous individuals of the Confucian, Buddhist, Hindu, and Muslim faiths.

The creation of the WCF was also influenced by Younghusband's participation in the second World Parliament of Religions, held in Chicago in 1933. In his scholarship on the WCF, Rev. Dr. Marcus Braybrooke notes that Younghusband's involvement with the World Parliament of Religions encouraged him to organize his own international gathering committed to building fellowship among people of different faiths. While several titles were considered, such as “The All-Faiths Fellowship,” ultimately the meeting was dubbed the “World Congress of Faiths.” Held at University College, London, in 1936, the first WCF brought together prominent scholars of world religions, including Yusuf Ali, D. T. Suzuki, and Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, as well as various clergy and religious leaders. According to Braybrooke, it was agreed that the aim of the WCF was not to create a new synthetic religion but rather to generate understanding and a sense of unity between the world's religions. After this conference, the WCF became an interfaith organization with an executive body and president, and since its founding, the WCF has sponsored numerous interfaith gatherings and initiatives.

The initial vision for the WCF was international in scope, which to this day is reflected in the organization's popular journal *Interreligious Insight*

WORLD CONGRESS OF FAITHS

The World Congress of Faiths (WCF) is an interfaith membership organization and registered

(formerly *World Faiths Encounter*). In recent years, the work of the WCF has been concentrated primarily in the United Kingdom, where it is a member of the Inter Faith Network, an association of British interfaith organizations. From its inception to the present, the WCF has been a leading voice in the interfaith movement, helping forge respect and understanding among people of different faiths at the international and domestic levels.

Jason J. Hopkins

See also Global Religion; World's Parliament of Religions

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WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

The World Council of Churches [WCC] is a fellowship of 349 Christian denominations representing all inhabited geographical regions of the earth. The council began to be organized in the late 1930s, but World War II (1939–1945) delayed its formal inauguration until 1948. Its principal purpose is as a forum for dialogue and cooperation among member churches and their partners in other churches, faiths, and agencies. Primary programmatic emphases include theological discussions, mission and evangelism, peace and justice, ecological integrity, the role of churches in international affairs, and interreligious relationships.

The preponderance of WCC member churches are Protestant, Orthodox, Anglican, or Old

Catholic. Several Pentecostal bodies have joined the WCC in recent decades. The Roman Catholic Church is not a member of the WCC, but relations between the two bodies have been positive since the Second Vatican Council of the early 1960s. There is a Joint Working Group between the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches, and there are joint commissions made up of delegates from both fellowships.

Historical Background

The modern ecumenical movement, dedicated to the search for church unity, began in the late 19th century, when Christians regularly began to pray and work across ecclesiastical boundaries in search of greater oneness in Christ. Discussions arising from the World Missionary Conference held at Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1910 led to the creation of the International Missionary Council and several other movements for closer interchurch relations. Among these movements were “Faith and Order,” concerned with matters of doctrine and church government; “Life and Work,” focusing on cooperation in social, medical, and service ministries; and an alliance of churches acting to promote world peace.

Following World War I (1914–1918), the Eastern Orthodox synod of Constantinople addressed a letter “to all the churches” proposing the establishment of a fellowship of Christian churches similar in form to the League of Nations. In 1937 to 1938, church leaders agreed to establish the WCC. In August 1948, representatives of 147 churches were able to assemble in Amsterdam and constitute the WCC. Most of the founders were from Protestant and Anglican churches in western Europe and North America.

In 2010, WCC membership stood at 349 churches and reflected the dramatic growth of Christianity in Africa, in Asia, and throughout the Global South.

The chief executive officer of the WCC is the general secretary. This office has been filled by Willem A. Visser 't Hooft, a Reformed minister from The Netherlands (while the WCC was in the process of formation, 1938–1948, and following the WCC's inauguration, 1948–1966); Eugene Carson Blake, a Presbyterian minister from the United States (1966–1972); Philip Potter, a

Methodist minister from the West Indies (1972–1984); Emilio Castro, a Methodist minister from Uruguay (1985–1992); Konrad Raiser, a minister of the Evangelical or Protestant church in Germany (1993–2003); Samuel Kobia, a Methodist minister from Kenya (2004–2009); and Olav Fykse Tveit, a Lutheran minister from the Church of Norway (2010–present).

The WCC holds its assemblies every 6–8 years. The First Assembly at Amsterdam was convened in 1948, and in 2006 the Ninth Assembly was held in Porto Alegre, Brazil. The next assembly is due to be held in 2013 in Busan, South Korea. The WCC central committee and executive committee meet regularly to guide the work of the council between assemblies.

Achievements Since 1948

In the decades since the founding of the WCC, new councils of churches and other ecumenical bodies in different countries and regions have created a genuinely worldwide network of which the WCC is an integral part. This network inspires its members to share resources of all kinds— theological, liturgical, spiritual, material, and human.

Since the papacy of John XXIII and the Second Vatican Council, the Roman Catholic Church has become a full member of many national and regional ecumenical organizations, international commissions, and the Joint Working Group that coordinates activities with the WCC.

Shared convictions on faith, life, and witness have enriched theological reflection. For example, theologians from different church traditions working together in the Faith and Order joint commission produced a 1982 statement on “baptism, eucharist, and ministry” that has led to greater understanding and changed relationships between churches of different confessional traditions.

During the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in mid-January each year, Christians are drawn together in common worship and meditation. The annual theme is developed by the WCC-administered Faith and Order commission with the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.

The WCC has also helped coordinate educational ministries among its member churches and, since the aftermath of World War II, has provided

a laboratory for graduate theological education at the Ecumenical Institute in Bossey, Switzerland.

Since its creation, the WCC has supported and inspired church participation in struggles for justice, peace, and the integrity of all creation. One example is the support given by churches, through the WCC’s Program to Combat Racism, to the struggle against apartheid in South Africa. Other examples include support for efforts to defend human rights in Latin America during the decades of military dictatorships, to advance the reunification of Korea, and to end internal conflicts in Sudan. One aspect of the WCC lies in its function as an NGO advocating for its members’ concerns in arenas related to the United Nations and particular governments.

Recognition of the importance of interreligious dialogue and relations with other faiths, as well as of the integrity of all creation, has been a particular hallmark of the WCC. From the end of the 20th century to the beginning of the 21st century, the WCC has focused on the churches’ solidarity with women and the overcoming of violence throughout the world.

Criticisms of the Council

The WCC has a diverse constituency and an even wider diversity of people outside its membership. Critics abound.

Some voices from the churches have accused the WCC of succumbing in its policies and activities to secular and political values. Orthodox critics have asked whether the council’s worldview owes too much to Enlightenment philosophy, while Western conservatives have found the Marxist underpinning of liberation thought exerting undue influence on WCC statements concerning international and economic policies.

In the 1970s and 1980s, the WCC came under intense criticism for its role in the antiapartheid struggle throughout southern Africa. In the United States, there were notably negative critiques of the council in the media, for example, in *The Reader’s Digest* and the CBS News magazine program *60 Minutes*.

After the International Missionary Council was merged into the WCC in 1961, many conservative Evangelicals argued that the interdenominational missionary task had sunk to second-place status at

best, playing a supporting role to the WCC's interest in causes of social justice and world peace. One response to the merger was the creation in 1974 of a new force for evangelical mission outside the WCC, the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelism.

A similar complaint has been made by some proponents of the Faith and Order agenda, claiming that the social and international interests of WCC leaders have reduced the resources available for doctrinal and ecclesial discussions.

Others have complained that the institutional nature of the WCC encourages a "cheap unity" that seeks easy accommodations and avoids hard choices. In such circumstances, old patterns of domination remain unopposed, and prophetic voices are muffled by means of bureaucratic devices.

Throughout its history, the WCC has sought to foster dialogue with its critics, to listen for and learn from uncomfortable truths, and to build new forums where more constructive cooperation among Christians is possible.

Initiatives With the Future in View

New forms of commitment are emerging in the life of the WCC. Young people are finding their own expressions (and thus assuming ownership) of the Christian movement. As the most comprehensive body among the modern expressions of inter-church dialogue and cooperation, the WCC has committed itself to building new relationships with nonmember churches and agencies through autonomous platforms such as the Global Christian Forum, the centennial celebrations of Edinburgh (1910 to 2010), and the ACT Alliance for inter-church diaconal service and relief.

Theodore A. Gill Jr.

See also Ecumenicalism; Protestant Christianity; Religions and World Federation; Religious Dialogue

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WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM

Based in Davos, Switzerland, and incorporated as a nonprofit foundation in 1971, the motto of the World Economic Forum is "entrepreneurship in the global public interest." Seeking to develop a next-generation regime in which values are as important a basis as rules, it links social development and economic progress as essential to sustainability. In the process, since the beginning of this millennium, the forum has found it necessary to integrate religious perspectives into governance agendas.

Faith communities are now integrated into the structures through the Global Agenda Council on Faith as well as through the Community of Global Religious Leaders and the Benchmarking Series. In doing so, the forum provides a basis to consider religion in association with conventional economic matters such as industry and politics. Discussions at the Summit on the Global Agenda, in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (November 2008) highlighted the status of religion on the global agenda. The council proposed that religion can contribute to business, society, and conflict prevention and peace building.

In December 2009, in collaboration with the Nielsen Company and Georgetown University, the forum conducted an opinion poll in 10 countries over Facebook. The respondents were from France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Israel, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, and the United States. Of the more than 130,000 respondents over

the age of 18 years, almost 80% were under 30. The questions were intended to determine personal values, the sources of the values, and the role of the same values in global economic and governance systems.

More than two thirds of the people who responded to the poll believe that the current economic crisis is also a crisis of ethics and values. Only 54% of the respondents believe that universal values exist; religion and faith are most likely to affect values in the United States, Saudi Arabia, and South Africa. Only 18% of the participants aged 18–23 selected this as the primary source of their values. A detailed discussion of the poll on values and ethics appears in Part 1 of the May 2010 report, titled “Faith and the Global Agenda: Values for the Post-Crisis Economy.” Part 2 of the same report provides “Perspectives From Global Religious Leaders.” The council encourages a fundamental rethinking of moral and regulatory frameworks and promotes global interconnectedness and a more communitarian spirit.

The statements from several religious leaders provide comments from their traditions. The information they provide is intended to contribute to the values of interconnectedness and community. The plurality of religious resources also reflects the commitment to a multistakeholder process in tackling global challenges.

With the capacity for and interest in multiple discourses, an initial dialogue and cooperation between Islam and the West has commenced through the Community of West and Islam Dialogue (C-100). The first of a series of benchmarking reports commenced in 2008 and focused on the state of dialogue between Islam and the West.

Community partners and supporters include His Royal Highness Prince Hussam bin Saud bin Abdulaziz al Saud, Saudi Arabia; The Ronald S. Lauder Foundation, the United States; and Xenel Group, Saudi Arabia. Participants include 1,000 member companies that typically are enterprises each with more than \$5 billion in turnover, strategic partner companies, industry partner companies, and event partner companies.

Lester de Souza

See also Economic Issues and Religion; Religious Dialogue

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WORLD RELIGIONS

The idea of world religions became a popular way of thinking about the diversity of the world’s religious traditions in the latter half of the 20th century. Religious communities were thought of as “world religions” if they were historic religious traditions with a worldwide or nearly worldwide presence/distribution, regardless of their numbers. World religions were regarded as possessing a standardized scripture or set of scriptures (i.e., a sacred canon), a universal message, shared rituals, and a religious clergy. Though most religious traditions are, in fact, far too diverse internally to conform to any simple description, thinking about “world religions” using this template often forced them into a uniform mold.

Moreover, assumptions were made about the difference—an implied cultural superiority—that the major world religions possessed in contrast to nontextual, nonhistorical “traditional religions.” Some scholars have suggested that the following features distinguish world religions from traditional religions.

1. World religions deal with larger, more abstract theological concerns about crucial topics such as salvation, the human problem and its remedy, and the nature of the Divine or governing grand principles, whereas traditional religions focus primarily on more immediate concerns, such as how to treat a snake bite, to find a marriage partner, to obtain success in a business venture, or to divine the whereabouts of a wrongdoer.

2. World religions have formalized, standardized scriptures, whereas traditional religions are chiefly carried through oral tradition.

3. World religions are more expansive, appealing to a wider range of people than traditional religions, which are usually confined to a particular locale, ethnicity, or small-scale people group.

None of these categories apply to all forms of the “major world religions” or to all aspects of the “traditional religions,” and it is important not to overplay the distinction between world and traditional religions. On the ground, where people live, work, are born, and die, religions are not experienced by the believer as neatly separated types, “world” and “traditional.” As such, these distinctions are, at best, heuristic categories (in the language of sociology, “ideal types”) and at worst, misleading stereotypes, since they do not capture all the nuances of lived religious experience.

The typical list of world religions includes Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, Daoism (Taoism), Confucianism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, with Daoism and Confucianism not only considered Chinese religions but philosophies as well. There are several ways in which these world religions have been compared and contrasted. One is by region, highlighting a religion’s place of origin and its expansion globally. Thus, there are the Middle Eastern (or Abrahamic) traditions (i.e., Judaism, Christianity, and Islam), the South Asian (Indic) traditions (i.e., Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, and Jainism), and the East Asian traditions (i.e., Daoism, Confucianism, and some forms of Buddhism). No world religion has emerged evenly around the world, but all have appeared in a specific time and place. Distinctions are also made between those religions that have a particular founder (e.g., Islam, Christianity) and those that do not (e.g., Hinduism).

The great sociologist of religion, Max Weber, referred to religions of universal salvation, such as Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism. Historically, the religions of universal salvation have expanded through the following means:

1. *Migration*, where the numbers of adherents increase simply by the influx of religionists and births
2. *Trade contacts*, whereby economic power, political force, and personal presence can merge to create a compelling arena for religious change

3. *Conversion*, by which the message of the religion itself, always embedded in social, cultural, and psychological contexts, can attract new adherents, making such religious change a multifaceted process
4. *The use of violence*, whereby the power of the state, empire, or other social congeries is employed to force the acceptance or repudiation of particular religions

Partly due to the universal vision of the world religions, these religions have helped stimulate and even guide processes of globalization and, thus, have transformed the world.

Another way of categorizing world religions is to identify them either as reform movements within earlier religious traditions or as a movement *sui generis* (alone in its own class) in nature. Some of the major world religions appeared as a result of reinterpreting major theological or doctrinal elements of earlier traditions. For instance, Siddhartha Gautama, who became the Buddha, and thus the founder of Buddhism, and Mahavira, the founder of Jainism, were both members of the Kshatriya caste in India, but both led movements that became separate from Hinduism by redefining fundamental concepts that are common to all Indic traditions, such as karma, dharma, and moksha. Both Buddhism and Jainism were anti-Brahmanical movements in the Indian subcontinent and appealed to a wide number of people. Daoism and Confucianism, on the other hand, emerged as two of the most popular schools of Chinese philosophy during a time when China was experiencing significant social and economic change, a context in which six major schools of thought surfaced in an attempt to retrieve a sense of harmony that had been severely threatened during the Chinese Axial Age.

While the relationship between Daoism and Confucianism has been said to be complementary, with the Dao representing yang forces and Confucianism the yin side of the Dao, the relationship between Judaism, Christianity, and Islam is more complex. Some argue that Christianity is continuous with Judaism, by affirming that Jesus was the Jewish Messiah (the Anointed One) promised and foretold in the Old Testament, while others see Jesus as the universal Christ, the beginning of a “new creation,” as the Apostle Paul suggested.

Islam accepts the prior revelations of both Judaism and Christianity, with Muhammad being considered the final and seal of the prophets. While scholars of religions recognize the influence of Hinduism and Islam on Sikhism, most Sikhs today regard their tradition as being neither Hindu nor Muslim but rather a distinct religious tradition.

Yet another way to understand the world religions is to highlight the form and role of the deity they affirm, whether that ultimate being is a personal God, a distant God, or a formal Principle, Power, or Cosmic Law that is indescribable yet inequitably pervasive. This distinction gives rise to the popular demarcation between monotheistic and polytheistic religious traditions, which is another category that is much too simplistic to be analytically useful. The monotheistic traditions are said to be Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, which affirm the existence of one God, who created, sustains, and will ultimately judge humanity. The knowledge of that God varies according to tradition, but sacraments, rituals, prayers, and revealed sacred texts (e.g., the Torah, New Testament, and Qur'an) are believed to be carriers of God's message. Even monotheistic traditions differ in terms of how they identify the distance between God and human beings. For instance, Christianity affirms that God became incarnate in Jesus Christ, upholding the belief that in Christ the physical presence of God was present on earth. The Christian theological formulation is that God is at once *transcendent*, entirely distinct from all creation, and *immanent*, being with us in Jesus Christ. In comparison, Islam's repudiation of anything that can be compared with or associated with God (i.e., Allah) serves as a crucial constraint and guide to the daily life of Muslims. The Arabic term *shirk* (i.e., "associationism") refers to wrongful attempts by human beings to associate someone or something, even a person, ambition, or material item, with God, since God is so great that He cannot be compared, as expressed in the common Arabic Muslim slogan *Allahu Akbar* ("God is greater"). No image can represent God, and nothing can displace God. Yet Islam displays great variety on this topic, since Muslim mystics (i.e., Sufis) experience God as quite close, even as close as one's jugular vein (Qur'an 50:16). Thus, even within the monotheistic traditions, there are multiple understandings of God and the location of God vis-à-vis creation.

The Hindu tradition is regarded as polytheistic, though beyond the multiplicity of images of gods, there is the Hindu notion that there is one single ground of being, and ultimate unity. Other non-monotheistic traditions do not recognize a God, personal or otherwise, but instead acknowledge a Power or Cosmic Law within which individuals and communities need to live in order to have fruitful, healthy lives while maintaining social harmony and cosmic stability. In Daoism, Confucianism, and Theravada Buddhism, affirmation of creation by a personal being is less important than living according to the immensely powerful cosmic laws that determine one's life in the present and future. Daoism and Confucianism are based on the Dao, a preexistent "way" or force that permeates all things and out of which all things are, in the language of *Dao-te-Ching*, "named." That declaration means that the Dao is preexistent yet gave rise to all that is: "The unnamable is the eternal real [Dao]. Naming is the origin of all particular things" (*Dao-te-Ching*, 1). The extent to which one lives according to cosmic forces, such as the Dao of Chinese religious traditions or the Four Noble Truths of Buddhism, is the degree to which one lives well. Failure to live according to cosmic principles or truths can lead to all kinds of misery, including physical disease, social disharmonies, and even death. Some world religions are not organized exclusively around monotheistic notions of God or cosmic laws. For instance, while Hinduism recognizes a universal, indefinable divine essence (i.e., Brahman) that pervades all things and can only be known in the particular, it also affirms the existence of dharma (duty) law, which should guide a devotee's life.

In the late-modern world it has become common to speak of "global religion" rather than "world religions," indicating a crucial relationship between the world religious traditions and globalizing forces. The study of global religion attempts to answer such questions as these: How have the world religions made their way across the globe? Who or what are the carriers of the world religions? How have they changed by their engagement with local cultures? And how have cultures been changed by the world religions? For instance, how was early South Asian Buddhism reinterpreted when it was adopted by the peoples of East Asia (e.g., Korean, Chinese, and Japanese Buddhism)?

How has Christianity been translated into forms meaningful to Nigerians or Mexicans? How have Chinese religious traditions been adapted in the North Atlantic region, where, for instance, there is a robust attraction to practicing tai chi chuan, employing feng shui, and decorating homes with Zen styles? Of course the North Atlantic connection to Chinese religions goes deeper than mere stylistic or culinary tastes, for there are burgeoning numbers of non-Asians who have adopted either in part or wholly Chinese religious perspectives, as exemplified by a contemporary discussion called “Boston Confucianism,” which argues that it is indeed possible to be Confucian without being Asian, just as it has been possible to be Muslim without being Arab, Buddhist without being Indian, Christian without being Western, or Jewish without being ethnically Jewish. Nevertheless in the global arena, the world religions have been employed to shore up ethnic identities, legitimating horrible atrocities against other religionists or enabling surprisingly great acts of benevolent humanitarianism and sacrificial compassion.

Charles E. Farhadian

See also Christianity; Confucianism; Daoism; Global Religion; Hinduism; Islam; Jainism; Judaism; Mahayana Buddhism; Smart, Ninian; Smith, Huston; Theravada Buddhism; Vajrayana, Tibetan

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WORLD SOCIAL FORUM

The World Social Forum (WSF) began in 2001 as a civil society counterpoint to the corporate-organized World Economic Forum. The global gathering is now held semiannually in a location in the Global South. Activists from diverse movements, cultures, and faith traditions come together in the WSFs to share analyses of the social effects of economic globalization, to strengthen alliances, and to exchange experiences and organizing strategies. It is seen as a *process* because it explicitly links discussions and organizing experiences across time and place. The WSF aims to build a transnational movement and encourage what analysts have called “experiments in global democracy.” The longevity of the effort and the large numbers of people it has mobilized demonstrate its political significance.

Organized around the idea that “another world is possible,” the World Social Forum process has provided a focal point and organizing infrastructure for social movements and facilitated coordination and cooperation across movement sectors as well as across national borders and over time. It emerged following a series of large and confrontational demonstrations against the World Trade Organization, the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, the Group of Eight, and regional trade blocs. At the time, many activists in an emergent “global justice movement” sought new strategies for advancing critical analyses of economic globalization and alternative visions of globalization. The turnout at early meetings consistently overwhelmed organizers and demonstrated the resonance of the WSF’s message. From the very beginning, activists began organizing local, national, and regional social forums, explicitly linking conversations and themes across time and place. Global gatherings now attract up to 150,000 participants, and tens of thousands more participate through local, national, and regional forums.

An international council facilitates international coordination and leadership of the WSF process.

Organizers have made conscious use of technology to advance efforts to expand dialogue among diverse civil society members, reflecting a commitment to expanding participation from those most marginalized by dominant social institutions. The WSF has shifted its location and organizing format to promote greater inclusion and participatory democracy. There is constant internal debate about the limitations in fully achieving these ideals, and these debates fuel innovations that have expanded the forum's accessibility to poor and oppressed groups.

The WSF is an important and evolving response to the failures of representative democracy that supports cross-national and cross-sectoral dialogue on some of the most pressing conflicts of our day. Its process orientation allows for learning and relationship building to help unite a very diverse collection of individuals and groups.

Jackie Smith

See also Economic Issues and Religion; Social Justice

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WORLD THEOLOGY

World theology can refer either to the convergence of theological ideas from different religious traditions around the world or to the way theological speculation within a single tradition has changed to respond to the globalization of culture and the global diasporas of religious communities. Wilfred Cantell Smith, in *Towards a World Theology*, has

explored the former kind of thinking, the way theological ideas in different religious traditions have much in common and interact in pluralistic settings. This entry will focus on the latter—the way in which theology in one tradition, Christianity, has adapted to its global context.

The contours of a Christian world theology can be identified by the common concerns shared by theologians working in different regions of the world. Globalization, international migration, capitalism, and war are all issues that have influenced Christian theology since the emergence of the modern world. One of the key elements of a Christian world theology is the recognition of the unique contributions made by scholars from theologies outside Europe and North America, in regions such as Africa, South America, Asia, and the Pacific. Christian theology by scholars from several denominations continues to undergo significant development around the world.

Catholic Theology

At the beginning of the 20th century, Catholic theology was influenced by renewal movements that sought to move beyond the neoscholastic theology that had dominated Catholic thinking since the late 19th century. Pope Leo XIII (r. 1878–1903), in his encyclical *Aeterni Patris* (1879), had given primacy to neoscholastic theology, emphasizing that theology should look back to the work of St. Thomas Aquinas. For some Catholic theologians, this situation narrowed the focus of Catholic thought. It can be argued that Leo XIII's championing of Aquinas set the foundations for the Modernist movement (1890–1910). A group of scholars, including George Tyrrell (1861–1909) and Alfred Loisy (1857–1940), attempted to bring critical historical perspectives borrowed from Protestant theology into Catholic thought. The Modernists were suppressed by the Vatican because their findings on the life of Christ and the nature of the Church were interpreted as being unorthodox.

By the end of World War II, the New Theology (*théologie nouvelle*) movement had become influential. Scholars who belonged to this movement included Yves Congar (1904–1995) and Henri de Lubac (1896–1991), both of whom sought to recognize the influence of the early Church Fathers on Catholic theology. Karl Rahner's (1904–1984)

writings on grace and the sacraments were also important in the years prior to the 1960s. The writings of these scholars were questioned by some Vatican officials but were taken up by the Catholic Church at the Second Vatican Council (Vatican II).

Vatican II (1962–1965) constitutes a point of renewal for Catholic culture and theology, and Catholic theology expanded greatly after the council. Karl Rahner, whose thinking underpinned much of the discussion at Vatican II, interpreted the Church as being a diaspora of the faithful, living in disparate parts of the world but sharing witness to Jesus Christ. For Rahner, Vatican II constituted a leap forward for the Church, from being an institution focused on Europe to becoming a world Church that speaks to global communities.

After the council, Catholic theology became much more concerned with issues such as the role of women and the role of the laity in the Catholic Church. Furthermore, the council's concern with ecumenism has encouraged Catholic theologians to work more closely with theologians from other Christian denominations and faiths.

In the late 1960s, Liberation Theology emerged as a powerful force in defending the rights of the poor. Authors such as Gustavo Gutierrez (b. 1928) and Leonardo Boff (b. 1938) wrote persuasive theological texts that took up the concerns of the poor, revealing a debt to the work of Marx. This welding of Marxism and Christianity became a source of concern for the Vatican, and although no one was officially excommunicated, many were asked to explain how their writings were compatible with Catholic thought.

Anglican and Protestant Theology

In the early 20th century, the existential movement influenced theologians such as Paul Tillich (1886–1965) and prompted examinations regarding God's presence in the world of modernity. For Tillich, the modern world challenged believers by emphasizing the struggle for meaning that modern people grapple with.

In Protestant theology, the work of Rudolf Bultmann (1884–1976) and Karl Jaspers (1883–1969) on myth in the New Testament influenced a number of thinkers seeking to address questions about the relevance of Christianity in modernity. Bultmann argued that the symbolism of the New

Testament was intended to capture the imagination of those living in the ancient world. In his popular writings, Anglican Bishop John Robinson (1919–1983) proposed a theological outlook that engaged with the secularization of European society. Robinson took Bultmann's work on myth as his point of departure and called for the gospel message to be presented in modern language and symbols. Other theologians were also concerned with the role of faith in modern society. Harvey Cox (b. 1929) addressed North Americans, arguing that revolutionary activity was central in Christian history, such as the resistance to Roman pagan religion by the early Christians.

Reflecting on the importance of the Holocaust in the 20th century, authors such as Jurgen Moltmann (b. 1926) have composed theologies that address questions on how theological speculation could best be carried out after such an event. Such work was inspired by the writings of Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906–1945), who was imprisoned and executed by the Nazis for his resistance to them. Bonhoeffer had grappled with the issue of how religion can survive in an increasingly secularized world.

After the social changes that took place in the 1960s, a shift occurred whereby theology began to borrow more heavily from social theory. Theologians began to be concerned with social issues of injustice and poverty, and this was reflected in theological work that emphasized social justice, equality, and suffering as shared social concerns. Recent work by John Milbank has been critical of the influence that social theory has had on theology. For Milbank, social theory's atheistic undertones are problematic if such perspectives are used by theologians.

In recent years, debates about evangelical forms of Protestantism have raised questions about the relevance of secularization theories, which claim that modern society is growing less religious. The presence of fundamentalist and evangelical groups in the United States provides evidence that religion and modern society are not incompatible, as some secularization theorists have argued.

Postmodernity has provided theology with both challenges and opportunities. How unified systems of theological knowledge and notions of transcendence may be sustained under postmodern conditions is debated, and the connection

between religious belief and language is also of concern for postmodern scholars of theology.

Theology in Global Settings

African Christian theologies have focused on a range of issues important to the experience of African believers from many countries that share a similar culture and history. The dialogue between indigenous African religions and Christianity is one such area, as is the interpretation of the gospels in light of the colonial history of the continent. With regard to the relationship between African religions and Christianity, some African theologies see a great deal of compatibility between the two, while for others, such a relationship gives rise to syncretism. Islam has a long history in the African continent, particularly in the north, and the tensions since 9/11 have become an area of concern for religious scholars of all faiths in the region. Liberation Theology has been a powerful influence in African religious thought, becoming very prominent in South Africa because of the former apartheid system. Other social concerns such as poverty, access to health care and education, and concerns about AIDS and the rights of women have also been the focus of African Christian theologians.

Like African theology, Asian Christian theologies are also concerned with the relationship between faiths such as Christianity and Islam and existing Asian religions. Asia shares with Africa a colonial history. Initial contact between Christian theology and existing religions in Asia was one of condescension on the part of missionaries, but over time, theologians in Asia have reconsidered the relationship between Christianity and traditional Asian religions. Asia's colonial history has been interpreted as containing contradictory elements for belief and theology. On the one hand, exploitation at the hands of the colonizers has led to critical interpretations of Christianity, while on the other, the political liberalism and advances in technology brought by the colonial nations has had an impact on people's standard of living in Asia and has, in turn, helped maintain a dialogue between Christian theology and traditional Asian religions.

In South America, Liberation Theology has been a major influence, particularly due to its ecumenical basis. The struggle against corrupt governments in some states in South America has

also enhanced its prestige there. In the Pacific, theologians have sought to stress the connection between religious and cultural life and the importance of missionary activity in countries such as New Zealand and in many Pacific islands.

Theologians of all faiths around the world are today engaged with topics such as religion under global conditions and the impact of environmental concerns and sustainability. Migration and inequality in wealth and access to resources are also concerns that will engage theologians around the world in the years ahead.

Andrew Lynch

See also Liberation Theology; Modernization; Postcolonial Theology; Postcolonialism; Postmodernism; Religious Dialogue; Secularization; Vatican Council, Second

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WORLD'S PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS

The World's Parliament of Religions was a convention of religious leaders from around the world held in September 1893 in Chicago. The parliament was part of the larger celebrations surrounding the Columbian Exposition, a fair commemorating the 400th anniversary of Columbus arriving in the Americas. The parliament's organizers hoped that the event would bring together religious leaders from around the world in a spirit of mutual learning and brotherhood, to show how the wisdom of the world's faiths could be mustered for the betterment

of society and, ultimately, to affirm the theistic core underlying all the world's religions. While the extent of toleration and pluralism demonstrated at the 1893 parliament is debated by scholars, the event was undoubtedly a watershed moment in the history of global encounter between religious traditions from the "West" and the "East." In a century dominated by imperialism and missionizing, the parliament showcased an alternative attitude toward non-Western religions, one that had been growing in popularity through the second half of the 1800s. Instead of bringing Christianity to the rest of the world, private organizations such as the Theosophical Society and academic bodies such as the American Society of Comparative Religion were now working to introduce global religious traditions to the Western world. The success of this project reached a palpable crescendo with the rousing applause received by the Bengali Hindu theologian Swami Vivekananda during three packed-house lectures that he gave during the parliament.

In many ways, it was Vivekananda who set the stage for the world's parliament legacy to endure in the 20th and 21st centuries. In 1988, two members of the Vivekananda Vedanta Society, which the Swami founded in Chicago following the 1893 parliament, proposed organizing an event to celebrate its 100-year anniversary. The suggestion was taken up by a new organization called the Council for a Parliament of the World's Religions, and in 1993, a renamed "Parliament of the World's Religions" was held in Chicago. The event attracted 8,000 participants from around the world, including religious leaders, ecumenical groups, philanthropic organizations, and scholars. A week-long conference culminated in the participants' formal endorsement of a document titled *Towards a Global Ethic*, drafted by Hans Küng, which declared their commitments to four global ethical

principles. Since 1993, the council has organized two other parliaments. In 1999, a Cape Town, South Africa, parliament attracted 7,000 participants, including Nelson Mandela and the Dalai Lama; and concluded with the presentation of another document, *A Call to Our Guiding Institutions*, encouraging the world's leaders in religion, business, education, politics, and media to reevaluate and re-form their roles in the world. In 2004, the council held a parliament in Barcelona, Spain, in association with the city's Universal Form of Cultures. The council hosted a parliament in 2009 in Melbourne, Australia.

Benjamin Schonthal

See also Global Religion; Küng, Hans; Religious Dialogue; Vedanta Society; Vivekananda

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YAGÉ

Yagé is a hallucinogenic drink consumed in indigenous religious rituals in South America. *Ayahuasca*, as it is known in the native Quechua language, is an Amazonian plant combination that is made by cooking the stem of *Banisteriopsis caapi*, a vine of the family Malpighiaceae, with the leaves of *Psychotria viridis*, of the Rubiaceae. In areas of Colombia and Ecuador, the admixture plant is *Diplopterys cabrerana*, also of the Malpighiaceae, where it is known under the name *yagé* (also written *yajé*). *B. caapi* contains the alkaloids harmine and tetrahydroharmine, with traces of harmaline, while both *P. viridis* and *D. cabrerana* contain the powerful visionary alkaloid dimethyltryptamine (DMT). DMT is not orally active, being readily inactivated in the gut and liver by the enzyme monoamine oxidase (MAO). Harmine is an MAO inhibitor, protecting DMT from deactivation, which is then able to cross the blood-brain barrier and bind on serotonin receptors sites in the central nervous system.

Travelers and anthropologists have reported the use of ayahuasca/yagé by numerous indigenous groups of the Upper Amazon, where it is mainly used to get in touch with spiritual realms, for healing and divination. In some instances, especially in the past, it is also used in great collective ceremonies of a religious character. Ayahuasca permeates the cultural lives of many indigenous groups, including their art, narratives, and general cosmological ideas. Its use was adopted by the riverain

mestizo population of Peru, Ecuador, and to a certain extent also Colombia, Brazil, and Bolivia, probably in the beginning of the 20th century, where practitioners use it in ceremonies of a shamanic nature, for healing, for divination, and for “learning from the plants.” A rigorous training involving a special diet and sexual segregation is a requirement to become an *ayahuasquero*. However, it is sometimes also taken simply to see the visions that it often elicits, ayahuasca being often referred to as the jungle cinema or TV.

In contemporary Brazil, ayahuasca is considered as a sacrament by the three main Christian syncretic religious organizations, which emerged in the Amazonian states of Acre and Rondônia, its use then being extended in the past decades to all states in Brazil, as well as to other countries. These religious organizations are the creation of three religious figures, all coming from the Brazilian Northeast, Raimundo Irineu Serra (1892–1971) and Daniel Pereira de Matos (1904–1958), who established their religious organizations in Rio Branco, Acre, and José Gabriel da Costa (1922–1971), who in 1961 created in Porto Velho, Rondônia, the *União do Vegetal* (UDV). A fourth religious leader, Sebastião Mota (1920–1990), a follower of Irineu Serra, created after his death, a new religious branch, which separated from the matrix. The *Centro Eclético de Fluente Luz Universal Raimundo Irineu Serra* (CEFLURIS, Eclectic Center of Fluid Universal Light Raimundo Irineu Serra), created in 1972, first expanded to urban areas of many Brazilian states and later into other countries in Europe, the Americas, and Japan. The

original nucleus created by Irineu Serra, known as *Alto Santo*, divided into several small nuclei, all located in Rio Branco, plus an offshoot in Porto Velho. The religious organization created by Daniel Pereira de Matos, known as *Barquinha*, has also divided into various churches in Rio Branco, with smaller units in Brasilia and Salvador. The UDV is experiencing the greatest growth. It is found in almost every major Brazilian city, has members in all levels of society, and is spreading to other countries. Followers of Irineu Serra, Pereira de Matos, and Sebastião Mota call the sacred brew *Santo Daime*, while those of José Gabriel da Costa call it *Vegetal*. All of these religious organizations have been influenced by *kardecism* and by European esoteric traditions. They all believe in reincarnation. There is a strong popular Catholic ethos in Barquinha and Santo Daime (Alto Santo and CEFLURIS), while stronger Afro-Brazilian elements are found in Barquinha, as manifested in Umbanda or Candomblé. There is a frequent movement of persons between different ayahuasca doctrinal lines, and schisms occurred within these religious organizations with the emergence of new charismatic religious leaders and the gradual incorporation of the use of ayahuasca by other religious organizations. This has contributed to the appearance of more and more groups led by new *ayahuasqueros* in religious, therapeutic, musical, or artistic settings in Brazil, Peru, Colombia, and Ecuador, while indigenous shamans travel the world or Western *ayahuasqueros* conduct sessions in their own countries. There has been a revival of ayahuasca-mediated shamanism among some indigenous communities, to a great extent set in motion by Western interest in the brew and its economic value. Caution is thus in place when people present themselves as ayahuasca experts, as not all of them have undergone proper training or adhere to high ethical standards. On the other hand, there is a growing scientific and popular interest in ayahuasca for the possibilities it offers in the study of consciousness and also as a tool for personal growth, creativity, and healing in general.

Luis Eduardo Luna

See also Ayahuasca Religious Movements; Brazil; Candomblé; Colombia; Ecuador; Indigenous Religions;

Latin America; Native Latin American Religion; New Religions; New Religions in South America

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YARMULKE/KIPPAH

The Hebrew word *kippah*, *yarmulke* in Yiddish, refers to a head covering that functions as an outward sign of Jewish identity. The exact derivation of these terms is uncertain, but Rabbi Joseph Telushkin postulates that *yarmulke* is a combination of the two Aramaic words *yarei* and *me'elokha* ("one who fears God"). Over time and throughout Jewish diasporic life, *kippah* has taken on a multiplicity of meanings, oftentimes representing conflicting views of Jewish Halakha ("law") and attesting to developed minhag ("custom"). There is no halakhic mandate on the fabric, size, shape, and color of a kippah. There even is no halakhic injunction that one needs to wear it constantly or whether it is solely for men. Even within each movement, traditions are not static. What is consistent in variations on the tradition of wearing a kippah is that its use represents attempts at humility and respect.

An early allusion to a head covering, not necessarily the kippah, is found in the biblical description of priestly garments worn in the Temple. One Midrash speaks of Moses showing proper reverence, according to the rabbis, when pronouncing the name of God by hiding his face, in contrast to others who demonstrated insolence by looking on with uncovered heads. Yet covering here refers to wrapping one's body, not just the head, in a tallith (prayer shawl).

Notions of cultivating piety and reflecting one's devotion are emphasized in later rabbinic writings. Several Babylonian Talmud tractates mention covering one's head in the hope of inducing piety, a belief echoed in the Zohar, a medieval kabbalistic text, which states that a rabbi walked no more than 4 cubits without a covered head out of consciousness of the Divine Presence above. Other Talmudic tractates indicate that wearing a hat is optional, a matter of custom. The major emphasis

in these texts contrasts impudence (i.e., bareheadedness and haughtiness) with proper forms of reverence (i.e., humility within the community and in God's presence).

Developing out of the ambiguous Talmudic and post-Talmudic statements is the notion that wearing a *kippah* has taken on the force of law. A differentiation is made between interpretations of devotional head covering and historical instances of female bareheadedness, which varied across cultures and through time. Beginning in the 17th century, and breaking with the previous custom of dressing like others, developments in some European Jewish communities included prohibition on praying as the Christians did (i.e., bareheaded), although these customs varied regionally.

Cases continue to arise that put in question the status of the kippah and the identification of its wearer. For example, as of 2004, the French government banned the wearing of a kippah in public schools, and the specific kippah that passes as a symbol of a particular religious and political movement within Israel, the nationalistic segment of Orthodox Jews, takes on new, less religious and political, overtones in the United States. Today, Orthodox males cover their heads at almost all times, and Conservative males and some females use the wearing of a *kippah* in the synagogue. Within Reform Judaism, decisions on head covering are left to the individual.

Daniel Hotary

See also Clothing; Jewish Diaspora; Judaism; Reform Judaism

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YEMEN

Yemen (*al-yaman*), officially known as the Republic of Yemen, is located on the Arabian Peninsula south of Saudi Arabia and west of Oman, and its coastline borders the Arabian Sea and the Red Sea. It has a population of 22,858,238 (estimate as of July 2010), almost entirely Muslim. The capital of Yemen is Sana'a. Arabic is the primary language spoken in this country. Prior to Yemen's unification in 1990, it was divided into two states. In 1918, Northern Yemen became independent from the Ottoman Empire and was eventually known as the Yemen Arab Republic (YAR). Southern Yemen was colonized by the British from 1839 to 1967. After the British withdrew, southern Yemen declared its capital to be Aden, and this state became known as the Socialist People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. Currently, Yemen's political system is republican; both men and women are in theory allowed to vote and run for office. Yemen is known for its tribal society. While almost all citizens of Yemen are Muslim, religious diversity is present within that category.

Religious statistics for Yemen are not generally reliable; however, according to one report, approximately 30%–35% of the population are Zaydi Shi'i (traditionally from the north of Yemen) and 60%–65%, Shafi'i Sunnī. Sufism also has a long history in this country, especially in the governorates of Ta'izz and the Hadramawt, where many shrines of Sufi saints can be found. The city of Tarim in the Hadramawt region houses a prominent institute for the study of Sufism, known as Dar al-Mustafa. Other religious minorities include Ismailis and a dwindling number of Jews.

Tensions among religious groups include Shafi'i-Zaydi strife. Perhaps of greater concern is the friction between the Salafis, on the one hand, influenced by extremist revival movements stemming from nearby Saudi Arabia, and the Sufis, moderates, and secularists, on the other. The government suffers from instability and is battling secession movements in the south and the Zaydi Huthis in the north. The European Union and the United States offer aid to Yemen in the attempt to curb the influence of Islamic extremism and the al Qaeda, which is active in Yemen.

Yemen is the poorest Arab country and one of the poorest countries in the world. The literacy rates for men and women are approximately 70% and 30%, respectively, and are even lower in rural areas. The reasons behind Yemen's poverty are many and include inadequate natural resource management and a dwindling groundwater supply. Additional factors involve agricultural policy, political instability, widespread corruption, and the legacy of the previous ruler Imam Yahya (1904–1948), who kept much of Yemen in relative isolation for decades. Yemen's poverty and low rate of literacy shape the ways in which Islam is practiced by many in Yemen who have little access to textual sources of religious orthodoxy and who thus practice "popular" forms of Islam.

Sophia Pandya

See also al Qaeda; Arabic; Islam; Islamism (Political Islam); Oman; Ottoman Empire; Saudi Arabia; Shi'a Islam; Sufism; Sunnī Islam; War on Terrorism

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YIDDISH

Yiddish is a language spoken primarily by Jews of eastern European descent. Unlike other West-Germanic languages, Yiddish is a fusion language comprising mainly Germanic, Hebrew/Aramaic, and Slavic components, featuring a Hebrew-derived orthography. There are an estimated

500,000 native speakers of Yiddish, with the largest communities in Israel, the United States, and Russia, although reliable statistics are difficult to ascertain due to the reluctance of certain orthodox groups to participate in censuses. The figure represents a significant decline from its peak of 11 million speakers at the outbreak of World War II, 7–8 million of whom lived in eastern Europe.

Philologists trace the origins of Yiddish to the 11th century. Max Weinreich argued that Yiddish emerged when Judeo-Romance-speaking Jews encountered Germanic tribes in the Upper Rhine Valley. Others have argued for a Bavarian context, while, radically, Paul Wexler has posited Slavic origins, claiming that Yiddish is a relexified form of Upper Sorbian. Most scholars continue to accept Weinreich's thesis, particularly its sociolinguistic base. Weinreich considered Yiddish a constituting element of Ashkenazic Jewish life, reflecting and determining its unique configuration. Yiddish helped retain traditional folkways as the community migrated eastward, while the language itself became heavily Slavicized after the population shifted in the 17th century. In 1908, the Czernowitz Language Conference proclaimed Yiddish a Jewish National Language, while the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research developed a standardized orthography and phonology in the 1930s. This is the version taught today.

Early Yiddish texts range from memoirs and ethical wills to translations of Arthurian legends. Among the largest bodies of premodern Yiddish texts are prayers written for women. Women were largely uneducated in Hebrew, the traditional language of Jewish learning, and they turned to Yiddish as a religious outlet. Many Yiddish books claimed to be written for the benefit of women, and this became a means of justifying Yiddish-language publication. The development of a literature in the women-oriented vernacular parallels the situation in other European literatures.

Modern Yiddish literature emerged in the mid-19th century. Its three classic authors were Sholem Yankev Abramovitch, Sholom Aleichem, and I. L. Peretz, who together developed many of its generic features. The literature grew exponentially before World War II, becoming truly cosmopolitan with major centers in the Soviet Union, United States, and Poland. Ironically, Yiddish literature enjoyed some of its greatest successes after the war, culminating in

I. B. Singer's receipt of the Nobel Prize in 1978. Today, secular Yiddish literature is written by a small number of writers; however, recent years have seen the emergence of younger authors, many of whom learned the language in universities. There is also a growing corpus of texts written by and for Hassidic Jews, who continue to use Yiddish as a daily spoken language.

Eitan Kensky

See also Ashkanaz; Hebrew; Israel; Jewish Diaspora; Judaism

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YING YANG AND THE FIVE PHASES

See Chinese Popular Religion; Daoism

YMCA, YWCA

The Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) and the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) began separately in mid-19th-century England as Protestant voluntary associations. Their early, middle-class members sought to provide moral guidance, Christian community, and charity in the context of industrialization; the movement was also a response to the evangelical revivalism ignited by the visiting American Protestant Revivalist preacher Charles Grandison Finney. National YMCAs and YWCAs have since formed around the world, and many of them have abandoned missionary fervor in favor of more secularized agendas promoting the intellectual, physical, and spiritual well-being of Christians and non-Christians alike. While perhaps best known for sports facilities and travel hostels, the

YMCA and the YWCA have rich histories of societal engagement in many countries.

The national YMCAs came together to form the World Alliance of YMCAs in 1855, while the national YWCAs came together to form the World YWCA in 1894. Although the YMCAs and YWCAs developed as separate organizations, they remain closely affiliated at the international level. According to the official websites, the World Alliance of YMCAs claims the status of the oldest voluntary international organization, and the World YWCA prides itself as one of the first international women's organization to exist independently of male organizations. Currently, both international organizations have national branches in more than 120 countries.

Their missions remain rooted in nondenominational Christianity yet are open to global concerns and the needs of individual countries. The first world conference of YMCAs in 1855 in Paris adopted what became known as the Paris Basis, which stated that the mission of the YMCA was to bring together young Christian men despite their differences. Bringing men together often took the form of team sports, which led to the promotion of "muscular Christianity" in the late 19th century and the invention of various sports, including basketball. In 1973, the mission was reaffirmed and updated with the concern for fostering love, honesty, and creativity within the international organization; working toward equality and justice in the world; and promoting the holistic development of its members. In 1998, the World Alliance of YMCAs expressed a desire to address the concerns of the 21st century in what they called "Challenge 21." These concerns included attention to the rights of women, children, the poor, and those oppressed due to their religious or racial affiliations.

Both the YMCA and the YWCA are dedicated to contemporary social change. The World YWCA considers its mission to be the improvement of the lives of women and children around the world. It has supported job training programs for women and encouraged the development of female leadership. It also holds a wider agenda of spreading awareness of environmental sustainability, human rights protection, HIV/AIDs prevention, and international peace and justice.

Kristy L. Slominski

See also Christianity; Evangelical Movements; Liberal Protestantism; Men's Roles; Protestant Christianity; Women's Roles

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YOGA

Yoga has become more than just a Sanskrit term referring to union or a system of philosophy. Its current reach extends far beyond the pages of Patanjali's Yoga Sutra and beyond the borders of India. Yoga studios have emerged all over the Americas, Europe, Africa, and Asia. Yoga has been translated into these many different global contexts, but what remains constant in these many translations is a bodily practice that revolves around the asanas or poses.

Yoga was introduced to the global stage via the intertwined forces of colonialism and capitalism. During the colonial reign under the British Raj, yoga experienced a renaissance of sorts and became more popular in India as a Hindu practice. Yoga was rediscovered as an example of rational and enlightened Hinduism (in contrast to other practices that focused on the iconic and ritualized).

At the same time, there were religious leaders in India geared up for exporting yoga outside India. One of the first ambassadors for yoga outside India was Swami Vivekananda, who came to the United States in 1893 as a delegate for the World Parliament of Religions. Vivekananda's yoga, *Raja Yoga*, focused more on *pranayama* or controlled breathing and was marketed as universal practice that could supplement and complement Christianity.

While yoga remained popular in certain circles throughout the first half of the 20th century, it was not until the 1960s that it really began to take off. The growing openness to Eastern religions and the heightened profile of the yoga teacher B. K. S. Iyengar helped increase its popularity. Iyengar's focus on correct postures using props,

such as blocks and straps, helped many people of all ages and ability levels to participate in the practice of modern yoga.

Because of the popularity of yoga around the world, controversies surrounding the religious or secular location of yoga have emerged. While Vivekananda and Iyengar may have constructed the practice of yoga as universal, there are other teachers of yoga, such as Ram Dev, who situate the practice within the Hindu tradition. Yoga is taught not only in Hindu ashrams but also in gyms, public schools, and prisons. To add more complexity to this controversy, Christian and Jewish yoga have also gained various followers, which has led followers of the three faiths and scholars to debate the locations of religious boundaries.

While various factions continue to debate the religious, universal, or secular place of yoga, it continues to become more popular across the globe and is creating a network across national, social, religious, and economic boundaries.

Shreena Niketa Gandhi

See also Hinduism; Meditation; New Age Movements; New Religions; New Religions in the United States; Vedanta Society; World's Parliament of Religions

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YOUTH WITH A MISSION

Youth With a Mission (YWAM) is an evangelical, nondenominational Christian organization officially based in more than 175 countries. It was founded in 1960 by Loren Cunningham, who was then in charge of the youth activities in Los Angeles of the Assemblies of God. After he left this Pentecostal denomination in 1964, YWAM adopted a charismatic stance by promoting an individualized religious

experience beyond denominational labels, refusing any sacred/secular distinction and spreading, since the 1980s to 1990s, the Spiritual Warfare theology.

Its development relies primarily on the Discipleship Training Schools, which attract several thousands of young Christians each year, mainly from evangelical, charismatic, and Pentecostal backgrounds but also from mainline Protestant churches and Catholicism. This program, launched in 1969 under the name of “Schools of Evangelism,” took its current name in 1978 as it became the first degree of YWAM’s newly established university, called the University of the Nations, located in Kona, Hawai‘i. It includes 3 months of teaching followed by 3 months of missionary work that often gives students the opportunity to discover new countries. This international mobility, of particular appeal to youth, also generates tensions between YWAM and many local churches, which fear that their young leaders are irrevocably moving away from them.

Students and permanent staff members (YWAMers) have to raise funds by themselves to meet their financial needs. They are invited to support the leaders of the various programs established since the 1960s, specifically in the seven priority domains that Cunningham pointed out in 1989 to “shape the society for Christ”: (1) the family; (2) churches; (3) education; (4) the media; (5) politics; (6) arts, entertainment, and sports; and (7) business, science, and technology. They are also encouraged to launch new projects through mobilization of their personal relationship and financial support networks. This twofold dynamic has led to a remarkable diversification of YWAM activities, officially endorsed by the leadership team during the 1990s through the concept of “families of ministries,” putting emphasis on a network of networks rather than vertical hierarchical structures. Early religious socialization, centered on the King’s Kids program, constitutes one of the most important of these “families.” Another international ministry, Mercy Ships—medical missionary ships—founded in 1978 by Don Stephen, became an officially distinct body in 2003. These ships have greatly contributed to the development of YWAM in Third World countries, especially Africa.

Historically, YWAM’s growth began in America, then expanded to the Asia-Pacific area through its campaigns in New Zealand at the end of the 1960s—a country that soon afterward provided several of the early YWAM leaders. In Asia, it has

benefited during the past decades from the rise of Pentecostalism in South Korea. YWAM is now present in all the continents except Antarctica and has established itself as a multicultural organization. The growing proportion of non-Western YWAMers (43% in 1997, more than 50% in 2010) enables YWAM to take an effective part in the efforts of evangelical missionary networks focused on the 10/40 Window (countries located between the 10th and the 40th north parallels), especially in continental China.

Yannick Fer

See also China; Evangelical Movements; Korea, Republic of (South Korea); North America; Pentecostal Movements; Politics and Religion

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YUGOSLAVIA

Yugoslavia refers to the former Pan-Slavic state that dominated the Slavic Balkans for most of the 20th century and was finally totally dissolved in 2002, when the only regions left in the Yugoslav federation, Montenegro and Serbia, renamed their federation as “Serbia and Montenegro.” Yugoslavia was conceived in 1918, after the end of World War I, as a proposed united kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (all unified under Slavic identity and culture). Slavic nationalism was strong in the late 19th century and enjoyed considerable Russian support for the ideal of a Pan-Slavic state. Yugoslavia was the closest manifestation of the Pan-Slavic ideal, but it always strained under the diversity of religion, ethnicity, and national identity within its borders. Croatia and Slovenia joined the union more to stave off Austrian and Italian expansion than to identify with Slavic ethnicity.

Religion was one of the key distinguishing factors that led to early disillusionment with the project of the Slavic state. Croats, Bosnians, Albanians,

Roma, Slovenes, and Montenegrins, all resented the increasing dominance of Eastern Orthodox Serbs in the government. Prior to World War II, the Ustaše, an extreme Catholic fascist group, and other terrorist groups tugged at the already tenuous hold of the Serbian-led government in Belgrade. Yugoslavia attempted to remain neutral during the war but wavered under economic pressure from Nazi Germany and the Serbian monarchy's affinity toward Britain. The tensions were resolved when the Nazis invaded Yugoslavia in 1941. After the war, the country was once again unified as Yugoslavia under a nonaligned communist regime led by Marshal Tito, who played off of Western and Soviet concerns masterfully. The disintegration of the communist state in 1990 sparked off what is now known as the Wars of Yugoslavian Secession, with the first armed conflict in Slovenia in 1991 and the last in Kosovo in 1998.

Prior to the communist regime, religion was only suppressed insofar as it was connected to sedition and internal conflict. Tito's partisans generally did not claim an overt religious affiliation, unlike the Catholic Ustaše. Tito maintained internal order through typical iron-fisted communist tactics early during his regime and was particularly suspicious of religious institutions that promoted ethnic identity or were viewed as foreign (e.g., Mormon or Protestant evangelical groups). However, after the

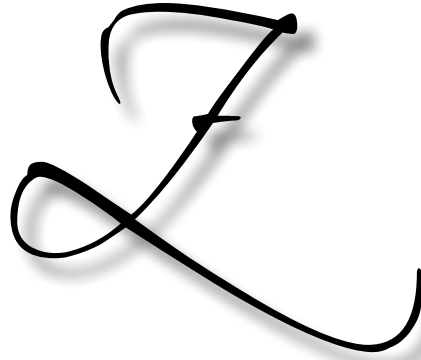
formal break with the Soviets in 1948, Tito began a process of increased autonomy for the various provinces, which included more latitude for the respective religious groups. The ever-simmering nationalism took on more pronounced religious meaning over the 20th century, which led to a deadly combination of religious and ethnic warfare from 1992 to 1998 between the Croats (Catholic), Bosnians (Muslim), Albanians (Muslim), and Serbs (Orthodox), most notably in Bosnia and Kosovo. Warfare strengthened the bonds between ethnicity and religion in such a powerful way that religious diversity is, at the very least, seen as unpatriotic in the former Yugoslav republics as they seek to heal from a century of resentment and a decade of war.

Christopher M. B. Allison

See also Albania; Bosnia and Herzegovina; Communism; Croatia; Kosovo; Macedonia; Montenegro; Russian Federation; Serbia; Slovenia

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ZAMBIA

The Republic of Zambia in southern Africa is surrounded by the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Tanzania, Malawi, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Namibia, and Angola. One of the earliest Europeans to enter the country was the Protestant missionary and African explorer David Livingstone. His extensive explorations in the mid-19th century brought Zambia to the attention of the Western world and inspired countless other missionaries.

Roman Catholic, Methodist, Anglican, and Baptist missions in neighboring countries such as South Africa, Tanzania, and Malawi expanded into Zambia in the late 1800s. They worked not only to convert the native population to Christianity but also to enculturate them to Western morals and values. The influence of the mission churches is still felt in modern-day Zambia: English is the official language, and Christianity is the official religion. In addition to the traditional mission churches, African-initiated churches (AICs), those that originated independently, are also an important part of the religious landscape. These churches emerged in the colonial era as indigenous interpretations of Christianity within the Zambian sociopolitical context and served as havens from European domination, in some cases supporting nationalist organizations in the struggle for independence.

Zambia gained independence from Britain in 1964, and since the 1970s, many Pentecostal and Charismatic churches in the United States have

sent missionaries to the country; these missionaries found audiences responsive to the preaching of the prosperity gospel, which promotes the idea that God wants to bless his followers with material wealth. As the hardships associated with structural adjustment took hold of the country in the 1980s and 1990s, the popularity of spiritual remedies for the suffering of the masses increased. In 1991, a Pentecostal, Fredrick J. T. Chiluba, was elected president, and the influx of Pentecostal and Charismatic missionaries and the founding of churches in the country surged to even greater levels.

A 1996 amendment to the Zambian constitution made Christianity the official religion of the country. However, other religions are freely practiced in Zambia. The country's current religious makeup is estimated to be anywhere from 50% to 87% Christian, with Roman Catholics being the largest group. According to various estimates, 1%–5% of the population is Hindu, mainly residents of South Asian and Middle Eastern descent. The Baha'i community in Zambia is the 10th largest in the world and constitutes 1%–2% of the population. Zambia has the largest number of Jehovah's Witnesses in Africa, with a quarter million members (1% of the population). Adherents to indigenous beliefs are estimated at 1% of the population, while 5% are estimated to be atheist or to have no religious beliefs. Islam has a long history in Zambia, starting with Arab slave traders in the mid-18th century. Other Muslims came to Zambia from India during the colonial period and settled along the railway from Lusaka to

Livingstone. Today, Muslims are estimated to make up 1%–5% of the population.

Kimberly Eberhardt Casteline

See also Africa; Christianity; Indigenous Religions; Pentecostal Movements

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ZEDONG, MAO

See China; Cultural Revolution (China)

ZEN BUDDHISM

Zen is the Japanese form of the Chinese Ch’an, in turn deriving from the Sanskrit *dhyana*, or meditation. Centered in East Asia, it is a form of Buddhism that emphasizes attaining enlightenment through the quiet sitting known as *zazen* and through interaction with a *roshi*, or Zen teacher. Zen is known for its substantial influence on the traditional arts of Japan. More than most other forms of Buddhism, Zen has spread worldwide and has had a significant cultural impact in the West.

History

Zen or Ch’an emerged in China shortly after the introduction of Buddhism in the early centuries of the common era. Clearly an adaptation of the imported religion to Chinese cultural values, it combines the basic Buddhist emphasis on monastic discipline and enlightenment with Daoist naturalism. The key figure is the half-legendary Bodhidharma (ca. 470–532), who is said to have brought the tradition from India to China. His teaching

stressed that Zen is not something realized through the study of texts but by direct experience transmitted from teacher to student. That training may entail the harsh discipline of abuse and even blows, as well as long hours of *zazen*, but it can produce a personality as free as Bodhidharma himself, who was allegedly able to speak impertinently even to an emperor.

Ch’an was developed in China by celebrated teachers such as Hongren (601–674) and Shenzui (ca. 606–706), who emphasized sudden enlightenment and the use of enigmatic stories and questions, known in Japanese as *koans*, to bring it about. A significant event was the persecution of Buddhism by the Tang Dynasty in 845, after Confucian allegations that the foreign faith was parasitic. Many great monasteries were destroyed, and their monks returned to lay life, but Ch’an was largely spared because its centers were comparatively modest and out of the way and its monks supported themselves by the work of their own hands. The upshot was that monastic Buddhism in China, and the priesthood, became largely Ch’an, though popular religion favored Pure Land Buddhism.

In the 12th and 13th centuries, Ch’an was introduced as Zen Buddhism in Japan. This was during Japan’s Kamakura era (1185–1333), a time of much spiritual ferment. Eisai (1141–1215) went to China to bring back the *Rinzai* school of Zen, while Dogen (1200–1253) did the same for the *Soto* school. Rinzai, with a more dynamic view of Zen, emphasizes intense interaction between *roshi* and disciple, with much use of koans. Soto, conversely, presents a more quietist Zen, in which realization is attained moment by moment while doing *zazen* and daily work. Both schools attracted the support of the samurai or warrior class, dominant in the Kamakura period. Like the contemporary knights of Europe, they greatly valued self-discipline while aspiring to a higher culture. In Zen’s monastic discipline and its spare but elegant art, many men preparing to face death on the field of battle found a spirituality that seemed right for them.

The subsequent Ashikaga or Muromachi period (1392–1568) was the golden age of Zen in Japan. Under lavish patronage by the shoguns of the Ashikaga house, Zen architecture, gardens, flower arrangement, the “tea ceremony,” and Noh plays,

with their decided Zen influence, all took form and flourished. So also, as one would expect in samurai culture, did martial arts such as *kendo*, the “way of the sword,” with their appropriation of Zen’s indifference to life or death and its focus on the present moment, in which one must act spontaneously, without conscious deliberation. All these arts inculcated naturalness of medium and movement, harmony with nature, and apparent simplicity. At the same time, they actually came out of long and rigorous discipline, intended to prune away all that is not truly natural in self and expression.

A little later, in the Tokugawa period (1600–1868) the concise 17-syllable (in Japanese) haiku poem, so epitomizing the Zen way of seeing, reached its peak under the great Basho (1644–1694). His haiku,

*An old pond
A frog jumps in
The sound of water*

is said to express the whole of Buddhism for those who understand it. Hakuin (1685–1768) organized the traditional koans, and the corresponding stages of Zen practice, systematically.

Practice

The foundational Zen practice is *zazen*, sitting meditation. Traditionally, it is done in the “lotus posture,” with the legs crossed, each foot on the opposite thigh. The back and head are erect, eyes focused ahead. Breathing is slow and deep; teachers will often ask students to begin by counting breaths from 1 to 10 to help keep the mind steady.

Later, especially in the Rinzai tradition, a student may hold a koan in the mind during *zazen*. These will be given in an interview with the *roshi*. Some familiar koans are “What is the sound of one hand?” or “What was your face before you were born?” Both of these refer to the oneness of the universe. The point is not to think about them intellectually but just to hold them in the mind during *zazen* and in daily life, until they work a deep influence on the mind. Then, when the student is asked by the *roshi* to demonstrate the meaning of the koan, the response would not be an explanation so much as a gesture or a cry showing

that the student is himself or herself a part of the oneness. The student should carry that awareness into the routine work, in the kitchen or garden or grounds, which is no less a part of Zen.

Zazen sessions are generally held in the morning and evening for 2 hours or so, often in 30-minute segments broken by brief walking. They are preceded and ended with more formal Buddhist worship—bows, sutra chanting, perhaps a *teisho* or brief sermon. Zen combines inner freedom with firm ritual and discipline, and they are seen to go together. In this respect, the “tea ceremony” is almost like a Zen sacrament, for it does something very ordinary and natural, making and serving tea, in a way that appears naturally graceful and polished. Yet that is the result of much practice, just as playing the piano so well that it seems “easy” is the product of years of work. So also the other natural-seeming Zen arts: the gardens of raked sand, the ink paintings of a few strokes, the “tossed” yet graceful *ikebana* or flower arrangements, even the martial arts.

Zen in the West

This kind of awareness, and for many the world behind Zen arts as well, seemed a different perspective from the Western and is one that has appealed to Westerners. That attraction led to the sprouting of Zen centers in most major countries outside Asia and to a “Zen” cultural influence that has gone far beyond its formal practice, affecting art, architecture, music, poetry, novels, and even brand names. Together with Vedanta Hinduism, Zen is an early and continuing example of the globalization of religion from the East on several levels.

The story of formal Zen in the West begins with the Japanese monk Soen Shaku (1859–1919), who represented the tradition at the World’s Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893. He was also the teacher of D. T. Suzuki (1870–1966), whose books and lectures did so much to popularize Zen; of Nyogen Senzaki (1876–1958), the first Zen monk to reside permanently in America; and, through another student of his, of Shigemitsu Sasaki (1882–1945; also called Sokei-an), founder of the First Zen Institute of New York in 1930, the premier lasting Zen establishment for Westerners.

It was after World War II that the Western vogue for Zen crescendoed. The 1950s were allegedly a

decade of conformity, but they had a rebellious undertow, epitomized by the “Beat Generation.” Sparked by the writings of Suzuki and reports from occupied Japan by Europeans and Americans who had sampled the culture of the erstwhile enemy, Zen came to represent what many were seeking. Zen meant different things, of course. Alan Watts, in *Beat Zen, Square Zen, and Zen*, contrasted the Zen of the “Beats,” a wandering, aesthetic, “bohemian” kind of life supposedly modeled on the “Zen Lunatics” of old, with the “square Zen” of formal discipline and practice. Three books can be taken to represent the three Western Zens: (1) Alan Watts’s *The Way of Zen*, the Daoistic, artistic, philosophical kind of Zen; (2) Philip Kapleau’s *The Three Pillars of Zen*, the Zen of rigorous practice, enlivened by vivid accounts of modern enlightenment; and (3) Jack Kerouac’s *The Dharma Bums*, a semiautobiographical presentation of “Beat Zen.” In all these ways, through a kind of ripple effect, Zen has gone global.

Robert Ellwood

See also: Dogen; Mahayana Buddhism; Suzuki, D. T.; Sword; Theravada Buddhism; Vajrayana, Tibetan; Vedanta Society

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ZIMBABWE

The Republic of Zimbabwe is a landlocked country in the southern part of Africa, bordered by South Africa, Botswana, Zambia, and Mozambique. The country consists of several ethnicities, the largest of which is Shona. Three languages hold official status: English, Shona, and Ndebele.

The traditional religion indigenous to Zimbabwe is a monotheistic faith that believes in one supreme creator, called Mwari by the Shona and Mulimu by the Ndebele. Prayers are channeled to the creator through family ancestors, sometimes with the help of a spirit medium. Early contact with European religion came when the Jesuit priest Goncalo de Silveria reached the Munhumutapa capital in 1560. However, the first permanent missions were not established until 1859 by the London Missionary Society. Some of the early Christian missionaries who encountered the indigenous religion recognized its monotheistic nature and incorporated local concepts into their evangelism of the locals. For some contemporary Zimbabweans, the Christian faith is practiced in conjunction with indigenous religious practices. Thus, in addition to attending Christian churches regularly, they might also visit traditional healers, consult a spirit medium for advice, or visit a Mwari shrine. Some local religious groups, such as the Seven Apostles, formally combine Christian beliefs with traditional African beliefs.

Today, the country is approximately 70% Christian. The largest denomination is Roman Catholic, and there are significant numbers of Anglicans, Methodists, and Presbyterians. These mainline denominations were imported into Zimbabwe during the colonial era and are financially maintained by a foreign missionary infrastructure. Pentecostalism is the fastest growing sector of Christianity and was originally brought to South Africa and the then southern Rhodesia by foreign missionaries in the 1950s. It is highly transnational due to the international ties created through the Zimbabwe diaspora (such as business contacts and remittances) and through the vast range of ideologies incorporated into the teachings at different times (such as the Christian prosperity gospel, neoliberal capitalism, Marxism, and pan-Africanism). The indigenous Zimbabwe Assemblies of God, Africa (ZAOGA), founded by Ezekiel Guti in 1960, claims to have over 1 million members in Zimbabwe, South Africa, and across the world in places such as Sidney, Sao Paolo, Toronto, Shanghai, Paris, New Delhi, Rome, and London. ZAOGA is an example of what has been called the “reverse flow” of missionaries from the Global South to the former missionary-sending countries of the North.

Various non-Christian religions have been introduced as a result of immigration. Islam is practiced in Zimbabwe primarily by South Asian immigrants from India and Pakistan as well as some North Africans and Middle Easterners. Muslims make up approximately 1% of the population. These are also small Jewish, Hindu, and Buddhist populations, which like the Muslims, are primarily composed of immigrants located in the capital city, Harare. Like Christianity, the Baha'i faith was established in Zimbabwe through efforts at evangelism. The first Baha'i missionary arrived in 1953 from Iran, followed by missionaries from the United Kingdom and the United States. In 2003, the Baha'is in Zimbabwe celebrated their 50th anniversary in the country with an international conference.

Kimberly Eberhardt Casteline

See also Africa; Christianity; Indigenous Religions
Pentecostal Movements

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of the Jews since their exile from their homeland in the year 73 CE and their perennial political feebleness made them an obvious and accessible target of the xenophobia and economic frustration felt by host nations in the tumultuous and uncertain years that marked the rise of modernity. This entry describes the circumstances in which Zionism was born, the leaders who inspired and initiated the movement, the challenges and obstacles it faced, and the various interpretations and factions it spawned.

The Forerunners of Zionism

Prior to the formal establishment of the Zionist organization and the convening of the first Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland, in August 1897, there were several educators and spiritual leaders who wrote about the necessity and inevitability of a Jewish national awakening as a precondition for redemption and salvation. The common theme with all these thinkers was that saving the Jews from persecution is possible only through the return to their ancient homeland and resettling the land of Israel. These early advocates of national deliverance and emancipation came to be known as the precursors of Zionism. Three persons, in particular, with differing personalities and disparate backgrounds and beliefs emerged as passionate advocates of Zionism. They were Rabbi Zvi Kalischer (1795–1874), an Ashkenazi Orthodox Rabbi from northern Poland; Rabbi Yehuda Alkalai (1798–1878), a Sephardi Orthodox Rabbi from Serbia; and Moses Hess (1812–1875), a secular communist philosopher and a colleague of Marx and Engels. The two rabbis, unlike their peers, believed that self-help and activism are not heretical but a part of the divine intervention of saving the Jews and restoring their status as the chosen people. However, it must happen in two stages, the first being the actual return to Zion, which would then enable the coming of the Messiah and the full redemption of Israel. Hess, on the other hand, wholeheartedly believed in the ingathering of Jews from all their exile communities because assimilation among the Gentiles could never work. In a striking departure from his earlier conviction, that universal education and emancipation would promote and facilitate the assimilation of Jews in their host societies, violent anti-Semitic

ZIONISM

Zionism is the national movement of the Jewish people. It was formed as part of the advent of nationalism in the mid-19th century and was precipitated by the growing anti-Semitism accompanied by waves of violence against Jews around the world but mainly in Eastern Europe. The dispersion

outbursts all over Europe convinced Hess that only immigration to Zion and the establishment of a socialist society there is the viable solution for the survival of Judaism. Thus, from ostensibly opposing points of departure, the three prominent harbingers of Zionism reached similar conclusions. In their major literary works *Seeking Zion* (1862), *A Lot for the Lord* (1957), and *Rome and Jerusalem* (1862), respectively, they exerted a significant influence on Zionist leaders, even on the founder of the movement, Theodore Herzl, who as a secular man admitted that he never would have written his seminal *The Jewish State* if he had not read Hess's *Rome and Jerusalem* first.

Herzl, Founder of the Zionist Movement

The trigger event for Herzl's activism and his dedication to establish an infrastructure for a concentrated effort to solve the Jewish predicament was the Dreyfus affair in France. In this notorious case of false accusation, a Jewish military officer was charged with treason, brought to trial, and convicted. Before he was sent to prison, he was stripped of his ranks and humiliated in a public military degradation ceremony. Herzl covered the trial as a correspondent for the Viennese newspaper *Neue Freie Presse* in the winter of 1894 and was deeply affected by the anti-Semitic atmosphere that had engulfed the judicial processions and the public debate in France at the time. Some historians claim that the ascendancy of the anti-Semitic Austrian politician Karl Lueger to the position of mayor of Vienna in 1895 bore even more influence on Herzl's decision to relinquish his hopes for emancipation and assimilation and become a Zionist. He immediately immersed himself in feverishly writing his seminal book *Der Judenstaat* (*The Jewish State*), which came out in February 1896 and laid the ground for the official establishment of the Zionist movement and the first Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland, in August 1897.

Challenges to the Zionist Idea

The first major challenge for Herzl and his colleagues in the Zionist leadership was to reach out and consolidate their initiative into a cohesive national movement by enticing and mobilizing Jews from different countries and different continents,

with dissimilar cultures and languages and disparate degrees of urgency to invoke and redeem their Jewish identity. Jews from Western and Central Europe experienced an entirely different rapport with their host environment than their brethren from Eastern Europe, and both of these concentrations of Jewish communities encountered a vastly different reality from Jewish existence in the Middle East, North Africa, or Asia. The globalization and dispersion of Judaism made the national awakening and reunification of Jews a much more difficult task. The Zionist leadership's first priority was to align all Jews from the prosperous North American communities with the ravaged and pogrom-stricken Russian communities, and the German and French secularly educated and self-emancipated Jews with the traditionalist and conservatively religious Yemenite or Tunisian Jews. The forefathers of Zionism were mostly secular, some even socialist, Jews who promoted their agenda on rationalist, socioeconomic grounds. Their most pressing quest was to save the Jews from perishing under the onslaught of anti-Semitism. The sentimental and spiritual value of returning to the promised land of their birthright was less evident to them. However, the majority of Zionism's prospective adherents were devout Jews who for generations had cultivated their affinity to Zion on the merit of their religious beliefs and cultural kinship.

This apparent incompatibility between the leaders and the putative followers needed to be attenuated by adjustment of the Zionist elite to the circumstances in which most of their potential recruits lived. The unfamiliarity of most Zionist intelligentsia with the aspirations and hopes of their people induced them to make extended trips among Jewish diasporas in order to acquaint themselves with the woes and difficulties that kindled the age-old desire to return to Zion. Herzl and his associates at the helm of the Zionist establishment realized that to put their vision into action, they would have to canvass the postexilic Jewish world and persuade community leaders to join the movement. The annual congresses and the periodic conferences and summits held in different cities in Europe were attended only by the elected delegates and professional, dedicated Zionists. The critical masses remained in their local communities, and their level of involvement was very low to nonexistent. In their proselytizing efforts to sway the Jews from

passivity to activism and from waiting for divine salvation to man-made self-redemption, Zionist leaders travelled across the seas and oceans and traversed the continents.

Contending Interpretations and Factions

However, the absence of a single political jurisdiction and the abiding authority of an independent state has hampered a unified and coherent endeavor to promulgate the idea of Zionism. Instead, a multipronged effort was launched, generated, and maintained by several divergent beliefs or understandings of what Zionism meant. The major variants of the Zionist idea were political Zionism, practical Zionism, and cultural Zionism. Alongside these initial disparities, other disagreements developed between national and religious Zionism and, a little later, between labor and revisionist Zionism as well. This variegation of Zionist thought reflected the contending denominations within the Jewish nationalist revival. Secular, religious, socialistic, and nationalistic rifts already existed in the dispersed Jewish communities, and the various attitudes toward the idea of Zionism augmented these rivalries and reinforced the existing faultlines between the factions.

Political or diplomatic Zionism meant the effort to obtain a charter or a legal permit to allow a Jewish state in Eretz Israel (the Land of Israel), or Palestine. Such a charter could have been granted only from one of the political powers of the time, especially those powers that had a direct influence on or a vested interest in the international situation in the Middle East, such as Great Britain, Germany, or Turkey. This stately path was preferred by Theodore Herzl and some of his deputies such as David Wolffsohn and Max Nordau. They firmly believed that political endorsement and international recognition must precede any action on the ground and that diplomatic achievements would facilitate and guarantee the build-up effort in Palestine. The exponents of practical Zionism contended the opposite: The work on the ground—cultivating the land, building settlements, expanding the Jewish population in Eretz Israel by encouraging immigration—is the most essential task, and it must continue unabated regardless of diplomatic negotiations. The leaders of this orientation were Zionist activists who immigrated to Zion in the early waves

of immigration at the end of the 19th century and Eastern European Jews, who unlike Western and Central European Jews, were artisans, workers, and farmers and hence more comfortable with a hands-on, matter-of-fact lifestyle. In contrast to the first two versions of Zionism, the cultural or spiritual orientation did not consider the return to Zion as a first, all-encompassing priority. The focus of cultural Zionism was the rejuvenation of the Jewish culture and reconnection to their heritage—the language and the values of their past. Their incentive for national revivalism was not “the problem of the Jews,” as Herzl wrote, but “the problem of Judaism,” in the words of a prominent figure in this camp, the revered journalist and essayist Asher Ginzberg, better known by his pen name Ahad Ha’am (One of the People). He maintained that Eretz Israel should be considered a spiritual center for world Jewry, but massive immigration there was not necessary. It was more important to nurture and bolster the unique Jewish identity in the various diasporas, and the Land of Israel would play a pivotal role as a source of inspiration. These three approaches vied for the attention and support of the Jewish communities, and though they were all part of the surge of national revitalization, their priorities and missions were in collision.

Other sources of friction within Zionism were tensions between the religious and the secular as well as between labor and revisionism. The former emphasized the deep-rooted disagreement regarding the nature of salvation, whether divine or human. The Zionist movement, initially a secular endeavor, could not give up on the masses of potential recruits who were religious. To enable their incorporation and active participation in the movement, the secular leaders of the movement underlined the spiritual and sacred nexus between the Jews and the Promised Land, while the religious constituencies on their part joined the Zionist initiative despite the absence of a redeeming Messiah. Their leaders, especially Rabbi Abraham Kook, reinterpreted Zionism as preparing the soil for the advent of the divine redeemer and, thus, managed to reconcile the religious and secular agendas within Zionism. The rift between labor Zionism and revisionist Zionism is akin to the polarity between the ideological Left and Right, respectively. In 1925, Vladimir (Zeev) Jabotinsky,

a journalist and a charismatic Zionist leader from the Ukraine, formed the Zionist Revisionist Organization as a renegade faction within the Zionist organization. His dissent focused on the attitude of the Zionists toward Britain and the general direction of the Zionist policy in Eretz Israel. He vehemently believed that Britain was becoming increasingly anti-Jewish in its Palestine policy and that the conciliatory manner that the Zionist leadership demonstrated toward the British was defeatist and uncalled for. His main rivals were Chaim Weitzmann, the president of the Zionist movement at the time and later the first president of the state of Israel, a British citizen and supporter of the London policy in the Middle East, and David Ben Gurion, the dominant leader of the Zionist workers' union in Palestine and later the first prime minister of Israel. Their dispute extended further to the general character of Zionism, with Jabotinsky harshly criticizing what he perceived to be their inaction and their placatory stance and Weitzmann and Ben Gurion warning against Jabotinsky's militancy and aggression as jeopardizing their efforts at securing the Zionist goal.

Samuel Peleg

See also Diaspora; Israel; Judaism

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ZOROASTRIANISM (AND PARSIS)

One of the oldest revealed religions (if not the oldest), Zoroastrianism developed in ancient Persia and played a role in the evolution of the Judaic, Christian, and Islamic belief systems. Heavily dualistic in its beliefs, the community that was for so long based in the lands of modern-day Iran has been greatly diminished and dislocated; at the beginning of the 21st century, the largest group of believers, known as Parsis (Parsees), reside in India. This entry will outline the basic tenets of the Zoroastrian faith, give a short history of the tradition, and attempt to show some ways in which scholars have envisioned Zoroastrian influence on many major world religions.

Theology

Zoroaster is the Greek name for the prophet known as Zarathustra, the eponymous founder of the religion, who likely lived in Persia around 1500 BCE. Zoroastrianism is regarded as the first monotheistic faith and revolved around the worship of the deity Ahura Mazda (Ormazd in the Pahlavi language), the supreme God, who is the source of good and the world. His counterpart is the spirit Angra Mainyu (Pahlavi: Ahriman), who represents violence and death and engages in battle with Ahura Mazda until the end of time. Their conflict involves the entire universe, and each person must decide which side to join (this has sometimes been interpreted as an internal battle within each believer). The victory of Ahura Mazda is assured, and neither dualism nor evil will exist when time ends; even hell, where the evil dead reside, will be destroyed in the end.

The Avesta, the holy book of Zoroastrianism, preserves 17 hymns (*gāthās*) believed to have been written by Zoroaster. These *gāthās* are not directives but rather passionate poems about the worship of one God, the choice between good and evil, the idea of righteousness, and the cosmic order. The Avesta also contains the laws of the tradition, written after Zoroaster's death and leading to questions about their inspiration and the divisions in Zoroastrian communities that had followed.

Asha, the all-encompassing natural law, is another important belief of Zoroastrians. No direct translation for the idea exists, much like the Dao of

Daoism, but Zoroaster makes much use of it in the *gāthās*, and it is often symbolized by fire. It is the basis for the structure of Zoroaster's moral philosophy, the embodiment of the order that rules the world, and Zoroaster declares it to mean Ahura Mazda's righteousness. It likely is contiguous to or shares aspects with the Hindu *ṛta*, as both contain the idea of a path to be followed by the righteous.

Other beliefs of Zoroastrians will be familiar as they are shared by other global faiths. Death, for example, results in the deceased's soul being determined as worthy of heaven or hell by the deities Mithra, Sraosha, and Rashnu. There is also a savior figure, the *Saoshyant*, who would be born of a virgin in the line of Zoroaster and bring about the end of time and with it the gathering of all souls to heaven. Angels form another part of Zoroastrian doctrine, and they are divided into three categories: (1) *Amesha Spentas*, the archangels; (2) *Yazaatas*, the angels, and (3) *Fravashis*, the guardian angels. The first two are embodiments of abstract ideas and virtues or concrete objects of nature, while the third are "assigned" to individuals, watching over them and providing a moral model for the individual.

Zoroastrianism requires confession for penance, as well as several rituals of purification; some of these are done daily and some only at certain times and in certain places. Dogs play a role in the ritual practices of Zoroastrians, as their gaze is thought to ward off evil spirits. The chief ceremony of the religion is the *Yasna*, a sacrifice of the sacred liquor known as *haoma* in front of the sacred fire, which all temples must keep constantly burning. There is also a requirement to pray five times a day.

History

Religious estimates for the time of Zoroaster range from 6000 to 600 BCE, but most scholars agree that he lived sometime between 1500 and 1000 BCE. Herodotus claims that the Magi, practitioners of Zoroastrianism, were influential during the reign of the Median emperors but were defamed following their dissidence during the merging of the Median and Persian empires under Cyrus the Great. The loss of power of the priests did not mean a denigration of the religion, however; in fact, Cyrus the Great ostensibly made Zoroastrianism the official religion of his Achaemenid Empire. Cyrus's successor, Darius I,

likewise adopted Ahura Mazda as the chief god of his empire, continuing the faith's eminent position in the political realm. This would hold until the emergence of the Islamic dynasties in the seventh century CE. Zoroastrianism did play a role in marginalizing the polytheistic peoples of the time, and it was under Darius that the boundaries between Mithra and Ahura Mazda began to shift, both becoming understood to be gods of sovereignty and sealers of oaths.

The Sassanid Dynasty, coming to power in the third century CE, retained Zoroastrianism as the state religion and undertook a program to persecute Christians, which was surprising considering the similarities between the two faiths. However, the program was not targeted at all Christians equally; the relationship of the Sassanids to the Christian Roman Empire seemed more of a political consequence than a matter of belief, as the Patriarchate of the Church of the East was better treated by the Sassanids. With the defeat of the Sassanid Dynasty by the Umayyads, Zoroastrianism began to lose its direct influence in the world, but its indirect influence would continue through the impact the religion had on Islam, Christianity, and Judaism.

The Parsis of India are the last major Zoroastrian community in the world. It is estimated that the ranks of believers has fallen to less than 200,000 worldwide, the great majority residing in India. Having left the lands of Iran due to the persecution suffered under the Muslims in the 10th century CE, the name *Parsi* (Persian) was first seen in 12th-century travel logs of European travelers to India. Following the Parsis settling in the Greater Mumbai (former Bombay) area, they integrated into Indian society while maintaining their distinct culture and traditions. The members of the community instituted the first cotton mills and newspapers of India as well as the first Indian-owned bank. Their ranks include several preeminent Indians, such as Sir Jamsetji Tata, the "father of Indian industry," and Dadabhai Naoroji, the first Asian member of the British parliament and a mentor to the human rights champion Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi.

The numbers of the Parsi community, and thereby of the practitioners of Zoroastrianism, have been steadily declining. Parsis do not proselytize, and owing to the religion's basis in Persian tribal culture, members must be born and initiated into the faith. Inter-marriage with those outside the

religion is frowned on, and some have argued that the favorable status Zoroastrianism accords women has led to many of them choosing not to have children, which has played a role in decreasing the numbers of Parsis. In 1970, there began a slow exodus of Parsis from India to Western countries, resulting in a growing number of small communities in the United States, Canada, and Australia, to name a few.

Influence on Other Religions

The idea of monotheism itself has been attributed to Zoroaster. It has been surmised that the Jewish model (on which the Christian and Islamic belief systems are based) took this central notion from the Zoroastrian religion. At the time of the writing of the Jewish postexilic scriptures, Zoroastrianism was the religion of the empire, and its influence could have affected the beliefs of the authors. As with any attempts to prove one belief system informing the beliefs of another, precise linkages are not easy to establish, but the similitude of the beliefs compounded by the prevalence of Zoroastrianism during its formative years makes this plausible. In the Jewish scriptures, beliefs that align with Zoroastrian concepts appear only after those beliefs were available in the cultural milieu. Added to this was the likely interaction of Zoroastrianism with Greek and Roman cults, especially the Mithras Cult, which has been recognized as being influential on burgeoning Christianity.

Beliefs concerning heaven and hell, the cosmic battle of evil against good, and a Satan that opposes (but is not quite equal to) God all likely have their roots in Zoroastrian thought, as well as the important doctrine of a savior born of a virgin and the final judgment. Adding to this is the fact that certain Islamic traditions revere Zoroaster as a prophet of their own religion. Zoroastrianism and Hinduism also share many similarities, sometimes attributed to both traditions springing from an older Indo-European religion, evidence of which has been lost to time. The sacrificial rituals are similar in practice and close in title, *Yasna* in Zoroastrianism and *Yajna* in Hinduism. There is also the close association mentioned above between *Asha* and *rta*, the moral orders promoted by the two religions.

The impact of the Zoroastrian faith extends far beyond the Parsis who still practice it to those who

are followers of the religions that have taken aspects of Zoroastrianism and made them their own. While it was the official religion of an empire for over a millennium, its influence continues among the faithful in religions that boast much larger levels of adherence.

John Soboslai

See also Abbāsid Caliphate; Aryans; Global Religion; Indo-European Religion; Judaism; Manichaeism; Mithras Cult; Monotheism; Polytheism; Umayyad Dynasty

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